

Recombinant Communications: Extending Services to “Anywhere Customers”

A fundamental shift is taking place as customers assume control of the time, place and context for their interactions with selected vendors. In this report, sponsored by SpeechCycle, Opus Research describes the current sea change in customer care dynamics, providing a case study and description of the technical architecture and systematic approach that’s needed to support multi-channel, multi-modal customer care.

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Key Findings:

This report is a companion piece to the Opus Research webcast, "Recombinant Communications: Extending Care to Anywhere Customers," held on June 1, 2010. (www.opusresearch.net/wordpress/webcasts/) The webcast detailed several new trends in multichannel customer care and described a solution for extending customer care capabilities across space, time and a multiplicity of devices. Among the major findings are:

- **We're witnessing a shift from "push" to "pull"** – In the past, marketing and sales top-down "push" efforts used mass media campaigns to drive inbound traffic into call centers.
- **Today, people turn to multiple sources to support shopping and customer care** – Relationships with vendors can start with a Web search, email or even a Tweet and culminate in a text message or outbound voice message announcing closure.
- **Yet the phone continues to play an important role** – Respondents tell us that the phone continues to play a role in their dialogs with vendors in close to two-thirds all instances.
- **Those phones are morphing to "smartphones"** – Established trends show that smartphones will account for more than half of all mobile phones in the next three years.
- **The result is new pathways into and across enterprises** – "Collaboration Centers" are replacing locked-down call centers with knowledge being shared among customers, agents and other employees through computer terminals, smartphones and interactive voice response systems (IVRs).
- **...and new forms of dialog** – Enlightened enterprises are incorporating artificial intelligence, natural language understanding, predictive texting and the like to become more responsive to customer needs and to provide a better user experience.
- **Customers are taking control** – Just as iPhone owners select, assemble and prioritize their apps when they organize them "on the glass" of their mobile phones, customers can now turn a variety of devices – desktops, laptops and mobile phones – into personal portals.
- **...and enterprises are extending their infrastructure** – We're providing an illustration of how the tenets of Recombinant Communications and Rich Phone Apps (RPAs) can be deployed to better serve and retain customers (examples courtesy of SpeechCycle).

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