

THE QUINTUS WEBCENTER™ DIFFERENCE

A WEB-CENTRIC APPROACH FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE

A Technical White Paper

Quintus Corporation
47212 Mission Falls Court
Fremont, California 94539

OBJECTIVE

This paper presents an overview of the benefits of Quintus WebCenter™ Suite, a comprehensive, end-to-end solution for facilitating customer interactions over the Internet. Through its unique Internet-centric architecture, the WebCenter Suite enables businesses to foster end-to-end customer relationships, building on core capabilities for interactive and informative self-service, and offering real-time connections for person-to-person communications, when and by whatever channel is appropriate to the business. This multi-channel communications architecture enables the WebCenter Suite to provide the ability to integrate multiple channels with a consistent customer experience while substantially expanding the range of interactive choices to customers.

PRODUCT FUNCTIONALITY

The Quintus WebCenter Suite offers a variety of advantages: a completeness of functionality, integration of components, and a truly Internet-centric architecture.

There are many tools on the market today that are targeted to only a single part of the customer interaction problem (e.g., email management systems, CTI collaboration tools). These point tools, while they may address a point of pain, do not address the completeness of functionality required to implement a true, Internet customer contact center. Many times, they are purchased to solve an issue and are obsolete within six months as the organization's business needs evolve. By contrast, the WebCenter Suite is a comprehensive, end-to-end solution that manages and facilitates online communications with customers. It includes complete, robust support for the four essential components of online customer service:

- **Self-help.** The WebCenter Suite's self-help system enables customers to effectively find answers on their own while providing context to the system for potential escalations to live communications. Through interfaces with a variety of third-party knowledge bases, the WebCenter Suite's self-help capability allows organizations to leverage investments they have made in existing systems and effectively integrate them into an Internet customer contact center.
- **Voice communications.** The WebCenter Suite integrates with, but does not rely upon, the legacy telephony system, providing callback functionality as well as the ability to dynamically move agents between telephony tasks and Internet tasks. Additionally, the WebCenter Suite

provides integrated reports between the two worlds, allowing businesses to take advantage of the best of both environments today, while preparing for increased Internet activity over time.

- **Live Help.** The WebCenter Suite provides Web site visitors with the ability to instantly escalate to live text conferences with agents and jointly collaborate over the Web on solutions to inquiries. Whether helping an e-commerce prospect with a sales question or supporting an existing customer, the WebCenter Suite's best-of-breed live help capabilities ensure quick resolution and improved customer satisfaction.
- **E-mail.** The WebCenter Suite provides Web site visitors with a fully featured e-mail response management capability that is integrated into the WebCenter queuing and routing, reporting, and agent desktop environments. With the WebCenter Suite, email is an integrated communication channel, not a stand-alone point tool.

INTEGRATION OF COMPONENTS

In addition to providing best-of-breed functionality across the spectrum of Internet customer interaction, a key competitive advantage of the WebCenter Suite lies in the integration of these capabilities. This is in contrast to competitive systems that supply limited, single-purpose, and nonintegrated capabilities (e.g., standalone e-mail management systems, point CTI/collaboration tools).

The key to this integration centers on how the WebCenter Suite's individual components leverage each other to make the customer interaction experience more effective. All of the WebCenter Suite's components share customer data, a common agent cockpit for all tasks, and a blended reporting environment. With the WebCenter Suite's unique integration capabilities, businesses need not purchase throwaway point products from a variety of vendors and ferret out support issues on their own. Quintus customers can start by implementing individual components of the WebCenter Suite and be assured that their investments are protected as their business needs evolve and more functionality is required.

INTERNET-CENTRIC ARCHITECTURE

The WebCenter Suite is designed from the ground up to leverage the capabilities of an IP-based networking model. This is in contrast to many competitive systems that require the use of legacy, circuit-switched telephony equipment to handle Internet service requests. The WebCenter Suite's unique IP-centric architecture provides businesses with three primary benefits over these other systems:

- **Lower risk.** While products that utilize the traditional circuit-switched telephony infrastructure for Internet customer service allow the call center to leverage existing agents and circuit-switched ACD routing scripts, they are temporary quick fixes to a broader, more strategic set of customer interaction issues. These systems force agents to accept a mix of telephony, e-mail, text conferencing, call-back, and VoIP requests in a traditional, serial fashion, making it difficult to optimize agent productivity, utilization and service levels— while adding inappropriate risk to this mission critical process. By utilizing these older architecture systems for IP-based customer service requests, existing workflow can be compromised, customer satisfaction can suffer and

agent productivity can decline. In contrast, the WebCenter Suite channels all requests for customer service through a Internet-based management system, ensuring that all customer questions are appropriately handled, enabling parallel processing of these tasks and ensuring consistency across all channels.

- **Lower operating and capital costs.** Systems that require the traditional telephony infrastructure for Internet tasks ensure that telephony costs will continue to increase as Web traffic increases— i.e., to support more Internet customers, the organization must continue to upgrade its proprietary telephony gear and watch telephony-based capital expenditures and operating expenses continue to climb. Fundamentally, these systems do not take advantage of the fact that IP traffic leverages a lower-cost communications channel. The WebCenter Suite, by the very nature of its IP-based queuing and routing engine, takes advantage of the inherent cost savings provided by the Internet.
- **Optimized handling of Internet-centric customer inquiries.** Traditional circuit-switched call center ACDs collect only a fixed and limited amount of data for making routing decisions. In systems that rely upon this circuit-switched infrastructure, just like in a telephone call center, agents are delivered requests for service based on a limited set of scripting rules, usually based on the next available agent. By contrast, the WebCenter Suite utilizes the extensible and rich array of electronic information that is accessible via an IP-network to make queuing and routing decisions. By evaluating customer history, customer priority, wait times, the customer's activity on the site, and other contextual information about the customer, the WebCenter Suite ensures Internet customers get the service they need from the appropriate resource. Additionally, through dynamic routing of all Internet tasks to agents in parallel, agent utilization and service levels can be optimized.

ENABLING REAL WORLD INTERNET CUSTOMER SERVICE

Many providers of e-commerce and e-support have adopted the Quintus WebCenter Suite to provide leading-edge Internet customer service, including REI, Coldwater Creek, and Ashford.com. Based on the WebCenter Suite's unique Internet-centric architecture, its completeness of functionality and the integration of its components, these leading organizations expect higher revenues and lower operating costs while increasing customer satisfaction and loyalty.

The Quintus WebCenter Suite enables cost-effective, Web-initiated interaction between organizations and their online customers. As the communications backbone evolves from the proprietary circuit-switched world of yesterday to the IP-centric world of today and beyond, Quintus is uniquely positioned to provide market-leading customer contact solutions to innovative organizations. We believe that the Internet is the foundation of this new-world communications backbone and that businesses must increasingly provide customer service across all channels— self-help, email, LiveHelp, call-backs, voice over IP, and traditional telephony. Quintus' current architecture and vision for tomorrow is focused on helping businesses sustain competitive advantage, enjoy lower operating costs, and attract and retain customers through effective and satisfying customer interaction.