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CLOUD SERVICES IN CONTACT CENTRES SET TO GROW

IP in the contact centre is pivotal to enabling access to emerging cloud-based solutions

Johannesburg, South Africa – 11 June 2011 - Contact centres are taking the lead when it comes to driving technology change in the wider organisation, with an unusually high number of upgrades being planned for infrastructure platforms and continued growth in the use of transformation enabling IP. In addition, IP is providing more opportunities to consolidate and simplify technology across the enterprise to address advances in communications technologies.

According to research results in the 2011 Contact Centre Benchmarking Report released today by Dimension Data, the global specialist IT services and solutions provider, of the 546 contact centres surveyed in 62 countries across Asia, Australia, Europe, the US and Middle East & Africa, IP telephony is now deployed in nearly 50% of contact centres. This, together with just on 14% of participants polled planning to introduce it suggests the use of IP is now the default choice as advanced IP-based technologies continue to provide enhanced integration and operational flexibility.

The convergence of voice, data and video is the top ranking technology trend on the agendas of most contact centres which is predicted to drive a move towards simpler contact centre environments through increased access to cloud-based services. Service availability and consolidation of technologies are ranked second and third respectively. The 2011 Report also reveals that 70% of contact centres are focused on demonstrating the return on investment for any new upgrades or new technologies.

“The introduction of IP into the contact centre is pivotal to enabling access to emerging cloud-based solutions and gives cloud providers the ability to provision contact centre infrastructures that are reliable, flexible and cost effective,” says Andrew McNair, Dimension Data’s Head of Global Benchmarking.

“Contact centres across all countries realise the business and functional benefits of introducing IP into the contact centre. Our research tells us that cost savings and flexible architecture are the top two reasons (70%) for adopting IP in the contact centre. In addition, compared to our 2009 Report research, there’s an almost 30% increase in the number of respondents already adopting IP in order to fulfill specific business requirements.”

Cloud-based services is the fastest growing technology trend in all contact centres - rated the sixth most important overall trend. The announcement by Apple earlier this month of its breakthrough set of free new cloud services that work seamlessly with applications on smart devices or PCs to automatically and wirelessly store content will undoubtedly help establish cloud even further, and increase the demand to new levels.

“With 77% of those respondents surveyed reporting that contact centre architecture is being managed as part of their wider enterprise strategy, this demonstrates the clearest evidence yet of the interest at enterprise level on the role that contact centres will play to drive company-wide benefits and revenues.

“Today, organisations have more options available to make the business case for change. Rather than high capex spend, they’re looking to Software-as-a-Service and hosted cloud. This means they’re able to upgrade existing technologies and enable revenue,” explains McNair and adds that contact centres have historically taken a conservative technology approach.

“Now, they have easy, pay-as-you-use access to a range of new technology options via multi-sourcing technologies such as hosted cloud and SaaS. And because technology is more affordable, organisations that choose to ignore these opportunities face the risk of unsustainable costs, deteriorating service, and ultimately losing customers to the competition.”

-ENDS-

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 eleventh 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 62 countries and 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.