



RESEARCH UPDATE

Unification, Streamlined Productivity Mark

Enhancements in Verint's New WFO & Customer Analytics Release

Summary

On March 23, 2015, Verint® Systems, of Melville, NY announced the release of significant enhancements to its enterprise workforce optimization (WFO) and Customer Analytics solutions. The enhancements complement the company's Customer Engagement Optimization platform and touch nearly all aspects of the WFO solution with particular focus on the user interface and analytics, along with advanced capabilities that support smarter engagement, real-time guidance and employee productivity.

Leading the enhancements is the completely redesigned user interface that can be customized by the user in order to present a workstation that is designed to meet the needs and preferences of the individual user. The new user interface provides a unified, task-oriented WFO experience as opposed to the need to access the WFO experience via multiple discreet applications.

This new release also includes advancements in speech analytics capabilities that begin with a speech engine that has been re-architected from the ground up in order to improve accuracy and lower the total cost of ownership through its enhanced performance. New proprietary speech indexing software enables the transcription and indexing of full words and groupings of words in order to improve discovery in the speech analytics process. Using deeper contextual understanding via advanced semantic intelligence, Automated Theme Discovery automates many formerly manual workflows by presenting users with words, phrases and themes that appear frequently within a customer call.

Enhancements to this release also include embedded voice biometrics technology that can help improve the customer experience while streamlining fraud prevention and customer authentication practices during customer contacts. New customer identity techniques eliminate the need for contact center agents to ask identity authentication questions during the initial seconds of a customer call. Similarly, these new techniques can be used to more efficiently identify calls made by fraudsters.

Employee productivity is also addressed by Verint's redesigned quality management capabilities that empower the agent and manager with the presentation of comprehensive employee information during performance evaluations. New reporting capabilities assist managers in pinpointing agent productivity at the desktop, adding a new dimension to the unified view of employee productivity.

The enhancements to Verint's WFO and Customer Analytics solutions are immediately available.

[The View From The Saddle](#)

This announcement represents major enhancements to Verint's flagship WFO solution. While Verint has undertaken a number of acquisitions over the past several years that have been instrumental in the creation of its Customer Engagement Optimization portfolio, WFO remains a core pillar of Verint's contact center solutions and this announcement represents tangible proof of Verint's continued commitment to providing a state-of-the-art WFO solution for the industry. The sub-sections below will examine the highlights of this extensive product announcement.

Speech Analytics

Saddletree Research believes that the enhancements to Verint's speech analytics solution could have, and perhaps should have, been its own standalone announcement. Once again Verint has pushed the envelope in terms of analytics performance, this time completely rebuilding its speech analytics engine in order to boost processing speed and accuracy to the point of redefining industry standards. Total cost of ownership (TCO) has been significantly lowered as the enhanced speech analytics solution requires only about half the hardware that the previous generation required. While reducing the solution's TCO Verint has simultaneously engineered a 100-plus percent increase in its analytics processing speed, further improving the overall cost effectiveness of the Verint WFO solution. Saddletree Research believes this juxtaposition will not only be welcomed, it will be quickly adopted by the end-user community.

From an industry perspective, one of the challenges of processing speech for analysis is speaker separation so that the software can identify who is speaking and analyze accordingly. This challenge is typically met by providing a stereo feed from the ACD to the recorder wherein the agent and the customer are recorded on different audio streams. Many contact centers, however, have recorders that record in a single monaural channel only so speech analytics solutions have been essentially out of reach for them. This shortcoming is addressed by Verint's software-based answer to speaker separation as included in these new WFO enhancements.

Verint speech analytics software now captures and separates voice streams during a customer conversation without relying on a stereo feed. Software-based speaker separation not only opens the speech analytics market to those contact centers with mono recorders, it has the potential to impact industries beyond customer service, such as the legal industry, where technology has been the limiting factor in recording courtroom proceedings due to the inability to separate one speaker from another in these recordings.

Enhancements to Verint's proprietary speech analytics software also extends to speech indexing. Verint's Complete Semantic Index is the core capability that transcribes and indexes full words, and groups of words, rather than phonemes. This self-learning software guides speech analytics users toward words or phrases of interest in recordings based upon the full words used during a customer communication. Saddletree Research believes this capability is unique in the contact center industry.

Verint refers to the capability described in the paragraph above as Automated Theme Discovery. This feature dramatically reduces the need for human searching and indexing in the speech analytics process. Automated Theme Discovery identifies and quantifies frequently used words or themes during customer contacts and pushes this information out to the user. Reducing the need for human intervention in the discovery process means the user doesn't need special skills in order to get the most out of their speech analytics application.

Employee Productivity and Performance

Verint has an innate ability to be visionary while keeping its feet planted firmly on the ground and that is the case with the enhancements to its WFO solution. Specifically, Verint has not neglected to bring improvements to its quality management application, including coaching and training. Among the enhancements to quality management is the unification of previously separate applications.

The unified performance management capabilities included in this new release eliminates the need to jump between applications in order to provide an agent with a coaching session. Trainers and supervisors can create a coaching session, attach supporting documentation with annotations, and send the entire package to an agent all within the performance management application.

Also new within the performance management application is the ability to track employee performance to help ensure that performance is, in fact, improving. Supervisors can set performance milestones and measure employee performance against those milestones for a given time period. Supervisors can set up alerts if milestones aren't met and appropriate action, such as additional training or coaching, can be undertaken in order to address performance shortcomings. Once again Verint has automated a formerly manual process while adding considerable efficiencies to the management practice.

Also new to this release are productivity and effectiveness reports that provide a concise analysis of the length of time an employee may spend in a particular application. Similar in capabilities to desktop analytics, this formerly custom application combines desktop usage information with schedule information and adherence data in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of actual employee productivity.

Real-Time Guidance

Voice biometrics makes its debut as a WFO component with this new release. Verint has introduced passive voice biometrics to the customer identification process in order to eliminate the need to ask customers to answer security questions each time that customer calls. Passive voice biometrics matches the customer's voice with a stored individual voice print within the first few seconds of the call and verifies the caller's identification. Initial customer voice prints can be captured via archived recordings. The customer's recorded voice is then archived for future use.

It should be noted that this same process that can smooth the customer care process can also seriously disrupt the bad intentions of those attempting to commit fraud. Like customer voice prints, fraudster voice prints can also be captured, archived and used to identify questionable calls. These questionable calls can be immediately identified and routed to security or risk management to be dealt with as appropriate.

Summary

To say this is a major product enhancement to Verint's solutions portfolio would be an understatement. Verint has obviously closely scrutinized each component of its WFO suite, evaluated user needs, considered market evolution, gauged customer service expectations, assessed competitive factors and set its engineers to work. The net result is the creation of a unified WFO solution wherein the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. Not only does this new release have the potential to redefine WFO in the contact center, it pushes the boundaries of optimal customer service and could significantly raise the bar in terms of customer expectations in the future.

As an organization, Verint is equal parts industry innovator, bastion of stability, and unapologetic disruptor. Like all leading technology companies, Verint knows which role to exploit and when in order to anticipate and address evolving customer requirements while maintaining its industry leadership. In the case of this new WFO software release, Verint has taken the best of each of its business personalities in order to create a product that is as rebelliously innovative as it is disruptively efficient. The extensive nature of all the enhancements included in this latest release is further proof of Verint's well-established reputation for dedication and commitment to continuous improvement in the global customer service industry.

