T-Mobile USA

T-Mobile delivers outstanding customer service, saves millions annually by using the Adobe® Digital Enterprise Platform and Adobe Flash® Platform solutions to transform customer experience

T-Mobile USA
www.t-mobile.com

Industry
Telecommunications

Challenges
- Maintain T-Mobile USA's leadership position in customer service
- Reduce call center and customer support costs
- Enhance consistency of customer service across channels
- Increase sales across customer service and support channels

Solution
- Customer experience management
- Unified agent application for customer service and retail

T-Mobile USA used the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform and the Adobe Flash Platform to create QuikView, a unified agent application that gives frontline employees streamlined access to customer information and relevant sales opportunities.

Results
- Enhanced consistency of service across channels
- Decreased calls from retail channel to call center staff
- Reduced call center and customer support costs
- Reduced call resolution times by eight to ten seconds, resulting in millions of dollars of operating expense savings
- Increased upselling success and top-line revenue
- Attracted new customers and increased loyalty

Systems at a glance
- Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform. Key capabilities include:
  Data Services
  Output
- Adobe Flash Platform. Components used include:
  Adobe AIR®
  Flex® framework

Differentiation through customer care

Across the United States, T-Mobile USA serves more than 34 million mobile customers. The company consistently wins accolades for superior customer service in independent satisfaction and call quality surveys of U.S. wireless carriers.

"We take great pride in customer service at T-Mobile," says Scott Tweedy, vice president of customer service and sales at T-Mobile USA. "We've won 9 out of the last 11 J.D. Power and Associates Awards for customer service. Everybody sells phones and everybody has retail locations—but it's the interaction we have with our customers that differentiates us in the marketplace."

Equipping employees with the information and tools they need

The emphasis on quality customer service has helped attract new customers, as well as increase loyalty and revenue from existing customers. One of the ways the company provides superior service is by equipping frontline employees with proven technologies.

Traditionally, customer-facing employees had to move between different computer applications to access, review, and update customer information and initiate service and sales transactions. Because the process of accessing customer information was so time consuming and complicated, retail service representatives (RSRs) in more than 2,000 T-Mobile stores across the United States and Puerto Rico were spending a disproportionate amount of time interacting with their computer screens, rather than engaging in high-value retail customer interactions. For call center personnel, the result was often longer times to handle customer requests by phone.

"In retail stores, there could be long wait times to activate a phone due to the amount of data entry and the need to jump between application screens," says Tweedy. "Those types of delays can negatively affect the customer experience."

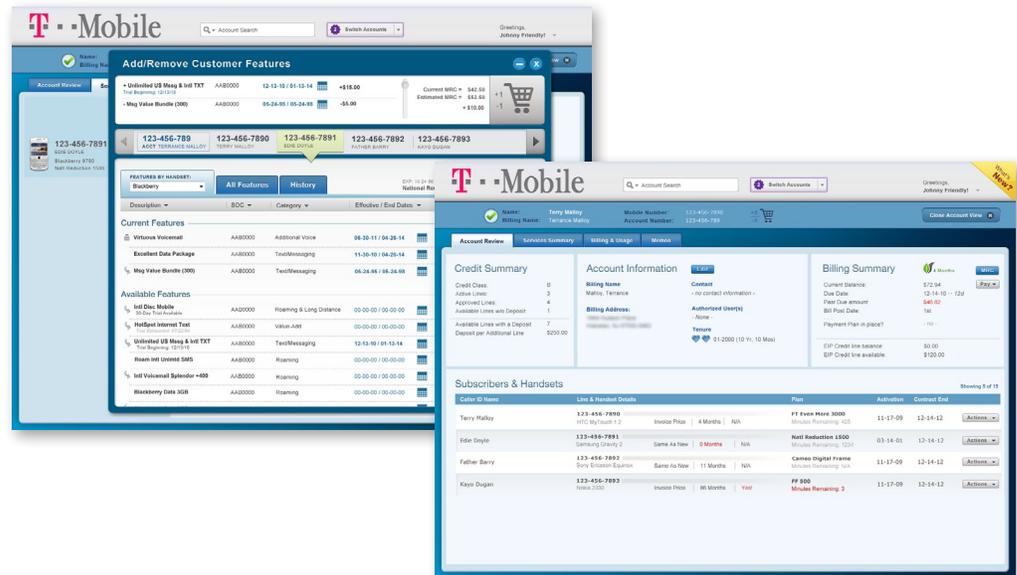## One interface, one set of information

The lack of a single consistent user interface for accessing and managing customer information created several additional challenges. Customer-facing employees in retail stores did not always have access to the same applications and customer data that call center staff used, which meant that RSRs sometimes would not be able to accommodate basic service requests on their own, and were forced to put a call into the customer service center for support. This in essence doubled the demand on T-Mobile USA staff—with both an in-store RSR and a call center agent working on a customer request—resulting in extra time spent by employees and longer resolution times for customers.

Also challenging was the fact that customer service employees could not easily gain a unified view of a customer's current service levels, credit limits, or authorizations, making it difficult to upsell and cross sell new products and services.

A new approach to customer service

To improve every customer interaction, the T-Mobile USA Enterprise IT (EIT) team set out to create a unified agent application (UAA) called QuikView that would give customer-facing employees streamlined access to vital customer information and services.

