



Value Index

Customer Experience Management: Agent Desktop 2011

Executive Summary

Aligning Business and IT To Improve Performance

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Ventana Research performed this research and analysis independently. Our goals were to determine the Value Index for the Customer Experience Management Agent Desktop and to evaluate vendors and products in accordance with the Ventana Research Customer Experience Management blueprint and specific operational and performance activities and processes. We charged no fees for this research and invited to participate all vendors that are delivering applications to enable the customer experience management agent desktop. This report includes vendors and products generally available as of December 31, 2010.

Our purpose in conducting this research was to evaluate the maturity of agent desktop software vendors and products and their appropriateness for the methodology and process of Customer Experience Management. This research and report are not intended to imply that one vendor or product is the right choice for any particular organization. Rather, they provide a baseline of knowledge that organizations can use to evaluate vendors and products to manage and improve the customer experience by aligning business and IT. Unlike IT analyst firm reports that use subjective influences to score vendors, our research is based on thorough analysis of the customer assurance and product categories that best represent how an organization should evaluate its technology supplier.

This material is copyrighted. Reproduction or distribution of this research in any form without prior written permission is forbidden. The research is based on information obtained from sources believed to be reliable, which can include communications from the technology supplier and information made available publicly on the Internet. Ventana Research is not liable for any inaccuracies in the information supplied.

We certify that Ventana Research performed the research to the best of our ability; that the analysis is a faithful representation of our knowledge of vendors and products; and that the analysis and scoring are our own.

A stylized, handwritten-style signature of 'Ventana Research' in black ink.

Customer Experience Management: Agent Desktop

Managing the customer experience has become a critical activity for companies that want not only to retain their existing customers but also to increase satisfaction levels and win additional business. Ventana Research defines customer experience management (CEM) as the practice of managing the effectiveness of all customer-related activities, including all interactions with each customer. Our benchmark research shows that the two main channels of interaction with customers remain telephone calls to a contact center and visits to the company's website. CEM therefore includes all the activities and processes required to handle these two types of interactions in the most efficient and effective manner, but it is not limited to them. In fact, our research also reveals that customers increasingly communicate with companies through other channels as well, the newest being social media. Ventana Research believes that an investment in CEM, wisely done, is a strategic step toward improving an organization's performance and thus its competitiveness.

We used our research on CEM to help validate the prioritizations in and focus of this Value Index assessment. This approach of using benchmark research to guide the assessment of vendors and their products for use in deployment decisions in areas such as CEM is unique, blending our firm's experience, research and comprehensive vendor and product framework to produce the only reliable research-based approach to determine what technology you need and what products you should consider.

Our Value Index guides provide an important service; if an organization seeks to improve its maturity across people, process, information and technology, it is critical to be able to select the vendor and product that will best do the job. Most businesses fail at this; our research found that only about one in eight organizations (12%) rank at the highest Innovative level of maturity in their CEM efforts. Furthermore organizations are least mature in the use of CEM technologies – over half (57%) rank at the lowest Tactical level here. This immaturity has a serious impact on how well an organization can handle customer calls; nearly half (49%) admit that they do not satisfy customers, and only two-fifths of calls are resolved at the first attempt.

One of the main reasons that organizations fall short in managing the customer experience is the state of the desktop that employees have to use.

One of the main reasons that organizations fall short in managing the customer experience is the state of the desktop that employees have to use as they attempt to resolve customer issues. Typically agents have to access multiple systems and sources of information to resolve each call, and their desktop gives little help in identifying the correct system, navigating through each system and across them, or providing guidance on the right action to take next.

These findings indicate that most organizations have not invested in dedicated applications that would help improve these processes, and this conclusion is supported by another finding: that only two-fifths of organizations are planning to improve their agent desktop. Yet this inertia occurs in the context of increasing availability of tools that can automate much of the work that has to be carried out on the desktop; such tools could make the handling of calls more efficient – for

example, by reducing average call-handling times – and also more effective, for example, by increasing the number of calls resolved at the first attempt.

But first organizations must come to understand the value of applications that will enable their agents to improve the customer experience. This understanding has been slow in coming, but now it is growing as organizations consider investments to maximize customer retention and loyalty, up-selling and cross-sales.

From our research and years of benchmarking we have compiled a blueprint that will guide organizations to improve their agent desktop and thus the handling of calls. Using this approach enables companies to more effectively align and link their activities and processes. Maximizing effectiveness, however, requires applications that enable an organization to manage the customer experience to the degree

Maximizing effectiveness requires applications that make it possible for an organization to manage call-handling regardless of who is taking the call.

required. We have developed and regularly update this Value Index to empower companies to evaluate applications' suitability for use as elements of this approach.

