

DaimlerChrysler Financial Services

Engaging Aspect Software to Preserve Brand Image

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Paul Morack

*Telecommunications Engineer
DaimlerChrysler
Financial Services*

The Company

DaimlerChrysler Financial Services is the financial services division of DaimlerChrysler AG, which provides financial solutions ranging from consumer automotive loans to DaimlerChrysler dealer inventory loans. It operates 25 offices in North America with more than 5,500 employees.

The Business Challenge

- Preserve investments in corporate brand by extending the professional image created in other media to the voice prompts in the contact center.
- Create normalized enterprise-wide reports.
- Easily manage staff resources at multiple locations and drive productivity efficiencies to maintain service level initiatives while also reducing costs.
- Provide a consistent customer experience from call inception to call completion.

The Solution

DaimlerChrysler Financial Services chose to implement several Aspect Software products from across all three of the company's product lines, Contact Center Performance Optimization, Signature and Unified IP Contact Center. These products include:

- Aspect® CallCenter® ACD for routing, reporting and queuing capabilities.
- Aspect® Enterprise Contact Server™ to provide advanced routing capabilities for multisite and multichannel contact management.
- Aspect® DataMart™, to gather and consolidate information from multiple channel contact center sites and deliver an enterprise-level view of contact center operations.

The Results

- Increased agent productivity
- Elevated customer service levels
- Initiated a seamless transfer of contacts among multiple agents and sites
- Preserved the customer-focused brand image
- Reduced inefficiencies in managing voice prompts across multiple sites
- Leveraged existing resources to create centralized technology source for multiple sites
- Created a central technology source for remote or work at home employees
- Formed a central source for all reporting data



Building a Brand

Recognizing that the brand and what it conveys to customers is the most important thing to the company, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services undertook a new initiative that made use of its Aspect® CallCenter® ACD. The initiative, called One Common Voice, was focused on enhancing the overall customer experience when they contacted the DaimlerChrysler Financial Services contact centers.

The goal was to create a uniform view of how the contact center was performing across its eight contact centers – three are run by outsourcers – as well as many remote agents so they could provide a consistent experience for customers. And, the company wanted to ensure it was meeting its service level initiative.

To achieve these goals, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services, a long-time customer of Aspect Software, implemented an array of solutions including: Aspect CallCenter ACD (automatic call distributor), Aspect® Enterprise Contact Server™ for computer-telephony integration (CTI), and other Aspect Software functionality, including Aspect® DataMart™ and the Uniphi Connect capability for Aspect CallCenter ACD.

As experienced users of Aspect Software solutions, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services' customer contact center employees were experts at applying Aspect Software technology to achieve specific business objectives. But as a major corporation with a strong brand image to maintain, the company is always looking for ways to use its contact center technology to enhance the strong position the company holds in its market.

One Common Voice

The idea was a simple one—select a professional voice talent who projected the image DaimlerChrysler Financial Services wanted associated with its brand. Then have that person record all the voice prompts for all of their locations in North America and accompany the prompts with consistent, well-selected music on hold.

The Aspect Software solution – Aspect CallCenter ACD integrated with a hosted IVR product – enables a technical transition when customer calls are routed from one center to another, but much of the that effect was lost because of the different voices, different greetings and different quality in the recording of the voice prompts.

“In the Services division alone, we talk to 1.5 million customers a month,” said Paul Morack, Telecommunications Engineer at DaimlerChrysler Financial Services. “Naturally, we want our customers to hear a consistent pre-recorded voice and be treated in a professional manner.”

The end result, the company is able to provide a consistent, professional greeting no matter where the call landed across the contact center operations.

In addition to yielding a more professional image, there were also cost efficiencies in centrally recording prompts. A welcome greeting recorded once, can easily be downloaded to all 25 business locations. In addition, Aspect Call Center ACD allows developers to access the voice subsystem remotely and to download high-quality sound files. Then, they can be downloaded to all locations for use on the company's IVR.

And, as part of its ongoing efforts to improve the interaction experience, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services will continue to incorporate feedback from its customers.

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Unifying the Contact Center

In addition to creating a uniform brand image through voice prompts, the company is also focused on building the brand by generating a unified view of contact center performance across the multiple sites, as well as ensure that every site is meeting its service level initiatives.

DaimlerChrysler Financial Service’s challenge was overseeing its eight contact centers; five operated by DaimlerChrysler Financial Services for customer service and collections and three operated by outsourcers who only handle customer service activities. The company also manages numerous remote offices and at-home agents. An added challenge was that the technology investments made by DaimlerChrysler Financial Services and the outsourcer were not always the same. Merging the information created by different systems into a single cohesive view was also part of the company’s One Common Voice initiative.

Before implementing Aspect® DataMart™, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services was not only trying to normalize disparate types of data from the private branch exchange (PBX) and Aspect® CallCenter® ACD, they were also trying to create a unified view of how each of the contact centers were performing – bringing together the standalone silos of data each site was creating.

