

Cloud Contact Center

Compelling value for your corporate customers



CreaLog | White Paper | Cloud Contact Center

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Certified Integrated Management System for Quality and Environment

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Executive Summary

The Cloud Contact Center Solution opens up great opportunities for network operators to approach their corporate customers with a compelling value proposition and offers great scaling flexibility for their customers: Its deployment options range from small businesses in need for a flexible automatic call distribution (ACD) system right up to enterprise organizations wishing to implement and operate a feature-rich contact center serving their customers at any time or place.

Organizations still using locally deployed legacy call distribution systems run the risk of eventually reaching their solutions's end-of-life, resulting in discontinued support. This leaves the businesses with obsolete equipment that needs replacing at short notice and considerable cost. A Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) solution is an easy way out of this fix, because the Cloud Contact Center Solution opens up an easy way for migrating Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) into the cloud. It supports a range of different pricing models, enabling network operators to address multiple customer groups with a single technology platform. This solution specifically focusses on low internal complexity for the network operator and easy customer administration. Its strong points include rapid customer provisioning, easy subscriber administration, and high availability and security.

The Cloud Contact Center Solution combines rapid, demand driven expandability with secure and redundant onshore data hosting and 24/7 customer support. It enables network operators to offer their corporate customers service level grades that their own ICT infrastructures often cannot equal. Organizations of all sizes can now deploy contact centers without any need to invest into their own infrastructure. Both its capacity and its range of services, the Cloud Contact Center Solution is expandable on a per-customer basis.

Corporate customers of network operators may start with a contact center offering telephone services only. But subsequent expansions can then feature a highly advanced interactive voice response (IVR) system for call steering, caller identification and customer self-service for rapid first call resolution. Other important options include call recording for documentation and quality management as well as speech analytics for word-spotting, data mining and the transcription of communication.

Introduction

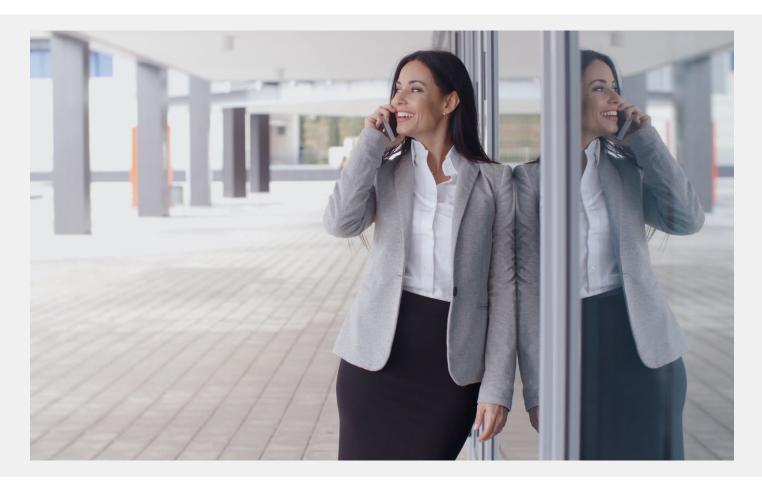
For customers communicating with an organization, maximum accessibility of service personnel is of highest importance. This is why businesses increasingly rely on using contact center solutions featuring automatic call distribution (ACD) to handle incoming customer calls. They help distribute these calls across the organization and its various locations to meet the customers' needs. Businesses gain flexibility in responding to customer concerns and external contractors can be integrated into the customer care processes.

CreaLog's multi-channel and multi-tenant Cloud Contact Center provides network operators with an answer to their corporate customers' needs. This full-fledged contact center solution is highly scalable and expandable and designed to allow network operators the service out of their cloud environment. The solution delivers high value for small and medium-sized businesses and large enterprise organizations alike. Customer centric companies including retailers and service providers can leverage the Cloud Contact Center solution to present a consistent image of high performance and dependability to their customers. At the same time, the CreaLog solution streamlines customer communications by distributing calls dynamically between service agents, branch office staffers, and telecommuters at any number of different locations. It also supports separate skill groups and regional services plus automated call forwarding to all employees registered for any one skill group without additional charges. This not only ensures even workload distribution among staff members but also helps keep customers satisfied.

This system uses state-of-the-art speech recognition technology to route calls rapidly and smoothly to the right agent or specialist. Centralized control and end-to-end reporting capabilities help organizations manage the quality of their contact center services continuously.