This Value Index for Customer Experience Management: Agent Desktop report evaluates the following vendors and products that address key elements of customer experience management:

Altitude, Cicero, Cincom, Genesys, Jacada, OpenSpan, RiverStar, salesforce.com, SmartPoint and Upstream Works. It uses the Ventana Research Value Index methodology, a framework that evaluates application vendors and their products in seven categories of requirements. Five are product-related, assessing usability, manageability, reliability, capability and adaptability, while two quantify the customer assurance issues of vendor validation and total cost of ownership and return on investment (TCO/ROI). We have been guided by these priorities in crafting the CEM Agent Desktop Value Index framework.

We urge organizations to do a thorough job of evaluating agent desktop systems and tools; we offer this Value Index as both the results of our in-depth analysis of these vendors and as an evaluation methodology. The Value Index can be used to evaluate existing suppliers and also provides evaluation criteria for new projects; applying it thus can shorten the RFP cycle time.

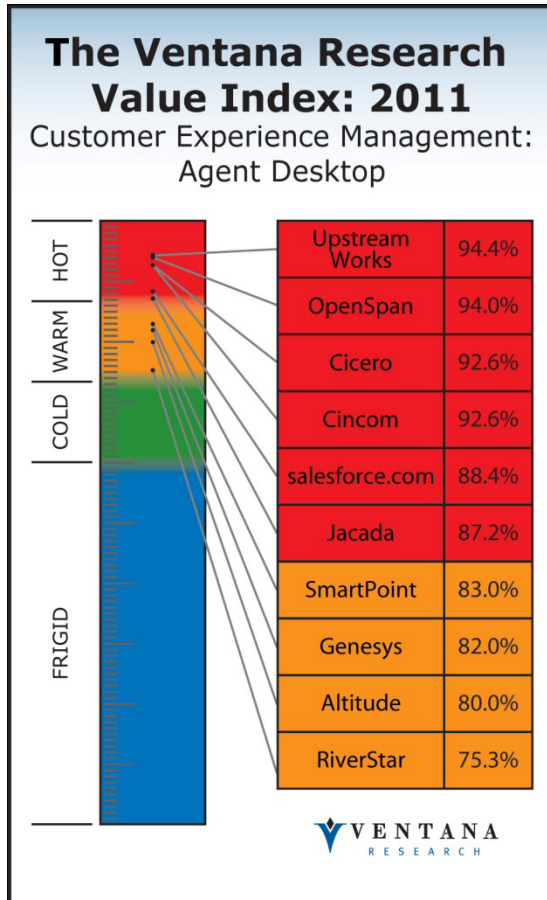
Unlike many IT analyst firms that rank vendors from an IT-only perspective and do not do research or provide advice on practices for customer-facing operations, Ventana Research has designed the Value Index to provide a balanced perspective of vendors and products that is rooted in an understanding of the business drivers and needs of employees handling customer interactions. The Value Index approach not only reduces cost and time but also minimizes the risk of making a decision that is bad for the business. Using the Value Index will enable your organization to achieve the levels of efficiency and effectiveness it needs to optimize its performance.

This Value Index research focus on applications to support interaction-handling comes at a critical juncture. The customer relationship management (CRM) era is coming to an end: CRM has delivered its maximum value in productivity for areas such as the customer experience. This research shows which vendors have (and which have not) invested in developing a new class of applications, and it reveals

which have products that are ready to address the needs of anyone who handles customer calls or other forms of interaction. It also examines the status of cloud computing and software as a service (SaaS), subscription-based rental approaches to accessing CEM applications that provide options for rapid adoption and use in your organization.

Value Index Overview

The Ventana Research Value Index: Customer Experience Management: Agent Desktop 2011 is the distillation of a year of market and product research efforts by Ventana Research, the premier benchmark research and advisory services firm. Built on a foundation of 10 years of business and technology research, this unbiased, fact-based index is the first such industry undertaking to assess the value of software designed specifically for enabling customer experience management.



