

Mobile Service Operator Provides Voice Self-Service

IDEA Cellular Ltd. shifted two million daily calls from live agents to a self-service voice portal.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
IDEA CELLULAR LTD. • Service Provider • Mumbai, India • 6500 employees
CHALLENGE • Differentiate service to gain a competitive advantage • Reduce customer care costs • Scale customer care operation for planned 100 percent growth
SOLUTION • Deployed Cisco Unified Customer Voice Portal • Engaged Cisco Advanced Services to integrate customer relationship management database • Engaged IBM for ongoing management
RESULTS • Shifted two million daily calls from human agents to self-service portal • Reduced average hold time from 64 to 58 seconds • Increased customer satisfaction from 3.75 to 4.2 on 5-point scale

Challenge

With more than 47 million customers, IDEA Cellular Ltd. is one of India's leading mobile service providers. It currently operates in 17 of India's 23 regions and has acquired the licenses and spectrum to expand into the other regions. Part of the India's multinational Aditya Birla Group, IDEA Cellular is known for its innovations, such as **My Gang Card**, **Youth Card**, etc.

The sheer size of IDEA Cellular's customer base made it a daunting challenge to provide customer care. The Cisco® Unified IP Interactive Voice Response (IVR) handles 4.5 million calls daily, and it caters to all geographical locations of India where IDEA Cellular services its customers. The challenge will increase when the customer base grows to an expected 60 million subscribers by the end of 2009, and 100 million by 2012.

An influx of new rural users, who tend to use fewer minutes, has decreased average revenue per user (ARPU). "To remain profitable, we needed to continue to provide responsive service to all of our market segments while reducing costs for lower-value segments, such as customers with prepaid plans," says Prakash Paranjape, chief

information officer, IDEA Cellular.

Solution

IDEA Cellular now offers a voice self-service option for people who call the contact center, using Cisco Unified Customer Voice Portal (CVP). The centralized solution serves all of IDEA Cellular's eight regional contact centers. "We chose the Cisco solution because of Cisco's strong IP background and its experience delivering other types of telco-grade solutions," Paranjape says. Another advantage of Cisco Unified CVP for IDEA Cellular is its support for the open VoiceXML standard, which enables the company to develop new self-service applications and easily integrate them with other applications and services.

Handling more than two million calls daily with 14,000 ports, IDEA Cellular's Cisco Unified CVP is one of the world's largest deployments. Callers can either touch telephone keys or speak commands to request self-service information, such as minutes remaining on a prepaid plans or charges for recent calls. Cisco Unified CVP retrieves the requested information from the customer relationship management (CRM) database and uses text-to-speech translation to speak it to the customer. When customers indicate that they want to talk to a live agent, Cisco Unified CVP places the call in queue until an agent in any contact center location is available. Then it transfers the information that the customer already provided along with the call, saving time for agent and customer alike.

Cisco Advanced Services designed the solution, integrated Cisco Unified CVP with the company's CRM database, and tuned it to recognize the wide variety of languages and dialects spoken in India. "Cisco Advanced Services made a significant contribution because the technology was new to us, and they already had the expertise," says Paranjape. "If we did it again, we would engage them earlier."

"Saving six seconds a call for 4.5 million daily calls translates into US\$1 million saved."

—Prakash Paranjape, Chief Information Officer, IDEA Cellular

Results

Cisco Unified CVP is helping IDEA Cellular provide cost-effective customer care as its subscriber base grows.

Lower Average Hold Time

Approximately 40 percent of callers, or more than two million daily, choose the self-service option. Freeing up agents has decreased average hold time from 64 to 58 seconds. "Saving six seconds a call for 4.5 million daily calls translates to US\$1 million saved," says Paranjape. Agents now have more time to spend on non-routine issues and interactions with high-value customers.

Increased Customer Satisfaction

During the first nine months that IDEA Cellular used Cisco Unified CVP, the customer satisfaction rating for self-service increased from 3.75 to 4.2 on a 5-point scale.

Self-Service Provisioning

Callers can use Cisco Unified CVP to provision new services, such as requesting for Ring Back tone, without having to wait for a human operator. After hanging up, callers receive a Simple Message Service (SMS) notification confirming that the service has been activated.

Lower Bandwidth Costs

When a customer asks to speak to a live agent, Cisco Unified CVP treats the call at the edge of the network until an agent is available, and then sends it over the IP network. "Keeping the voice at the edge has helped IDEA Cellular save bandwidth costs by 18 to 20 percent," says Paranjape.

"Our experience with Cisco has been great," says Paranjape. "The self-service platform is a true collaborative effort between IDEA Cellular, Cisco Advanced Services, and IBM."

Next Steps

IDEA Cellular plans to use Cisco Unified CVP to interact with customers using video, further differentiating its service. Customers who call the contact center with their mobile phones will be presented with video menus, for faster and more intuitive menu selection. The company will play 10-second videos about value-added services while customers wait for an agent. Customers who are interested in the service will be able to interact with contact center agents using video.

"Cisco is a trusted advisor," says Paranjape. "We look forward to a long-term relationship."

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Unified Customer Voice Portal, visit: www.cisco.com/go/cvp.

To share best practices and unfiltered perspectives, engage with customers and other experts on the Collaboration Community from Cisco at www.cisco.com/go/joinconversation.

PRODUCT LIST

Network Systems

- Cisco Catalyst® 6500 and 4500 Series Switches
- Cisco 7200 Series Routers
- Cisco Firewall Services Module

Collaboration, Voice, and Video

- Cisco Unified Customer Voice Portal
- Cisco Unified IP IVR
- Cisco PGW 2200 Softswitch
- Cisco AS5300 and 5400 Series Universal Gateways

Security

- Cisco Adaptive Security Appliance 5500 Series Firewall Edition



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