The Cloud Contact Center Solution can either be implemented on dedicated client/server hardware deployed on the network operator's premises or it can be installed on the network operator's existing virtualization platforms. Whichever choice network operators opt for, they and therefore their customers will always have all of the Cloud Contact Center Solution functions available in their latest releases.

CreaLog has years of experience in implementing contact center solutions for network operators and their corporate customers to draw from. Our solutions are already used by organizations with more than 20,000 service agents.



Benefits for Network Operators

A typical contact procedure

Depending on its intended feature set, the Cloud Contact Center Solution can be integrated into any of a network operator's network types (IMS, NGN, TDM). If needed, the call distribution takes place based on the dialed number alone, which means that even regionally distributed employees may be directly reached. For corporate customers using the CreaLog IVR module, the front door system will engage the caller in an automated pre-qualification self-service dialog. This dialog may take place in one of a range of national languages, which is selected depending on either the called or the caller's number.

Optional uses for these automated pre-qualification dialogs include identification, legitimation checks and selective call forwarding. Depending on the qualification results, callers are rejected, entered into the appropriate call queue, directly routed to preselected agents, or forwarded to one of the contact center's skill groups. It's understood, that calls are only routed to staff members who are actually available at any given time.

Intelligent call queues

Network operators can configure welcome announcements and on-hold music individually per corporate subscriber. Announcement options also include expected hold times and queue positions. CreaLog's IVR module supports self-service call routing to individual agents, contact center teams for specific areas of expertise (skill groups), or to leave a voicemail. Callers have the option to voice their entries or to use their telephone's keypad.



Flexible routing includes mobile workers

Each caller and each request may be routed individually to a predefined staff member or dynamically to all employees logged on in the appropriate skill group. It makes no difference where the agents happen to be — in a contact center, at an office workplace at the company headquarters or away in a branch office. Including specialists and contact center agents in home offices agents is just as easy. Individual agents, specialists, or experts can even be reached on their mobile phones if the need arises, as long as they are logged on to the system.



The Cloud Contact Center Solution is also able to route callers to different skill groups or company locations depending on their country or area code or their pre-qualification results. The system allows configuring time dependent routing destinations for each staff member or for complete skill groups based on the pre-qualification results — for different week-days or time windows, for example.

Administrators have the option to define an automatic system logoff time for agents, to close down the contact center during the night, for instance. In cases where no agent is logged on callers are treated according to specific routing rules setup for the company, which may involve routing them to a different target.

The Cloud Contact Center Solution uses intelligent call queues featuring a whitelist (VIP list) and a blacklist. Callers entered in the whitelist are treated preferentially while undesirable (annoying) callers may find themselves on the blacklist to be excluded from further routing after being informed of the fact.

Callback management

But how to react if on-hold times start getting a little too long? Callback management is the preferred option.

After having waited for a predefined time in the call queue, instead of further staying on-hold, callers may be invited to leave a voicemail. The resulting voicemail is then sent off, along with the associated meta data (time of day of the call, caller's number, pre-qualification result, etc.) to a skill group e-mail inbox for further processing by the members and a swift callback for the calling customer.

Among other options, a call queue may as well allow callers to confirm their phone number for a callback without recording a voicemail. But all options have the same goal: to ensure, that no call is lost and the promise of a callback kept.

Multi-tenancy for network operators and subscribers

Our Cloud Contact Center solution is a multi-tenant system, so it serves multiple customers, each with separate, isolated data, user administrations, etc. The system allows defining a different, individual feature set for each corporate customer. Examples include pre-qualification principles, call queue configurations, speech-automated dialogs, skill group concepts, and time-based routing rules. This provides network operators with ideal conditions to charge for contact center feature sets in a flexible way for the most diverse requirements and company sizes.

The Cloud Contact Center offers multi-tenancy for the network operator's corporate customers as well. They can assign rights on multiple levels, examples being creating new agent accounts, allocating them to skill groups, or defining standard postprocessing times.



Customizable Cloud Contact Center clients on a Desktop Computer (left) and different Smartphones (center, right)

Ease of use for contact center agents

Logging on to the Cloud Contact Center Solution is easy for all contact center agents: All they need is a browser to enter their user name, password and their phone number — whether in the office, at a remote branch office workplace, in their home office or even using their smartphone or tablet on the road. As a second option, the executable CreaLog Agent Tool (available for MS Windows) provides another way to connect with the Cloud Contact Center Solution. The third and most simple option is the log on by telephone using a personal access code. In this way, even a person without access to a PC or mobile device can participate in customer communication using the Cloud Contact Center Solution.