One major prerequisite was the ability to leverage the company's existing technologies and systems. "Some of our legacy systems are over ten years old and they had functionality gaps," says Art King, QuikView business lead for T-Mobile. "Our employees spent a lot of time navigating the systems to find information." Adds Tweedy, "We wanted a user interface that would sit across all the systems and present complete, cohesive information across all channels."

T-Mobile used the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform (ADEP), the Adobe Flash Platform, and support from Adobe Consulting to develop the rich Internet application (RIA). "We wanted an intuitive RIA, so we chose Adobe Flex as our development platform, Adobe AIR for our runtime client, and the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform on the back end for integration with our legacy applications," says Marcel Deller, vice president of IT development for T-Mobile. "It's vital for us to have enterprise applications that are easy to use and adopt with minimal training."

QuikView's success at T-Mobile USA is driven by several factors including its seamless integration with existing back-end systems and services. The Adobe Flash Platform and the Digital Enterprise Platform enabled T-Mobile to build a unified interface that integrates with T-Mobile's service-oriented architecture (SOA), connected to Oracle, SAP, Amdocs, and several custom-built legacy systems. QuikView displays all of the information about the customer's account and presents upsell and upgrade opportunities all on one screen, pulling information from multiple back-end systems and data sources.

There are many pertinent examples of how the integration helps customer-facing employees. For instance, the Usage Summary screen displays the most important information retail associates need to service customers. In a short time, QuikView has substantially decreased the number of calls from retail stores to call center staff, which has provided T-Mobile with significant operating expense savings.

"QuikView is user friendly and it has really unlocked the potential of our workforce," says David Sims, senior manager for T-Mobile. "No one knows better than the customer-facing employees what is needed to service the customer. With QuikView, we've brought what they need into one intuitive screen."

Little to no training required

The T-Mobile team says QuikView is readily adopted and used, and requires little to no training. Says Deller, "We have agents participating in usability studies that actually have no training whatsoever on QuikView. We ask them to start handling calls, and we see immediate understanding and adoption of the application."

It has already been credited with boosting sales on several campaigns. With one Father's Day promotion, T-Mobile was able to use QuikView to provide all the details to RSRs and call center personnel to increase the campaign's success. "In a really short timeline, we were able to provide the required detail to associates so they could bring the offer forward," says King.

According to Tweedy, employee response to QuikView has been fantastic. "Retail and call center staff are finding they can spend more time serving customers and less time clicking through applications to find information," says Tweedy.

Since the application was first deployed as a pilot in late 2009, demand for QuikView has skyrocketed, and it is currently used by more than 35,000 retail store and customer service employees. Today, QuikView is deployed in all 2,000 T-Mobile owned and operated retail stores in the United States and Puerto Rico and all call centers nationwide—including call centers operated by outsourcing partners. In addition, the platform will soon be made available to select third-party retail partners. But customer-facing employees are not the only ones who benefit; customers have a better experience as well, which helps drive brand loyalty for T-Mobile.

"The customer has a positive, consistent experience," says Sims. "They have confidence in T-Mobile because they might talk to a retail person and then contact customer service. They get a great customer experience with the same answers and same information. It gives our customers a lot of confidence in dealing with T-Mobile."

Fast time to market in a rapidly changing industry

With this new technology supporting customer service, the company has a stable, extensible application with a lower total cost of ownership. QuikView has also helped the company dramatically reduce time to market for new products and services. "The wireless field is constantly changing so our ability to have a platform like QuikView where we can rapidly make changes and deploy them quickly is key," says Deller.

In T-Mobile's business, everything imaginable is measured to determine its impact on the business. According to T-Mobile, QuikView has improved metrics across the board. "One of the most important metrics is call handling time," says Sims. "We've already seen a reduction of eight to ten seconds of call resolution time. It sounds small, but when you're taking 220 million calls a year, do the math."

Adding to the beneficial cost savings, the company has been able to take advantage of enhanced upsell and cross-sell capabilities supported by QuikView. "We will always be a customer service-oriented company," says Tweedy. "But we are moving from pure service toward blended service and sales. QuikView is the technology that empowers us to be able to deliver on that promise and deliver it in a way that is already differentiating us in the marketplace."

Minimizing training, improving collaboration

Another factor driving QuikView's success is its ease of use and comprehensive functionality. The application was developed in Adobe Flex, with help from Adobe Consulting, and uses an interface based on the Adobe AIR runtime. Part of the Adobe Flash Platform, the Flex framework is an open source development language for building RIAs that make it easier for people to view and interact with data. The Adobe AIR runtime lets developers use proven web application technologies to deploy RIAs that run online and offline outside the browser on a variety of operating systems.

According to Deller, QuikView provides a refreshingly simple user interface that supports both the data interactions of a desktop application and the instant updates of the web.

Benefits across the board

For T-Mobile USA, the benefits of using Adobe solutions are evident throughout the organization. The company is reducing costs and call resolution times significantly—all while increasing revenue through cross-selling and upselling opportunities and delivering award winning customer service.

"Adobe solutions are helping us streamline and enhance the customer experience, and we're already seeing benefits to the bottom line," says Tweedy. "One of our main goals is to make it easier to do business with T-Mobile—that is the primary motivation behind the QuikView project, and it's been very successful."