



Challenges

- Improve customer satisfaction by providing agents with immediate access to up-to-date customer information
- Lower costs by reducing staff and by generating accurate tracking data, while expanding customer service coverage 24/7
- Manage seasonal peaks in inbound customer service and support inquiries, which spike during the holiday season (October to December)
- Replace existing Siebel Systems call center with a fully integrated on-demand platform for both phone and e-mail communication

Solution

- The Echopass EchoSystem™ integrating Echopass Call Center On-Demand with RightNow Technologies Voice Self Service and Kodak's existing Sybase database
- A library of easy-to-use information services (FAQs, order status, etc.) accessible to customers via phone and online self-service to handle routine inquiries and most commonly asked questions
- Automatic updates of customer interactions on the agent's desktop via screen pops and CTI (Computer Telephony Integration) integration

Technology Partners

- Genesys
- RightNow Technologies
- Sprint

Kodak EasyShare Gallery "Clicks" with Echopass Contact Center On-Demand and RightNow Technologies

Situation Snapshot



Advances in digital photography over the past 5-10 years have created an explosive growth of digital images. In the earlier days of digital photography, amateur and professional photographers alike had to "file" pictures in their own cumbersome digital libraries, which few people ever did. With the introduction of online photo services, consumers were given new options for storing and getting the most out of their digital images. Many have turned to Kodak, well known and trusted for its quality, reliability and unmatched customer service. With Kodak, customers can upload pictures, share them with family and friends, order prints and put their images on numerous types of products, from mugs and cards to calendars and mouse pads.

Launched as Ofoto in 1999, and now a wholly-owned subsidiary of Eastman Kodak Company, Kodak EasyShare Gallery is the leading online digital photo developing service, earning top accolades in a photo services shootout in the March 2006 issue of PC World magazine. The kodakgallery.com site provides consumers with a secure and easy way to view, store and share their photos, obtain genuine Kodak quality prints of their pictures, and to experiment with free editing and other creative tools.

Digital cameras have since become more widespread, particularly in the past two years, when, in line with industry analyst projections, digital cameras began to outsell their film counterparts. The Kodak EasyShare team began to notice a trend; their customer support team was handling a significant increase in calls and e-mails to the customer service center during the last months of each year.

"Once Halloween rolls around, we see a steady rise in call and e-mail volumes from our customers looking for order status details such as shipment and delivery updates, or general information about our services," said John Allum-Poon, director of customer support for Kodak EasyShare Gallery. "While the call center is busy throughout the year, there is a noticeable activity spike during the holiday season — which starts around Halloween and continues through the New Year."

Unfortunately, Kodak lacked the infrastructure to handle this seasonal increase in call center demand, as well as integration between the call center and self-service tools.

Shooting for More Seamless Customer Service

With this challenge came an opportunity to improve the service experience for all its customers and decrease the number of inbound agent touch-points by updating Kodak's call center infrastructure and streamlining how both calls and e-mails are managed. After reviewing improvement options for the existing call center infrastructure, they realized that a simple upgrade to what was in place was not an option. Kodak needed a more advanced system that would intelligently route calls and create opportunities for new capabilities, such as voice self-service.



On Demand

Always On

Guaranteed

End to End

Benefits

- Better customer service through easier agent access to account/order information, and powerful voice/web self-service capabilities
- Shorter wait times and fewer abandoned calls
- Accurate status of call flow allows for on-demand, easy shifts in agent capacity in response to seasonal or market changes
- Instant, personalized customer service through direct integration with RightNow Technologies and Sybase
- On-demand, always on, guaranteed, end-to-end managed solution: Call center infrastructure fully integrated with Voice Self Service, CTI and screen pops to create a seamless customer experience

Results

- Improved call center performance metrics, such as a decrease in abandoned call rates, while also reducing overall system costs, increasing customer satisfaction and enhancing customer loyalty
- Managing seasonal spikes and monthly volume increases from 10,000 to 90,000 e-mail and 12,000 to 20,000 calls per month, without adding new headcount
- Reduced incoming e-mail and call volumes by 8% through new customer self service options
- Optimized staffing through Echopass reporting features, enabling better staff correlation with customer demand levels and eliminating Kodak's reliance on temporary call center agents

The team began looking for a hosted on-demand solution which would ultimately allow them to adjust the number of call center agents depending on the time of year, while reducing costs and also creating improved consistency in the overall nature of support provided to customers. Investing in and maintaining new on-premise infrastructure was too costly and could not provide the flexibility that the Kodak EasyShare Gallery call center required.

Starting with Self Service and RightNow

Implementing a new self-service feature that tied into the company's existing customer database was a key component of Kodak's plan to provide better customer service, 24/7, while streamlining call center operations. After researching several options, the team chose RightNow Technologies Voice Self Service, which gave Kodak the ability to automatically answer a wide range of customer calls 24 hours a day, seven days a week. This automation quickly reduced contact center workloads, saving the company money and ensuring its ability to deliver a superior customer experience any time of the day or night.