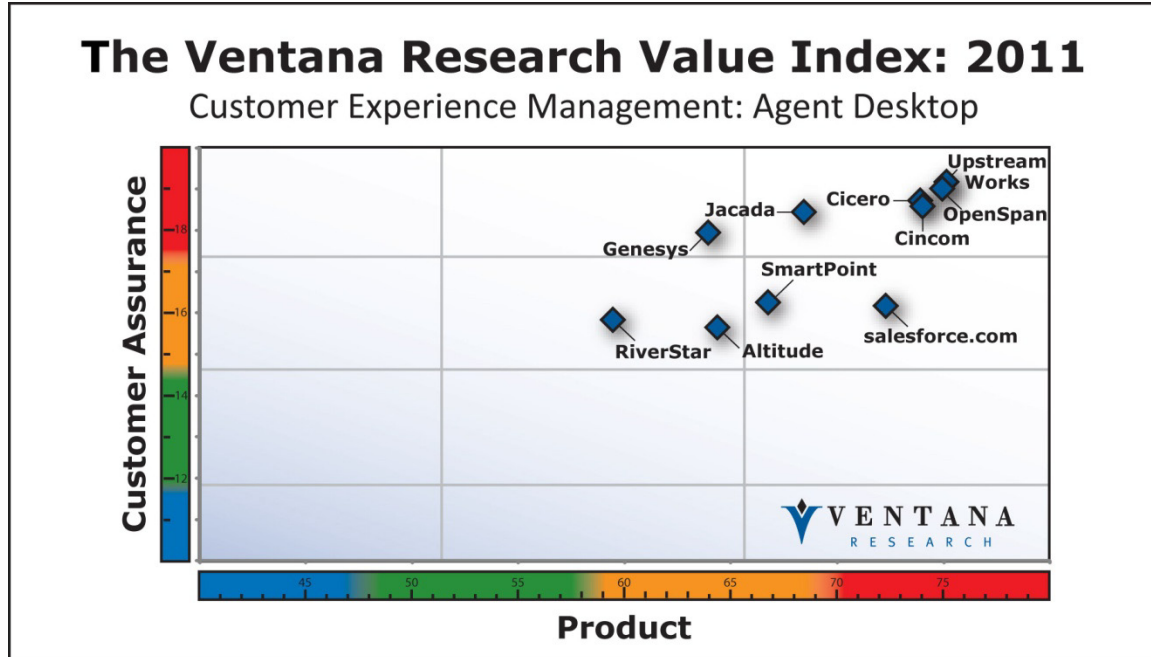
This Ventana Research Value Index is an analytic representation of our assessment of how well vendors' offerings meet buyers' requirements for software that enables and supports customer experience management. The index evaluates the software in seven key categories. Five are product-related: usability, manageability, reliability, capability and adaptability. In addition, we considered two customer assurance categories: vendor validation and total cost of ownership and return on investment (TCO/ROI). To assess functionality we applied the Ventana Research customer experience management methodology and blueprint, which links the business process of managing performance to an organization's information technology.

We use our research-based analytics and methodology to generate the Value Index percentages. We then build them into a set of indicators that are the graphic representation of the Ventana Research Value Index. In these indicators the colors reflect our assessment of the value to

you, the potential buyer, on a scale from minimally valuable, or Frigid (blue), to very valuable, or Hot (red). The Value Index thus is both an analytic and a graphic representation of the value of a specific vendor's offering based on an evaluation of what it can deliver that is relevant to your customer experience management needs.

The Value Index is not an abstraction; Ventana Research used a carefully crafted best practices-based methodology to represent how organizations actually will assess vendors. We believe it is important to take this approach, since making the wrong decisions can raise the total cost of ownership, lower the return on investment and hamper your organization's ability to reach its performance potential. In addition, this approach can reduce the project's development and deployment time and eliminate the risk of placing on your short list vendors that are wrong for your organization.

The Value Index for Customer Experience Management: Agent Desktop 2011 shows that currently the top suppliers, based on the weighted factoring of the five product and two customer assurance categories, are Upstream Works, OpenSpan, Cicero, Cincom, salesforce.com and Jacada, all qualified as Hot vendors. They are followed by four Warm vendors: SmartPoint, Genesys, Altitude and RiverStar.



The Value Index analysis identified the significant differences among the vendors with applications supporting the management and operations of contact center agent desktops. In addition, the research analyzed the underlying support for mobility, analytics, planning and integration to enterprise systems and processes.

Close vendor scores should not be taken to suggest that the packages evaluated are functionally identical or equally well suited for use by every organization or business process. Although there is a high degree of commonality in how organizations operate in marketing and commerce, there are many small differences that can make one vendor's offering a better fit with one organization's needs compared to another. After recent technology advancement, all these products are feature-rich, but not all the capabilities they offer are equally valuable to users. Moreover, the existence of too many capabilities may be a negative factor for an organization if it introduces unnecessary complexity. Nonetheless, one company may decide that a larger number of options is a plus, especially if some of them match its established practices or better support a new initiative that is driving the purchase of new software. Other factors beside features and functions or assessments about the vendor can turn out to be a deciding factor. For example, a company may face budget constraints such that the TCO evaluation can tip the balance to one vendor or another.

The profile of user needs for which the Value Index was developed is derived from Ventana Research's experience in working with contact center organizations and from our benchmark research on customer experience management. For this Value Index, the research was conducted from September through December 2010, and the various vendor products submitted for evaluation had to be generally available at the start of January 2011.