When an agent logs on by browser, a window containing the Agent Menu will appear on the screen. This well-tried display shows the agent's name, organizational unit and telephone number, call duration, time elapsed since last status change, and the present availability status (present, break, etc.). Agents also view all relevant data concerning their team at a glance, including workload, callers on hold, and the total of logged on agents. Status colors and numbers help to visualize how many team members are e.g. ready, paused, conducting a call, in postprocessing.

Forwarding to second level support

The consultation button is used if the agent cannot handle a customer's concern in conclusion and decides to forward the call to a second level support expert. Activating this button places the caller on hold with music playing. A list of second level agent teams along with their skill profiles is displayed on the agent's screen for him or her to choose from. The Cloud Contact Center Solution can also be configured to select and contact individual experts.

Once a second level group, a particular specialist agent, or maybe a currently available expert has been chosen as the consulting contact, a query call is initiated first. If this is successful the agent can talk to both sides, toggling between them. While this is in progress the agent has the option to transfer the customer call to the consulting contact by simply clicking on "forwarding". Another option would be to transfer the call directly without first contacting the specialist or expert.

The agent can cancel the call transfer anytime if no suitable party is available and continue talking to the caller. Depending on the configuration, the agent may be released to accept new calls automatically after a successful call transfer. Otherwise, the agent may activate the postprocessing mode for a while, to make notes of the incident in the customer call log or in the customer database, for instance.

Call information

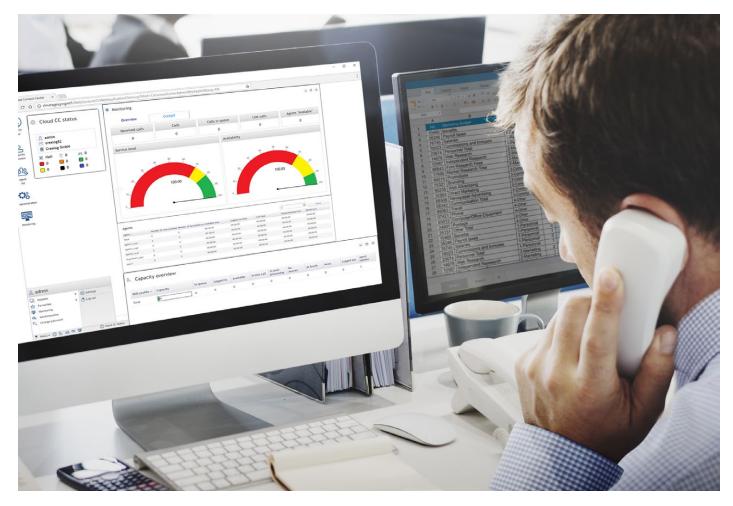
When a contact center agent receives an incoming call, a window showing related information will open up on their computer screen — or a smartphone screen if the agent is on the road. Network operators can choose to have this window display name and address details retrieved from the system's telephone directory along with the caller's number. The information window also indicates whether the caller has completed pre-qualification IVR procedures. Optionally, calls forwarded from other agents come with a message from this agent. Messages can also be sent to whole departments or skill groups within the organization.

The Cloud Contact Center Solution offers extensive real time monitoring capabilities to maximize resource utilization and to identify and mitigate overload situations at an early stage. The system's administrator view displays performance indicators and parameters for each call queue and agent. They are refreshed in configurable intervals and provide site administrators with a quick overall view of the contact center's availability and workload. Also, supervisors gain insight into performance characteristics of individual agents and agent groups. These include figures for average call handling time, accessibility, number of callers served, as well as average and maximum call queue lengths.

Blacklist and whitelist

Every staff member connected to the contact center can respond quickly to annoying callers: A mouse click will enter unwanted callers into a "blacklist" so subsequent calls from the same number will be excluded from further processing. Instead, the caller hears a rejection announcement. The system can be configured to remove blocked caller numbers from the blacklist automatically and so readmit them on a daily or weekly basis. Administrators have the additional option to block individual numbers permanently or to manage the blacklist completely by hand.

