Solution White Paper

b+s Fusion for Finesse

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Introduction

Operating contact centers costs a great deal of money. Consequently, reducing costs associated with running them as well as and improving their response efficiency across all service parameters ought to be among managers' and supervisors' primary goals in setting up and managing them. The key question is of course, how to do this. The answer: cost-effective technology solutions designed to optimize the transmission of information and to facilitate collaboration between employees. Extraordinary solutions have been developed to do these things. However, *perfectly* tailored solutions are not yet available, and may never be. The fact that competing software companies are working to develop the very best solutions possible is a great thing for the contact center space. It means that businesses will regularly have access to the best software at the lowest prices. However, as long as the market offerings for the range of products functioning in the contact center space is diverse, not all the software solutions will be perfect integrated. The functionality gaps between powerful products like CTI platforms and CRMs are places where businesses slowly lose money and customers: money because there is a cost associated with things like paying too many agents, and customers because customer service mistakes have a direct impact on client satisfaction and ongoing loyalty. Filling in the gaps that accrue in the information sharing and collaboration space is the only way to ensure savings: of money and customers. This is where middleware solutions like those provided by Bucher + Suter enter the fray. These unobtrusive, yet incredibly powerful gadgets provide the glue that holds these larger solutions together. They provide the caulking that ensures business does not leak money and customers.

"Businesses will regularly have access to the best software at the lowest prices."

The hardware and software systems that go into making contact centers function are extremely complex; adding middleware that further complicates matters is naturally the very last thing system administrators want. Custom code, special plug-ins, endless phone calls with technical support are simply not worth the time, money, or effort it takes to implement and utilize these sorts of products. For this reason, contact centers *must* find technology solutions that are easy to install, easy to upgrade, and inexpensive to maintain. What does this look like practically? Or at least, what *should* it look like? It looks like 90 second installation wizards that walk administrators through upgrades and implementations. It looks like agent tools that are immediately usable because they are so intuitive. It looks like software that embeds itself so seamlessly in native, larger platforms that the use experience is singularly modular. It looks like out-of-the-box, pre-integrated solutions exactly like those provided by Bucher + Suter.

Here are just a few of the important features the b+s gadgets offer contact centers interested in saving money, customers, and limit agent turnover:

- Real time views of the customer experience and agent performance
- Multichannel interaction handling
- Easy-to-access phone directories and interaction history
- CRM integration in a "single pane of glass"

To be clear: these are not generic technology solutions. Bucher + Suter has designed its gadgets specifically to work with Cisco Finesse. These are tailor-made solutions created for one purpose alone: to ensure that businesses can fully optimize the solutions they have in place to ensure maximum ROI.

Cisco Desktop Strategy

One of the most significant technology trends in recent years has involved seeking to streamline agent workflow. Primarily, this has been done by incorporating things such as Web 2.0 technologies into the agent desktop. The goal here is to simplify the user experience by decreasing the cognitive load required to perform repeated tasks in order to facilitate faster work. The pay-off: up-front savings as well as customer loyalty preservation; reducing agent burnout is an added benefit as well. This trend has seen the introduction of "mash-ups", or portals that provide a configurable "cockpit" wherein all the information Customer Service Representatives (CSRs) might need is available when they need it. This model is more flexible, is easily supported by admins, and is more extensible than the traditional fat-client, compiled CTI applications of the past.

"One of the most significant technology trends in recent years has involved seeking to streamline agent workflow."

Finesse is Cisco's next-generation Web 2.0 desktop GUI for Cisco's Contact Center. It consolidates all the information agents need into a single, easily configurable cockpit. It is a flexible webpage or "container" that contains individual applications or "gadgets". Here, Cisco's software development strategy has been to provide a framework for partners to build gadgets in Finesse that enhance the agent experience. It is standards-compliant and browser-based, with no client-side installation required, and is flexible, making it possible to drop a wide variety of compatible gadgets into the application. It is also highly intuitive, providing the look and feel of a fully configurable voice CTI.

