

Intel Improves Customer Self-Help with Significant Annual Productivity Savings Through a Customer Interaction Network

Executive Summary

CUSTOMER NAME

Intel

INDUSTRY

High-Tech Manufacturing

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

- Increase customer satisfaction and number of support issues resolved by customer self-help
- Double technical support productivity without doubling overhead
- Improve communication between customers and Intel channel support

SOLUTIONS

- CIN allows Intel to provide global, scalable support for emerging markets without adding significant headcount.
- CIN enables virtual contact centers that can deliver immediate live support 24/7 globally.

BUSINESS RESULTS

- Intel anticipates channel customers to resolve 50 percent of support issues online.
- Channel support expects to save 20–25 percent annually in cost avoidance through CIN.
- Web-phone integration improves customer satisfaction and allows technical support staff to interact easily with customers to enable cross-selling and up-selling.

The Cisco Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG) helps Intel Channel Support implement a Customer Interaction Network (CIN) solution that provides next-generation interactions between customers and Intel technical support, including contact-center virtualization, support in native languages, and Web-phone integration.

BUSINESS CHALLENGES

Improve Global Support Without Increasing Headcount

The principle of exponential growth that lies behind Intel cofounder Gordon Moore's Law—the number of transistors on a chip doubles about every two years—also applies to Intel's expansion into emerging markets. As the world's largest chip maker increases sales in countries from Turkey to Thailand, its need for sales support increases at an even greater rate. "Our indirect customer base, which comprises hundreds of thousands of small and medium-sized companies and distributors, represents nearly 40 percent of Intel revenue," explains JT Thomas, worldwide director, Intel Customer Support. "We are currently in 120 countries, which presents a number of challenges on the technical-support front."

50 Percent of Customers Leave Website and Call Technician

Indirect customers in Southeast Asia, Eastern Europe, and other emerging markets are typically small operations, making it cost prohibitive to open brick-and-mortar support centers. Intel's first line of support is its Website. But customers sometimes have trouble finding a definitive answer to their issue or an explanation in their native



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language. Fifty percent of the time, frustrated customers abandon the Website and call an Intel support representative. “This has its own set of problems,” says Thomas. “If a Ukrainian caller is routed to a representative who speaks only English, the call could end right there. If language is not an issue, the representative might try to guide customers through the Website so they can do it themselves next time. But this can be complex and time-consuming over the phone.”

If the representative cannot help the customer and escalates the call, the second-tier support person must type in the same information the first-tier person gathered because they are not on the same system. “We needed to streamline our operations,” continues Thomas, “to decrease the number of calls, increase customer satisfaction, and make our support staff more productive without significantly increasing headcount. It was a tall order. When I mentioned my challenge to a colleague, he recommended that I talk to IBSG.”

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Dan Russell, vice president, Intel Sales and Marketing Group

SOLUTIONS

CIN Is Strategic Solution for Worldwide Support

The IBSG team spent several weeks analyzing Intel’s support Website and call centers. They even created a mock PC problem and ran it through Intel technical support to discover the bottlenecks in the system. “The IBSG consultants were very professional, thorough, and experienced,” says Dan Russell, vice president, Intel Sales and Marketing Group. “They immediately grasped what we wanted to achieve. Besides the specific solutions they recommended, I feel IBSG’s biggest impact was strategic: they made us look at the issue from our customers’ point of view. It’s very easy to get caught up in the tactical aspects of a problem. IBSG raised our vision and forced us to consider the big picture, the end-to-end process. This allowed us to cut through the clutter of organizational red tape and work as a team to put a solution in place quickly.”

To improve customer self-help and enrich the online experience, IBSG helped Intel develop a strategy and roadmap for their Customer Interaction Network (CIN). The new network includes simplified Website navigation, improved content quality, and increased ease for technical support staff to escalate help tickets. A key part of the solution is the Cisco IP Contact Center (IPCC)—a virtual contact center that enables global call routing. With IPCC, the CIN vision is that a customer in Vietnam, for example, can quickly be routed seamlessly to a Vietnamese-speaking support representative in Vietnam or to the next available English-speaking agent worldwide, based on customer language preference and agent availability.