In order to glean information on how the contact center was performing as a whole, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services implemented Aspect DataMart, which gathers and consolidates information from multiple channel contact center sites and delivers an enterprise-level view of the operation. With this added information, the company is able to see if it is meeting or exceeding customer service levels.

“Aspect DataMart normalized all of the data we collect and made it all look the same as the Aspect CallCenter ACD data,” said Morack. “So now it’s: we’ve got telephone data and we’ve got ACD data that has already been normalized and crunched and configured and placed in tables and fields. So the support people only have to set up the query, run and schedule reports – no more grabbing the data, crunching it, and more.”

Morack added, “Because we have this central repository for information, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services has been able to bring consistency and best practices to all contact center reporting needs by providing normalized data across multiple platforms.”

Getting Customers to the Right Agent the First Time

DaimlerChrysler Financial Services uses Aspect Enterprise Contact Server to enhance its call routing and ensure calls are going to the agent with the best skills to serve the customer. Aspect® Enterprise Contact Server™ gathers data from 26 databases collected by the company’s customer service and regional collections centers and makes the determination based on a single set of business rules around customer data to direct the routing of contacts.

Aspect Enterprise Contact Server uses carrier routing to take the inbound calls and route them to any of DaimlerChrysler’s six contact centers, including the outsourcer’s centers, based on specific business rules. It uses Dialed Number Identification Service (DNIS) and Automatic Number Identification (ANI) to get agents the customer’s VIN and Account numbers at the same time the call is delivered to their phone. This process enables customers to get to the right agent, the first time and to have their customer service or collections inquiry answered as quickly and efficiently as possible.

“Central business rules allow DaimlerChrysler Financial Services contact center employees to go to a central place, evaluate available resources using those rules and then send the call,” added Morack. “The ROI is – the company doesn’t have to ramp up in these stand-alone silos based on terminating volume. We can leverage these central business rules and push calls across our enterprise, just in time and with just the right amount of people.”

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Managing a Dispersed Workforce with IP

With many of the remote sites, which include more than 100 work-at-home agents, DaimlerChrysler Financial Services is using Unified Connect with IP from Aspect Software at several of its sites and with all of its at-home agents. Uniphi Connect makes it possible to manage IP-based agents and PSTN-based agents from a single platform. The company has seen costs reduced because it didn't have to buy another automatic call distributor for those specific sites.

“Remote agents love Uniphi Connect; they can work flex hours - different hours throughout the day - or even part time. And the productivity has shot through the roof because they love working at home,” said Morack. “Having all of those agents access centralized technology has been very cost effective for us.”

Some other results that DaimlerChrysler Financial Services has seen by allowing agents to work at home includes, reduced turnover and absenteeism, improved recruitment opportunities for highly skilled and personable agents, reduced real-estate and overhead costs, and improved agent morale.

DaimlerChrysler Financial Services has more than 3000 users of CTI and computer telephony functionality. They also have several smaller contact centers with approximately 100 to 150 agents. Because it is not cost-effective to purchase a full-blown ACD for the smaller centers, the company is leveraging the technology at the larger centers by connecting the remote sites using Uniphi Connect over IP. One example of this: the company is connecting their 50-agent remote sites in Montreal and Calgary with their large contact center outside of Toronto.

“Uniphi Connect allows DaimlerChrysler Financial Services' smaller contact centers to leverage quality management, workforce management, recording, CTI -- for the cost of an agent seat.”

“As a result, we can leverage our technology from a central site out to the masses. Not just to another office, but to “work-at-homers”, “road warriors” or even someone with a laptop at Starbucks with a VPN token can launch Uniphi Connect - suddenly they're an agent at the call center,” added Morack. “And that opens up a world of staffing possibilities for us.”

DaimlerChrysler Financial Services is also in the process of deploying Uniphi Connect at some remote staff centers in Mexico. They are retiring old technology and will have remote staff connect to the central technology pool at the contact center in Monterey, Mexico via Uniphi Connect.

The key to this success of its contact center is that DaimlerChrysler Financial Services understands that they need to support the technology used by all employees whether they are in a remote office or working from home. And they also do not assume that all agents are techno-savvy and have developed a plan that provides assistance to those agents. This proactive approach to contact center technology is allowing the company to provide a consistently high level of customer service.

About Aspect Software

Aspect Software, Inc. founded the contact center industry and is now the world's largest company solely focused on Internet Protocol (IP) and traditional voice-based products and services for customer service, collections, and sales and telemarketing business processes. Each day, Aspect Software powers more than 125 million customer-company interactions at thousands of in-house and outsourced contact centers around the globe. Its trusted Signature product line offers automatic call distributors (ACDs), dialers, voice portals and computer telephony integration (CTI). The company's leading Contact Center Performance Optimization product line provides workforce management, quality management, performance management and campaign management applications. And, its pioneering Unified IP Contact Center product line delivers a comprehensive, multichannel solution. Headquartered in Chelmsford, Mass., Aspect Software has operations across the Americas, Europe, Africa, the Middle East and Asia Pacific. For more information, visit www.aspect.com.

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