

Capgemini cut call center costs and empowered agents with Google Apps Premier Edition



BUSINESS:

Capgemini, one of the world's foremost providers of consulting, technology and outsourcing services with 80,000 employees worldwide

Goal: Arm a fledgling customer support force with nimble tools that are easy to adopt and simple to scale

Challenge: Keep costs low while providing best-in-breed email and collaboration solutions

WITH GOOGLE APPS:

- Easily scaled services make future growth seamless
- IT managers have access to useful integration APIs and policy management components
- Employees have access to applications that enable them to work more effectively

“Getting Google Apps going required only an hour’s worth of work on our part: pointing our DNS server to Google.”

Eric Lakey

Capgemini’s business process outsourcing arm runs eight customer contact centers worldwide, which handle more than 20 million customer interactions annually. To stay ahead of growth in its customer care business, the company opened a state-of-the-art 610-seat Customer Care & Intelligence (CC&I) center in Junction City, Kansas, and immediately looked for an optimal communication and collaboration solution that was cost-effective and could scale easily.



Approach

Capgemini Customer Care & Intelligence Vice President Robbie Brillhart recognizes that the success of any contact center pivots on the productivity and effectiveness of its customer care agents. His task was to select and deploy everything the Junction City agents would need to work effectively, from machines to software. A top priority was equipping agents with a collaboration communication applications that would help them serve customers better and faster. Brillhart knew he wanted a solution with a streamlined feature set that was cost-effective, easy to use and simple to deploy. “Contact center agents need to collaborate and communicate, but they are not typically intensive data analysts or power users,” Brillhart explains. After hearing about Google Apps, Brillhart realized the Google solution would be ideal. It cost only \$50 per user annually, offered the right level of functionality and could immediately accommodate hundreds of new users without major IT infrastructure changes.

“Now that our agents have shaped Google Apps to the specific requirements of the contact center environment, they have the tools they need to deliver the highest levels of customer care on behalf of our clients.”

With Google Apps

Easily-scaled services make future growth seamless

Brillhart says the deployment of Google Apps was fast and easy, required minimal training, and has already resulted in time and cost savings. He notes that Google Apps will easily scale to accommodate hundreds of new users at the center, all without having to purchase additional software licenses in advance. “We opened with 165 agents, but we will be growing to 610 agents right away,” says Brillhart. “We needed applications we could deploy rapidly, with almost no effort required to add new users – and no need to purchase additional capacity in advance.”

IT managers are more efficient and have access to advanced integration APIs and policy management components

From an IT standpoint, processes in the Junction City center are faster and simpler, resulting in cost savings and reducing the demand for IT resources. “We looked at every line item to see where we could improve the way we do business. We investigated ways to save money and at the same time empower agents to improve the customer experience. We were very cognizant of costs that were not a tradeoff to the Customer Experience,” says Brillhart.

ABOUT GOOGLE APPS

Google Apps is a suite of customizable applications that includes Gmail, Google Calendar, Google Talk (instant messaging and voice over IP), Google Docs (online documents and collaboration), Google Sites (team site creation and publishing), Start Page (a single access point for all applications) as well as Google Apps security and compliance products (making existing email systems more secure, compliant, and productive). Google Apps offers editions tailored to businesses, organizations, schools, and project teams.

Visit www.google.com/a for more information.

Eric Lakey headed up the implementation, which he describes as extremely straightforward and simple. “Instead of spending a lot of time building and configuring new servers and installing software on a couple hundred workstations, we redirected our email domain to Google, set up some users, and were ready to start testing right away,” says Lakey. “This allowed us to focus valuable IT resource time to the other critical tasks necessary to launch the call center.”

For spam filtering and content management needs, Capgemini is using features from Postini, which come at no extra charge as part of Google Apps Premier Edition. This solution gives Capgemini precise control over incoming and outgoing email. According to Brillhart, this is critical for a call center, because not everyone needs to be able to send email outside the company. Postini also allows Capgemini to set up specific content filtering rules to manage the types of email traveling into and out of the call center. “We also constantly tap the advanced reporting on email traffic, spam filtering, and virus protection that Google provides. These are enterprise-level features that lend extra control and security,” Brillhart says.

Employees have access to applications that enable them to work more effectively

Due to the dynamic nature of the issues that occur in a contact center environment, it is necessary to have a way of reporting clearly and in real time. It is not feasible to create or modify a new automated solution for every new issue encountered, so many centers rely on paper-based processes or spreadsheets to track the details and occurrences of the issues. With Google Docs, a supervisor that notices several agents reporting the same customer issue can share a spreadsheet with the team that all of the agents can edit simultaneously. This allows the supervisor to specify exactly what needs to be captured and allows results to be viewed in real-time, without having to dedicate any time to the collection and compilation of data. These results can be escalated to management with the click of a button and management can continue to monitor the situation without having to request periodic updates.

New solutions to customer problems are being discovered every day in a call centers. Often, these golden nuggets are locked away at the agent level and not effectively shared within the larger enterprise because there is no clear, easy communication path. With Google Docs, a Capgemini agent can easily document and share a solution with his team and supervisor and allow for others to collaborate in the development of this solution. The supervisor can then review and share the document with the process improvement department if it is deemed worthy.

But most impressive for Brillhart are the many ways in which contact center agents are embracing the applications to serve customers better. Processes that used to take hours or days can often be accomplished in minutes, and collaboration among call center staff is stronger and more effective than ever. “We are empowering agents to take a larger role in improving the customer experience without creating bureaucracy on the production floor,” says Brillhart.

“With Google Apps, we found that collaboration grows from the floor up,” says Brillhart. “Now that our agents have shaped Google Apps to the specific requirements of the contact center environment, they have the tools they need to deliver the highest levels of customer care on behalf of our clients.”