To ensure the accuracy of the information we collected, we required participating vendors to provide evaluation data and demonstrations across seven categories as in an RFP. Ventana Research then validated the information independently through our database of product information and extensive Web-based research, and after that in consultation with the vendors. We also used our benchmark research, which assesses the technology needs and business priorities of hundreds of organizations, as input to the evaluation criteria and weighting of Value Index categories. The majority of selected vendors participated in one-on-one consultative sessions, after which we requested them to provide additional documentation to support any new inputs. We also conducted customer interviews to validate the assessment of vendors and products.

Vendors Not Included in This Value Index

All vendors with relevant agent desktop offerings were invited to participate in the Value Index evaluation process, at no cost to them. If a vendor did not respond to the invitation, we made a determination whether to include it in our analysis based on our knowledge of the company, its products, its customers and its relevance for this assessment. On this basis the 2011 Value Index for Customer Experience Management: Agent Desktop does not include the following vendors that provide contact center agent capabilities: Amdocs, Cisco, eGain, Kana, KnoahSoft, LivePerson, Microsoft, NICE Systems (eglue), Numero, OnviSource, Oracle, Pegasystems, Pitney Bowes Business Insight (Portrait Software), ResponseTek, SAP, Sword Ciboodle, Talisma and Teradata.

This Executive Summary is drawn from the full Ventana Research Value Index: 2011 Customer Experience Management: Agent Desktop report, which lays out in detail the analysis underlying the Value Index, lists the products evaluated, and suggests a methodology for preparing for an total compensation management related RFP. The full report is available for purchase, payable by check or credit card. For more information about the full Value Index report or assessment of your organization using the Value Index, please contact us at sales@ventanaresearch.com or (925) 474.0060.

About Ventana Research

Ventana Research is the leading benchmark research and business technology advisory services firm. We provide insight and expert guidance on trends and mainstream and disruptive technologies. Our unparalleled insights and best practices guidance are based on our rigorous research-based benchmarking of people, processes, information and technology across business and IT functions worldwide. The combination we offer of benchmark research, market coverage and in-depth knowledge of hundreds of technology providers means we can deliver business and technology education and expertise to our clients where and when needed to reduce the time requirements, cost and risk of technology investments. The Ventana Research Indexes – the Value Index and the Benchmark Index family – have redefined the research industry by providing accessible, easy-to-use, research-based business and technology guidance to businesses. Ventana Research provides the most comprehensive analyst and research coverage in the industry; the many business and IT professionals worldwide who are members of our community benefit from Ventana Research’s insights, as do highly regarded media and association partners around the globe. Our views and analyses are distributed daily through blogs and social media channels including [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Business Week’s Business Exchange](#). Ventana Research was ranked the #1 analyst firm you can trust in enterprise software for 2009 for its relevance to the industry. To learn how Ventana Research advances the maturity of organizations use of information and technology through benchmark research, education and advisory services, visit www.ventanaresearch.com.

We offer a variety of customizable services to meet your specific needs, including workshops, assessments and advisory services. Our [education](#) service, led by analysts with more than 20 years of experience, provides a great starting point to learn about important business and technology topics from compliance to business intelligence to building a strategy and driving adoption of best practices. We also offer tailored [Value Index Assessment Services](#) to help you define your strategy, build a business case and connect the business and technology phases of your project. And we can provide Ventana On-Demand access to our analysts on an as-needed basis to help you keep up with market trends, technologies and best practices.

Everything at Ventana Research begins with our focused [research](#), of which this Value Index is a part. We work with thousands of organizations worldwide, conducting research and analyzing market trends, best practices and technologies to help our clients improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their organizations.

Through the Ventana Research [community](#) we also provide opportunities for professionals to share challenges, best practices and methodologies. Sign up for Individual membership at www.ventanaresearch.com to gain access to our weekly insights and learn about upcoming educational and collaboration events – webinars, conferences and opportunities for social collaboration on the Internet. We offer the following membership levels:

Individual membership: For business and IT professionals* interested in full access to our website and analyst team for themselves. The membership includes access to our library of hundreds of white papers and research notes, briefings and telephone and e-mail consulting sessions to provide input and feedback.

Team membership: For business and IT professionals* interested in full access to our website and analysts for a five-member team. The membership includes access to our library of hundreds of white papers and research notes, briefings, telephone and e-mail consulting sessions to provide input and feedback and the use of Ventana Research materials for business purposes.

Business membership: For business and IT professionals* interested in full access to our website and analyst team for their larger team or small business unit. The membership includes access to our library of hundreds of white papers and research notes, briefings, telephone and e-mail consulting sessions to provide input and feedback, use of Ventana Research materials for business purposes and additional analyst availability.

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