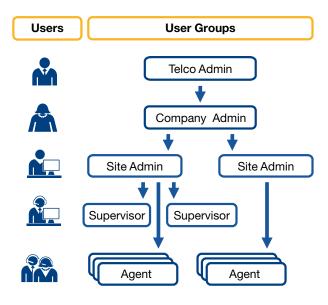
Alternatively, administrators add callers to a "whitelist". This allows to treat first-class customers (VIPs) favorably in subsequent calls, by placing them on top of the call queue or transferring them to their personal account manager immediately. Administrators have the option to load a list of numbers into the whitelist to award them with the VIP status.



Reports and statistics

Site and customer administrators as well as supervisors can prepare and retrieve a broad range of performance figures and reports related to their respective work areas, covering individual agents or skill groups. Hourly, daily, and monthly reports as well as agent and call queue statistics are available. Reports may also correlate quite diverse statistical data, such as:

- Number of incoming vs. accepted calls (per cent accessibility)
- Hold times
- Average, maximum, and total postprocessing time
- · Log on vs. availability times of agents and specialists
- Abort, hang-up, and on-hold call numbers
- Pause and availability times, and much more ...



Customizable menus

Both in design and content the agent view is customizable to specific requirements. Selected agents can be provided with additional supervisor windows displaying workload overview or a list of agents. The overview includes the skill profiles with their respective workloads and the agent list allocated to each of them. Grouping and filters are available for these agent lists.

Image to the right:

Information displayed on the contact center agents' main screen. Further options include the general capacity (workload) overview, an agent list for the group.

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Top image: report example

Rights management

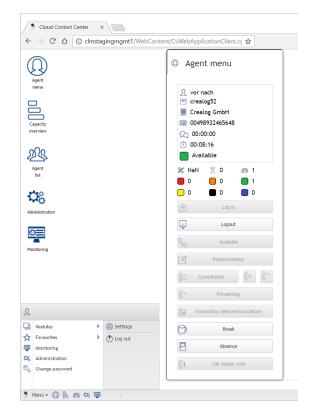
The CreaLog rights management system for the Cloud Contact Center is based on multiple user categories and levels. It comprises five levels:

The Network operator's administrators (Telco Admins) form the highest level with the most extensive rights and permissions within the system. Telco Admins are authorized to create the corporate customer company administrators accounts which subsequently manage the site administrators.

Site administrators are authorized to create and delete individual agent accounts within their business unit and assign supervisors.

Supervisors are only granted read-only access to the organization's agent configuration data.

Finally, agents are granted access to their own data only.



Administration function

The Cloud Contact Center solution provides administrators with a user-friendly telco user interface to set up and manage clients on the system.

Telco administrator

The telco administrator can enter all the clients' basic settings, relieving them from this task so they only need to set up their supervisor and agents. All functions are explained by help texts, effectively providing the telco administrator with a help tutorial.

The most important configuration options include:

- Add, edit, remove client
- Set up workflow dialog
- Define billing details

Basic client configuration

Custom announcements are configured either using preproduced voice files or by entering text in various languages and reproducing the announcement by speech synthesis. Also, default call destinations are defined for connecting calls should the call distribution system be unreachable. Finally, organizational units (divisions, branch offices, etc.) are defined, enabling agents/employees to be allocated and managed in an orderly fashion for enterprise clients. Basically, calls are connected to all agents of a skill group irrespective of their location in the organization.

Queues

The telco administrator defines queue types along with their properties for the client. Available queue types include:

- No queue
- Queue with hold music
- Queue with hold music and current queue position announcement
- Queue with hold music and expected hold time announcement
- Queue with hold music and periodical queue position announcement

The system offers the flexibility to define a maximum queue hold time followed by these subsequent actions:

- Record a voice message
- Leave a return call number
- Forward call to another skill group
- Forward call to a new destination
- Announcement followed by call termination

Skill groups

Skills are available tantamount to specific capabilities of service staff members, be they language proficiency, expert knowledge, or occupations such as accounting, service, or sales.

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Telco Administrator View

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A Customer Admin View

The telco administrator lays down basic skill group settings such as number of skill groups, their line numbers, queue size (maximum number of callers in queue). Subsequently, the client administrator sets up the required skills and allocates agents to each skill.