“Kodak realized it was time for a more sophisticated way to deliver even better customer support, while also streamlining overall support operations, ultimately reducing costs... In the end, it's all about making the customer happy and this solution accomplishes just that.”

—VIN DESCHAMPS, CEO of Echopass

RightNow integrates with a Sybase database to provide customers with answers about their own individual accounts. Because roughly 35 percent of the Kodak's overall call volume comes from customers checking on the status of an order, this solution provided a quick and easy means for customers to access this information. Customers simply speak or punch in appropriate numbers or answers as prompted, and are able to determine their own order status, avoiding more costly support channels.

Still lacking however, was a full integration between RightNow and Sybase, other Kodak legacy systems and the current call center infrastructure. The existing call center from Siebel Systems (now Oracle Corporation) was limiting Kodak's ability to fully leverage its investment in RightNow. Kodak realized the need for a more reliable and robust call center infrastructure to appropriately route calls and e-mail messages to the appropriate agent.

Adding Echopass for Contact Center Optimization

“It's really all about getting the right information into the right person's hands, whether that means delivery status for a customer or a contact history for an agent, and Echopass and RightNow facilitate that process seamlessly,” said Allum-Poon. “Some customers want self service, some want and need a live agent; providing both was our priority.”

Echopass became the one last important piece in Kodak's puzzle— a hosted call center infrastructure and managed services provider that could guarantee 24/7 uptime of the entire contact center infrastructure and integrate RightNow's solutions in a single customer support platform managing multiple touch-points, such as phone, e-mail and Web chat.

“The existing relationship and proven integration successes between Echopass and RightNow made us very confident about our decision to move to a new customer support platform featuring their solutions,”

said Allum-Poon. "In addition, we had a short timeline in order to ensure the new system was up and running before our busy holiday rush. We did not want to go through pulling employees from other duties to answer the phone, nor did we want to continue to hire temporary agents — both of which we were forced to do in the past. As it turned out, the new Echopass platform was implemented on schedule and both teams were very efficient and responsive during the process."

Echopass is the call and contact center industry's only provider of on-demand, always on, guaranteed, and end-to-end solutions offered as a complete, web-based service through the Echopass EchoSystem Service Integration Platform. Echopass Call Center On-Demand, the company's flagship voice offering, incorporates and integrates CRM applications from providers such as RightNow; other components such as workforce management and interactive voice response; and best-of-breed IP and routing technologies from Genesys Telecommunications, ensuring the most advanced call center infrastructure at an affordable price.

"With our new customer support platform, we have happier customers and happier agents — truly the best of both worlds and exactly what we wanted as an end result. We can scale as our universe of customers grows, without having to make significant infrastructure and staff investments."

—JOHN ALLUM-POON,
Director of Customer Support for
Kodak EasyShare Gallery

"Given our history working with RightNow, we knew that Kodak would find the answer to its business challenge with a combination of our always-on call center services and RightNow's voice self-service solutions," said Vin Deschamps, CEO of Echopass.

"Kodak realized it was time for a more sophisticated way to deliver even better customer support, while also streamlining overall support operations, ultimately reducing costs. Our on-demand, hosted solution, along with proven automated voice self-service technology from RightNow, offered the intelligent call routing and seamless integration to make the solution a success. In the end, it's all about making the customer happy and this solution accomplishes just that."

Picture Perfect: Happier Customers and Happier Agents

With its call center agent resources spread between an off-site call center in Nebraska and Kodak's on-site staff in Emeryville, California, Echopass created a seamless link that is completely transparent to Kodak's incoming customer. Calls are routed intelligently based on the customer's request and the options they choose using RightNow's automated system, and call center agents can provide personalized service with information about the customer from the customer database. For those customers electing self-service, at any point they can opt for live help and be routed to an agent along with a history of those self-service actions.

Since the Kodak EasyShare Gallery updated its call center infrastructure last year, it has greatly improved its customer service delivery and streamlined the management of call center infrastructure and agents, resulting in significant cost savings, happier customers and happier agents. Agents are no longer bogged down with routine requests, and customers enjoy faster access to up-to-date information about their own accounts and Kodak's general services. With intelligent and flexible call routing, the right customer now reaches the right call center agent — whether for Web site technical support or for specific order questions. Kodak's agents know in advance whether a customer has tried self-service first, making their interaction with the customer more helpful and efficient.

"With our new customer support platform, we have happier customers and happier agents — truly the best of both worlds and exactly what we wanted as an end result," said Allum-Poon. "We can scale as our universe of customers grows, without having to make significant infrastructure and staff investments. Echopass and RightNow have relieved the team from a lot of management burdens so that we can concentrate on our core business of delivering the quality photography goods and services that our customers expect. We've been extremely pleased with this partnership."