Our Solution: b+s Fusion for Finesse

Fusion for Finesse adds new functionality to Finesse with a set of intuitive gadgets that allow agents to do things like: manage multichannel interactions, view coworkers' availability status, get real-time contact center call data, and access lists of recently made or received calls.

b+s Fusion for Finesse also gives agents the ability to access the CRM application from within the application. With b+s Fusion for Finesse, agents have access to key CRM functionality such as click-to-dial, phone books, activity history, and more without having to leave the Finesse desktop. This saves time for both customers and agents, reduces costs and increases customer satisfaction.

b+s Fusion for Finesse provides agents and supervisors with a range of functionality not available in the out-of-the-box Finesse GUI. The following gadgets are available today from Bucher + Suter:
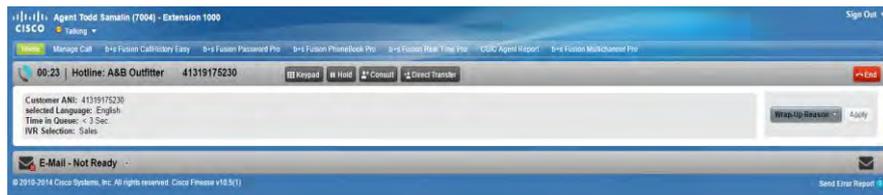

Illustration 1: Cisco Finesse

b+s Fusion CRM

This b+s gadget is a fully configurable, out-of-the-box integration between the Cisco Contact Center and the CRM system that provides agents with essential information in a single GUI. With the arrival of a phone call, within the Finesse environment, it automatically displays a link to that customer's CRM record. If an agent viewing this link needs to see more details, it is possible to click on it to display the full record within the CRM. The agent can see as much or as little information about the customer as the contact center admin chooses to display in the "Contact" tab. Agents can see the history of customer interactions in the "Activities" tab, as well as being able to create new activities without leaving Finesse. Since agents can track the customer's journey and communication history, they know when the customer called, whom they spoke with, as well as their preferred communication channel. b+s Fusion pulls this information from the CRM and displays it in Finesse. b+s Fusion CRM also makes it easy for agents to contact customers using the click-to-dial feature. Notice the screen shot example above showing an integration to Microsoft Dynamics CRM.

"Agents can track the customer's journey and communication history."

"b+s Fusion pulls information from the CRM and displays it in Finesse."
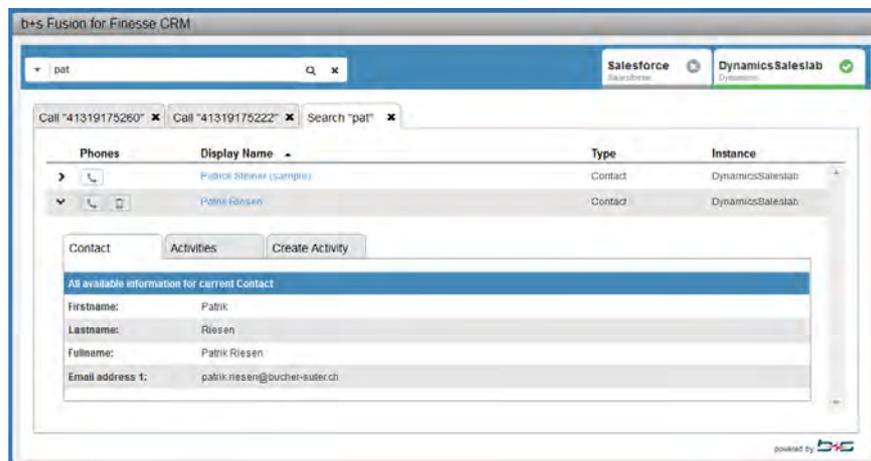

Illustration 2: Fusion CRM

b+s Fusion CallHistory

This b+s gadget allows agents to see a detailed list of their inbound, out-bound, and missed calls; this facilitates making follow up calls and callbacks. The agent can filter the list by phone number, call type or time frame, and can perform searches using almost any criteria (such as customer account number, department chosen in the IVR, duration, etc.).Fusion CallHistory is particularly useful for searching for customer calls and for offering a clickable phone icon to call customers back. b+s Fusion PhoneBook