Additional parameters

- Email address for sending voice recordings to
- Welcome and emergency announcements to be played back on entering the queue
- Hold music
- Call transfer to other skill groups in high load conditions
- Maximum queue hold time
- Default call transfer destinations for cases of no agent logged on or all agents engaged
- Call information shown to agents on web screen

Optional configuring for Clients

Available options:

- Create test accounts
- Emergency announcement updates by clients
- Agent logon and logoff by telephone
- Caller Blacklist
- Call transfer functionality for agents
- Consulting options for agents
- Defining the maximum number of concurrently logged on agents
- Configuring the Cloud Contact Center as a fallback system for an existing other contact center

Customizing the system for clients

Your customers have specific needs? No problem for you, because the Cloud Contact Center offers many interfaces on different levels for customized configuration. Examples are:

- In the Management Suite: web-based administration
- On the application layer: workflows, reporting, charging
- On the access layer: signaling and media server integration

More than just routing

A modular, expandable system

The Cloud Contact Center Solution is expandable on a per- customer basis, and this applies to both its capacity and its range of services. Network operators can let their corporate customers start with a Cloud Contact Center Solution offering telephone services and featuring an IVR platform for front door applications and customer self-service. Expansions can be added later as the need arises.

Intelligent self-service voice portal option

CreaLog has been implementing intelligent self-service voice portals for more than 20 years. One of their main tasks is to pre-qualify callers reliably by requesting customer numbers, passwords, PINs, and asking for the reason of calling. This, in turn, can serve to forward calls automatically to particular skill groups within the contact center or to personally appointed specialists. CreaLog employs a voice response system that allows callers to voice their concerns using normal spoken language to interact.

Our voice portals are multilingual by design. They recognize more than 85 different languages and national dialects, depending on their functional configuration. The CreaLog voice portal works speaker independent: Spoken words and sentences are recognized irrespective of the particular caller male or female, young or old, or even speaking with a pronounced accent.

In addition to prompts recorded in a studio, the voice portal also supports speech synthesis (Text-to-Speech) to communicate with callers. It reads out any text retrieved from databases or web services that callers may request. The IVR Textto-Speech feature supports more than 50 different voices speaking over 40 languages and dialects.

The fully or partially automated self-service capabilities help corporate customers greatly reduce labor and related costs in their contact centers. They also enable to implement a broad range of 24/7 customer services rapidly. Calling in for information such as opening times, order status or a bank balance are a common examples.

The Voice Self-Service Suite

Indispensable for a high First Call Resolution Rate, Interactive Voice Response is an optional component for the Cloud Contact Center Solution. The Voice Self-Service Suite can be integrated with a cloud solution just as well as with a more traditional stand-alone communication system. For the Voice Self-Service Suite, CreaLog offers comprehensive training for creating custom voice self-services. The knowledge transfer ranges from defining dictionaries and grammars through to designing a voice user interface (VUI). In addition, network operators may consult CreaLog for general issues concerning dialog and grammar design and for practical advice on selecting suitable speaker personalities for announcements.

IVR solution scenario example

The IVR integration with the cloud contact center offers an abundance of applications, as seen in the following examples:

Incoming callers are greeted in their local language or even dialect based on their area or country code or alternatively their complete dial number.

Callers are then asked for their customer numbers and possibly for their password or PIN. They can enter this information by voice or type it in. The system also accepts a mixture of both.

After authorizing themselves, callers can voice their concerns in natural language and are routed appropriately, which means their call is switched to the desired information announcement service, entered into a call queue for a skill group, or forwarded to a personally appointed specialist.

Easy dialog configuration

Configuring interactive voice dialogs and contact procedures is easy with CreaLog's IVR. It offers a powerful development tool featuring an intuitive graphical user interface. This tool helps network operators expert teams to quickly develop or modify a broad range of dialogs and contact sequences for their corporate customers.

The system offers many easy configuration options. These include front door qualifications, skill routing profiles, legitimation checks, call queue announcements, intelligent call queues, callback mailboxes, and more. To help developers get started, CreaLog supplies a comprehensive library of contact workflow templates for a range of standard scenarios. Developers can customize them to specific requirements and then store them as new workflow procedures.



WebRTC integration

The system is expandable to accept and distribute calls arriving via direct browser-to-browser communication based on the WebRTC specification (Web real time communication) specification. This opens up new perspectives in the customer relations field: While visiting a company's Web site customers can connect to a company representative via voice or video with a single mouse click or finger tap.



Integration with Skype for Business

The Cloud Contact Center Solution supports Skype for Business. Corporate customers using this technology for internal communication purposes can connect the two systems with a special expansion module. The Cloud Contact Center software features an interface to synchronize presence status information supplied by Skype for Business. The status of agents in Skype for Business along with changes effected by logging on or off are automatically mirrored in the CreaLog Contact Center's agent menu.

