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New Alcatel software extends multi-media customer interaction and e-business capabilities to contact centers

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Chicago - Aug. 1, 2000 — Alcatel today announced the OmniTouch Contact Center, a suite of software application modules designed for the OmniPCX 4400 IP-based PBX that provides enterprises with a complete solution for managing voice and data customer interactions. Based on an open architecture with built-in CTI technology, the OmniTouch Contact Center suite dramatically increases customer relationship management (CRM) capabilities using multi-media communication channels and third party applications.

The OmniTouch suite can scale from 10 to more than 1,000 agents and is easily expanded as businesses grow. Basic services include complete automatic call distributor (ACD) and interactive voice response (IVR) applications, while more advanced features include options for handling telephone, fax, and email inquiries as well as real-time Web chat and Web-based VoIP calls. Integrated capabilities for intelligent multi-media routing ensure that customer interactions are distributed to the appropriate agent based on predefined business parameters regardless of the communication medium selected.

A key differentiator of the OmniTouch Contact Center suite is the Navigator. Navigator is a powerful, patented, graphical agent management system that makes managing distributed and Web-integrated call centers possible. Navigator is a major advancement in supervisor management because it gives supervisors instant access to statistics on the flow of contacts and can easily change customer calling and queuing parameters to speed service. It allows point-and-click control of multi-media pilots, queues, and agent groups.

« The convergence of voice and data is providing companies with new opportunities for increasing sales and managing customer relationships, » said Judy King, Alcatel's manager of call center applications. « In conjunction with the OmniPCX 4400, the OmniTouch Contact Center suite provides businesses with all the tools they need to leverage converged technologies in order to completely manage customer interactions and win in the e-business economy. »

The OmniPCX 4400 is the world's most advanced IP-based enterprise voice system. Unique features of the Alcatel OmniPCX 4400 include scalability from 50 to 50,000 users, innovative Reflexes™ telephone handsets, 99.999% reliability, one-number mobility, unified messaging, voice-over-IP networking with quality of service management, and integrated voice and data network management. These features all work together to reduce the cost of ownership of enterprise communication networks.

Graphical Management

Navigator's patented main display features a matrix that a supervisor can use to assign multi-media contacts to queues and manage and monitor distribution of the contacts to the appropriate agent groups. Easy-to-read icons present the flow of contacts, the number of contacts in queue, and agent contact handling statistics. Navigator replaces complicated text-based scripting management systems that require extensive, ongoing training and take time away from implementing call center programs.

Web Call Centers

Navigator also is a key element of the OmniTouch Contact Center's ability to manage Web-based customer contact methods, including calls, emails, text chat, and voice over IP inquiries. These functions give the OmniTouch Contact Center an edge with fast-changing organizations that need to integrate the Web with a call center. For e-commerce or Web-based customer service, OmniTouch Contact Center can put customers into true multimedia contact centers providing better service and resulting in increased sales. OmniTouch

brings its call routing capabilities to e-commerce allowing Web customers the same opportunities for agent contact handling as telephony customers.

Multiple Location Support

The OmniTouch Contact Center also features networking capabilities that enable a contact center to be distributed over multiple locations. Multi-media contacts can inter-work amongst various locations, allowing multiple locations to back up others or for two or more locations to be combined into a « virtual call center. » With Navigator, all sites can be managed centrally for real-time management of agents and queues from a single supervisor screen.

Third Party Applications

The OmniTouch Contact Center features ease of implementation with a plug and play CTI Link, support of Ethernet protocols, CTI readiness and seamless integration with existing information systems. Alcatel partnerships with third party application vendors provide additional building blocks to complement existing products and features.

Pricing and Availability

The OmniTouch software family will be available for beta tests in September and generally available in 4Q 2000. Pricing varies depending upon features and functionality needed, but can range from \$30,000 for a small ACD application to several hundred thousand dollars for a large multi-media contact center.

About Alcatel

Alcatel builds next generation networks, delivering integrated end-to-end voice and data networking solutions to established and new carriers, as well as enterprises and consumers worldwide. With 120,000 employees and sales of EURO 23 billion in 1999, Alcatel operates in more than 130 countries.

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