Illustration 3: Fusion CallHistory

b+s Fusion PhoneBook

This b+s gadget allows agents to access their corporate phone book via LDAP. Agents can quickly and easily search for internal contacts by typing in part of a name or phone number and then call, transfer, or conference without leaving the Finesse GUI. This gadget saves administrators time and resources by allowing them to maintain only a single corporate address book based on Active Directory.
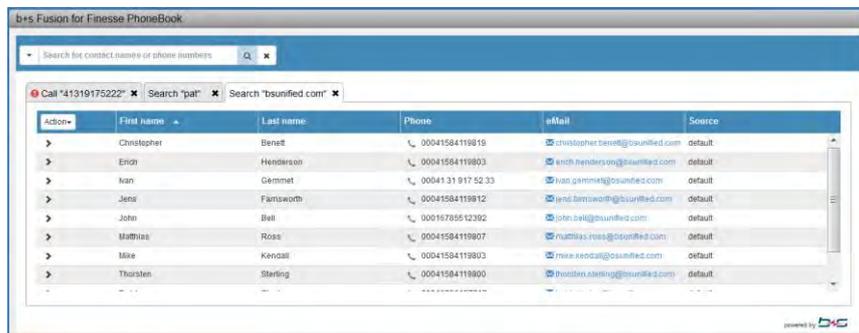

Illustration 4: Fusion PhoneBook

b+s Fusion RealTime

"Supervisors get a more complete view of their team's work load and can help out where needed."

This b+s gadget allows agents to see the real-time state of other agents who are members of their skill groups. Examples of state include ready, not ready, reserved, talking, etc. Fusion RealTime makes it easy for agents to get assistance from other agents by knowing what their coworkers are doing and being able to communicate with them quickly via click-to-dial. Agents can see this information for all queues, or can filter by queue so that they can see only those agents working on certain queues. What is more, supervisors get a more complete view of their team's work load and can help out where needed.

Bucher + Suter's Fusion RealTime gives Finesse users new functionality, such as the ability to:

- see information about all agents in their skill groups, not just agents on their team

- see agent state in truly real-time, without 15 second refresh delays

- click-to-dial directly from the Fusion RealTime desktop

- see agent state for multichannel, such as email, rather than just voice

- see the number of callers in queue

- see wait time of the caller that has been in queue the longest

- see the number of agents logged in

- view a variety of key statistics for the day, filterable by media type
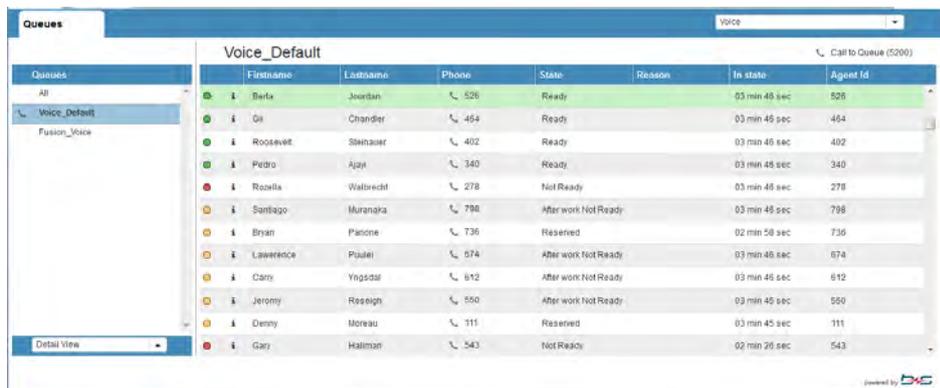
Illustration 5: Fusion RealTime Overview

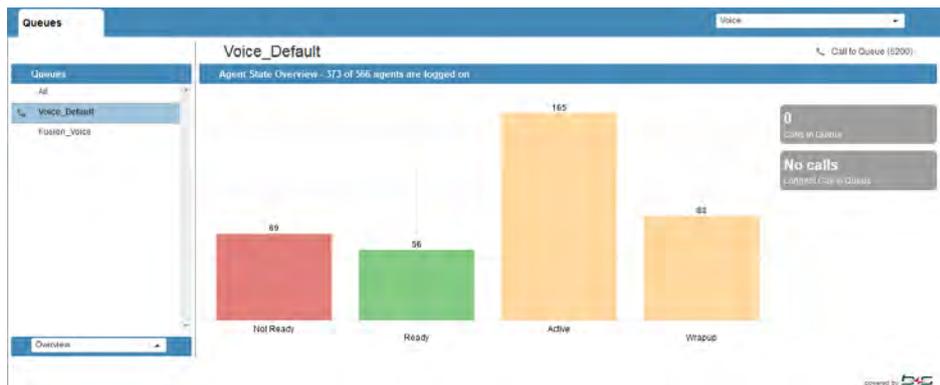*Illustration 6: Fusion RealTime Detail View*