Call Recording (MiFID II compliant)

The recording option automatically records customer calls – for quality assurance purposes or for a range of specific customer services, like reliable documentation of order procedures and consulting services, especially in the finance industry.

Recording takes place either without playing an announcement or with an announcement, indicating that the current call will be recorded and thus obtaining the caller's consent.

The system also allows for routine or random call recording — which may be used for customer satisfaction analyses or for training purposes.

Data privacy is important and observed: The recording module features encrypted archiving and decryption that can be networked with the Cloud Contact Center Solution, meeting MiFID II standards.

Speech Analytics and the CreaLog Transcription Engine

State-of-the-art speech analytics is another high quality enhancement option for the Cloud Contact Center Solution, complementing the system's voice recording option. It allows key words mentioned in the course of a call to be stored. These words can then be used to retrieve suitable clippings of the conversation for purposes such as contact center staff training.

The CreaLog Transcription Engine uses enhanced technology to convert complete calls into text (speech-to-text) into written text in real time. These are genuine voice communication transcripts that can be made from any telephone call in the contact center. The resulting text can be analyzed for specific terms, key words or phrases to gain new insights useful for improving complaint management and quality assurance.

CreaLog's multi-channel strategy

Increasingly, customer contacts tend to occur via non-voice media such as e-mail, internet chat, texting of various kinds, and social media platforms. The Cloud Contact Center Solution is open to all such communication channels. As an example, the customer may make his or her first contact using SMS or e-mail. After that, the communication is intensified in a browser-based chat. If the chat proves too time consuming for discussing the issue on hand, the agent may then call his or her customer via telephone or Skype.

CreaLog has developed the Cloud Contact Center as a powerful, true multichannel contact platform while keeping direct contact with network operators. We are dedicated to continue adding features capable of creating new revenue opportunities.

Features Overview

Major Cloud Contact Center features at a glance:

Carrier grade

The solution is based on a redundant carrier grade platform and can be integrated into TDM, VoLTE, IMS, and NGN networks. The software also features open interfaces to OSS/ BSS and other systems in the carrier environment.

Multichannel contact center

The Cloud Contact Center supports a comprehensive range of media including telephone, video, WebRTC, chat, social media, e-mail, fax, and SMS.

Service creation environment

CDG allows for customizing and modifying the standard solution.

Rights management system

A comprehensive access rights and role concept allows even highly structured enterprise organizations to configure functions and views according to their contact strategies.

User groups

User groups such as administrators, supervisors, or agents can be freely defined.

Workflow engine

Based on rules, all contacts are allotted to all of the organization's resources in the best possible way depending on agents' or employees' skills, priorities, or other parameters.

Free seating

Agents can be allocated to fixed or variable telephone extensions.

Multiple views

Multiple views are available for all browsers, including administration, agent list, monitoring, workload overview, status, agent's menu.

Administration

Using the system's Web user interface, client administrators have access to relevant information such as workload overview, agent list, and status. They can create new agents, allocate resources to skill profiles, etc.

Agent menu

Agents are free to configure settings using their own separate menu.

Call reason coding

Agents can code calls according to a predetermined category selection (reason for calling, issue), enabling call analysis.

Mobile logon to the CCC

Agent login, logout, etc. available for Android and iOS operating systems.

Agent tool

Compact Windows control program to be used when the agent is working with other applications.

Call information windows

Pop-up-windows shows caller (e. g., calling number, customer number) and call origin (e. g., access number, skill group name).

Group information

Information sent by administrators/supervisors to all of their agents/group members.

Call transfer

Accepted calls can be transferred internally and externally along with explanatory information.

Caller blacklist

Blocking of annoying calling numbers/callers.

WebRTC support

Agents can use audio or video to communicate with callers.

Queue handling

Handling a broad range of features including standard announcements, queue position, and expected hold time.

Custom queues

Hold music and announcements per skill group, voice message recording, leave a return call number, etc.

Microsoft Skype for Business synchronisation

Presence status synchronisation between Skype for Business and the Cloud Contact Center solution.

Monitoring

Constantly updated key values are shown as real time representation of main performance indicators.

Reporting

Reports covering longer time periods show all characteristics related to the Contact Center. These reports are delivered to clients automatically.

Enhancements

Additional services can be implemented using supplementary modules:

- IVR (Interactive Voice Response)
- IN/SCP service number routing
- Voice recording and speech analytics
- Telephone surveys
- Dialers
- Voicemail
- Fax





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