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BYE-BYE CONTACT CENTRE – HELLO CUSTOMER MANAGEMENT CENTRE

Increase in number of upgrades being planned across contact centres

Johannesburg, South Africa – 22 June 2011 - Traditional contact centres are set to be replaced by customer management centres as more organisations focus on expanding contact services beyond telephony and email offerings. According to research results published in Dimension Data's *2011 Global Contact Centre Benchmarking Report* released today, of the 546 contact centres surveyed in 66 countries, 64% are already handling Internet, with 40% managing SMS interactions and a quarter offering web chat - all via the contact centre.

This year's Report also reveals that social media interactions are high on the agenda of contact centre businesses. Just over 18% of research participants reporting they're already managing these interactions, with 32% say they're planning to do so over the next two years. And with products becoming more commoditised, service is increasingly being used as a differentiator as organisations recognise the contact centre as the heart of the business.

"The evolution of the contact centre to a full service customer management centre confirms that organisations view contact centres as profit generators. Where contact centres were traditionally regarded as cost centres, almost half (47.9%) of respondents said they regard them as *profit centres - 18.4% of them based upon sales revenue generated (up from 8.6% in the 2009 Report)," says Andrew McNair, Dimension Data's Head of Global Benchmarking.

The research results also shows that this year's top priority commercial driver for contact centres is improving service. "But," warns McNair, "Navigating this evolution will require a strong focus on process automation. Smart devices are dramatically changing the communication landscape and enabling increased numbers of customers to help themselves and decide how, when and where they engage. Organisations will need to embrace smart applications in order to make popular transactions even easier

for their customers. That's because self-service is fast becoming the accepted standard to provide customers with more choices to engage with the organisation."

Meanwhile, the top priority issue affecting contact centres across the globe is the drive to encourage customers to use these broader self-service channels. "We see a new focus on customer lifetime value (CLTV) management with a high number of respondents ranking it as the number one issue. This, in conjunction with improvements in customer satisfaction set to replace cost reduction as the prime self-service driver, underscores a renewed business focus on overall profitability," he explains.

In line with this trend, there's a significant increase in the number of infrastructure upgrades being planned across contact centres as technologies become more affordable and advances in communications technologies continue to drive flexible change.

"Businesses are pro-actively responding to customer demand while recognising improved service as the top commercial driver. In turn, they're using customer management centres as the vehicle to generate better service and revenue opportunities."

-ENDS-

** North America leading the charge to profit centre at 56.7% with travel and transportation being the highest industry at 66.7%*

About Dimension Data

Founded in 1983, Dimension Data plc is an ICT services and solutions provider that uses its technology expertise, global service delivery capability, and entrepreneurial spirit to accelerate the business ambitions of its clients. Dimension Data is a member of the NTT Group. www.dimensiondata.com

About the Global Contact Centre Benchmarking Report

First published in the UK in 1997 by Merchants, Dimension Data's specialist contact centre outsourcing and operations division, this year's edition is the twelfth in a series of the industry-renowned benchmarking reports. This year's Report has drawn the widest level of participation over 12 years, contains balanced global and industry representation from 546 contact centres located across 66 countries on five continents, and is an invaluable reference for all contact centre professionals. It provides managers with a set of best practice standards and benchmarks, including staffing and training, performance metrics, technology usage, budgets and development plans. The Report is researched and published by Dimension Data and includes a benchmarking portal for use by participants and partners. For more information about the Report, please go to www.dimensiondata.com/microsites/cbenchmarking