Illustration 7: Fusion RealTime Statistic View

b+s Fusion Multichannel

Customer emails are sometimes ignored simply because they fall through the cracks. At other times, response to the customer takes longer than it should. When these things happen, irritated customers typically call into the contact center, which increases costs, and decreases customers' willingness to buy additional products from the company. By integrating email into the contact center platform, contact centers can leverage Cisco's skills based routing engine, which will result in more timely email responses.

The b+s Fusion Multichannel gadget is a Microsoft Exchange based solution which allows agents to manage customer email from within Finesse. Once an agent accepts an email (or multiple emails) they can see information about the email, such as the destination, sender and subject. They can also end the email interaction, pause it, and request a wrap up reason.
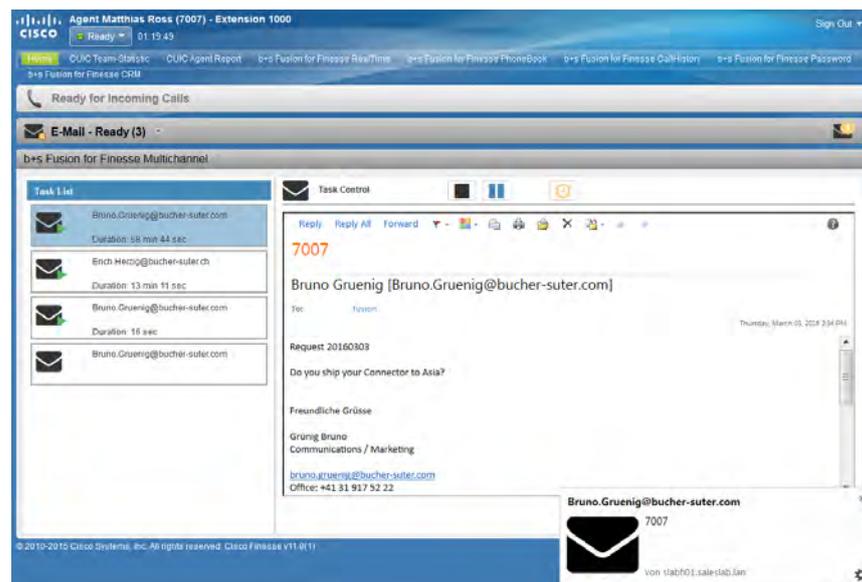

Illustration 8: Fusion Multichannel

"Agent workflow is optimized as voice and non-voice interactions are now handled in a universal queue."

Being required to use separate GUIs and separate reports for voice and email is highly inefficient, since report administrators will not want to be forced to extract reports from different systems and then consolidate them. b+s Fusion Multichannel enables the Cisco Contact Center to function as the single routing and reporting engine for both voice and email, as well as providing agents with a single GUI for both media types. Agent workflow is optimized as voice and non-voice interactions are now handled in a universal queue and Cisco routing differentiates between real time and non-real time media. Since the b+s Fusion Multichannel gadget leverages the existing Microsoft Exchange

system, IT no longer needs to set up and maintain an additional email system just for the contact center.

Conclusion

The Cisco Finesse application streamlines the agent work by making the tools they need easily accessible in the desktop application. Bucher + Suter's Fusion for Finesse greatly extends Finesse's functionality by providing a variety of intuitive gadgets that allow agents to manage multichannel interactions, immediately to know who the customer is and what they want, access CRM data for things such as activity histories, see the availability status of coworkers, and take advantage of time saving tools such as click-to-dial phone directories and Real Time Displays. Easy access to all tools and information from a single window increases agent productivity and improves customer service.

About Bucher + Suter

Bucher + Suter is a Preferred Solution Partner and Advanced Technology Partner that delivers unique add on solutions to Cisco Contact Center, enabling customers to realize additional business value from their Cisco investments. Bucher + Suter has been helping customers implement strategic solutions for decades and today supports some of the largest Cisco Contact Center environments in the world.