IPCC also facilitates Web-phone interaction. For example, a user could click a button on a Web page and, via voice over IP (VoIP), be connected by phone to a support representative who would know exactly which page the person is browsing. The agent could then co-browse with

the customer to help the person resolve the problem and “teach” the customer how to fix issues in the future. CIN is a leading example of the new “interactions Web” movement, where integrated and coordinated multichannel interactions improve the customer experience, drive operational efficiency, and increase customer intimacy.

90 Percent Self-Help Is Achievable Goal

“Our CIN will be much more intuitive and customer friendly than our current solution,” notes Thomas. “We now have three support Websites, which we are going to consolidate into a single portal. That will speed interactions between our customers and technicians, and between technicians when they work together to solve a customer’s problem. Our goal is to have 90 percent of issues solved by the customers themselves when they contact us via the Web—and to ensure that over 50 percent of customers contact us via the Web. We feel we can achieve that with CIN, plus provide global, scalable support for our move into emerging markets. The IBSG solution will allow our support staff to take fewer calls and spend less time on them, dramatically improving their productivity.”

“WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT THE FUTURE WITH CIN. IT IS BECOMING A BIG PART OF OUR FUTURE PLANNING BECAUSE THE POSSIBILITIES ARE ENDLESS.”

JT Thomas, worldwide director, Intel Channel Support

BUSINESS RESULTS

Intel Channel Support Expects to Save 20–25 Percent Annually in Cost-Avoidance

Thomas’ group includes a technical support staff of 500. He estimated that the self-help and reduced call volume through CIN will save 20–25 percent annually in cost-avoidance for Intel Channel Support. A single support call costs about US\$25, but it costs only 20 cents when a customer solves his own problem online. So the savings per call are enormous. Further, without CIN, he conservatively estimates that he would have to hire 20–25 percent more people to handle the increase in help tickets created by Intel’s expansion and growth plans.

CIN Generates Cross-Selling, Increases Customer Satisfaction

Besides saving money, Intel’s CIN can generate revenue through cross-selling and up-selling. When customers use the new, single-portal Website, CIN will capture their browsing preferences, orders, issue resolutions, and other information. By analyzing this historical data and customers’ current browsing patterns, CIN can suggest recommendations for new products or new versions of the customers’ existing hardware or software.

The recommendations will appear in pop-up windows or can be called up by an Intel support person when answering a live support call. “The potential for increasing sales is real and substantial,” says Thomas. “I also expect to improve our overall support rating by 10 points, which is a huge leap forward. In addition, CIN will make it very easy for our telesales people to interact with customers. For example, if customers want to find out more about a solution they see online, they can click a button that immediately takes them to a salesperson. If customers ask a technical question that the salesperson can’t answer, a technician can be conferenced into the call to help close the sale. The IBSG solution directly affects the bottom line by increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty, which means repeat business and revenue.”

NEXT STEP

Roll Out Across Intel

“CIN has spawned a big push within Intel to expand the solution to our employee contact centers and other internal and external contact centers,” continues Thomas. “We envision a single portal for all of our needs, not just support, which will enrich the online experience of each user and lower our overhead costs across the board. The indirect customer support implementation is now considered a pilot program. We are excited about the future with CIN. It is becoming an integral part of our future planning because the possibilities are endless.”

MORE INFORMATION

The Cisco Internet Business Solutions Group (IBSG) is a global consulting team that helps customers transform their organizations by strategically applying advanced technologies and business process innovation. A unique combination of industry experience and business and technical knowledge enables IBSG consultants to serve as trusted advisors to many of the world's top organizations.

For further information about IBSG, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/ibsg>



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