

Turning customer interaction into profitable relationships

Reaping the benefits of unified customer communication management (CCM)

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Effective customer communication boosts customer loyalty, ensures brand and regulatory compliance, reduces environmental impact and helps control a range of costs such as reductions in IT maintenance, printing, call centre operations and postage. However, most organisations take a fragmented approach to managing enterprise customer communications using outdated technologies which are not consistent across the range of media channels that people use today. Quocirca's report examines how a CCM strategy can transform the impact of customer communications at every customer touch point, controlling cost, driving operational efficiencies and building customer loyalty.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Clear, effective and relevant communication is critical to building trusted and long-term customer relationships, yet many organisations—both private and public sector—struggle to manage and deliver consistent and cost-effective communications across today's multitude of media channels. This leads to poor branding, compliance issues, higher customer care costs and, ultimately, customer attrition. An effective CCM strategy overcomes these challenges through a unified approach to the creation, management and delivery of multichannel, interactive customer communications.

- **Today's "connected" consumer-centric world is putting pressure on businesses to deliver timely, personal and compelling communications across diverse channels.**
Businesses are communicating with better informed and increasingly demanding consumers via a multitude of channels, including email, web sites and/or portals, SMS, and social media networks along with traditional mail and telephony via call centres. Well connected customers are less tolerant of fragmented and inferior service and are more willing to readily move to a competitor as a result of a poor customer experience.
- **An uncoordinated approach to customer communications has serious implications for any business.**
Businesses are facing phenomenal growth in the types of communication that an organisation has to manage—both inbound and outbound. Inconsistent and inaccurate communications not only leads to brand inconsistency but can expose an organisation to litigation or financial penalties and negative publicity. The consequential damage can be lasting, particularly in the connected world that all businesses now operate in where reputations can be quickly sullied.
- **Many companies use multiple products to create and manage customer communications, leading to inefficiencies and increased costs of management and maintenance.**
Most businesses generate huge volumes of customer communications, such as statements, bills, direct mail and general correspondence. These communications are often based on a multitude of different templates, which are stored in different environments making them impossible to update, version and track. This decentralised approach is costly and time consuming and makes it not only hard to ensure consistent and accurate communications but also to maintain brand integrity.
- **Lack of customer knowledge is the root of communications challenges.**
Organisations seeking to improve customer communications should look beyond customer relationship management (CRM) systems, as these often fail to capture and analyse all inbound and outbound communications. Data quality is the foundation for CCM, and CRM is but one feed. By leveraging existing CRM and transaction data, CCM provides a 360 degree view of the customer, ensuring that on-going communications are highly personalised and relevant.
- **The benefits of CCM are tangible, reducing costs and improving operational efficiency while enhancing the customer experience.**
An effective CCM platform provides a unified approach to managing all enterprise communications, regardless of format or delivery channel. CCM tools empower business users to create and manage customer communications, reducing the reliance on costly IT resources. Personalised cross-channel communications can be created through sophisticated data quality and integration tools, while advanced storage and retrieval capabilities ensure all communications, including email and SMS, can be centrally stored and accessed.

Conclusion

The negative impact of irrelevant and unclear communications cannot be underestimated. As customer interactions across media channels continue to grow, a disjointed approach to communications will have profound consequences for any business in the form of higher costs, customer loss and brand damage. Those businesses that stay ahead of the competition will be those that develop a good CCM strategy that coordinates multichannel communications, empowers business users and provides a rapid return on investment. Businesses that do will reap the benefits of lower costs, improved efficiency and greater customer loyalty.

1. Introduction: the challenge of communications in the digital age

Today, businesses across most industry verticals—be it financial services, insurance, retail, telecommunications, utilities or the public sector—engage in customer communications through documents such as statements, bills, contracts, customer correspondence or direct mail promotions to reach their customers or citizens. However, many organisations rely on disparate and incompatible communications systems which have been further complicated by the rush to move from traditional print to less costly online communications channels. Such an approach has proven to be costly, inefficient and often results in inconsistent and inferior communications. This reduces an organisation's ability to provide coordinated messaging, leads to an inconsistent brand experience and fails to meet the rising expectations of today's informed and demanding customers.

The winds of change

A myriad of business challenges are forcing organisations to rethink their approach to communicating with customers: a shrinking economy, demanding online consumers, a drive for lower costs, commoditisation of products and services, shorter product lifecycles, the disruption of traditional media channels and increasingly global competition—the list is long and growing. Economic reality is forcing organisations to cut costs through headcount reductions and by slashing capital expenditure to tackle falling bottom lines and more restricted cash flow. Rising customer service costs, regulatory pressures and green initiatives also mean IT investments are being subjected to ever-increasing scrutiny as organisations are forced to do more with less. This, in turn, is seeing rising interest in cloud services, service oriented architectures and XML data formatting—all technologies which can potentially provide a more cost-effective IT delivery model.

The problem is further compounded by major shifts in consumer demographics and the increasing spending power of today's tech-savvy digital natives. The connected consumer environment is characterised by a proliferation of media channels including email, text messaging (SMS), web chat, web self-service/portals and online social media. This has been further boosted by the growing use of smart mobile devices such as the iPhone and the BlackBerry, with the expanded availability of unlimited data packages accelerating adoption of the mobile web.

Consequently, today's "always-on" consumers and business users have more choices than ever before and want product and service information that is personally relevant, timely and delivered via their preferred channels. If customer satisfaction is not met across multiple channels, the result is customer frustration, customer defection and, therefore, missed revenue. Also, as consumer attention splinters across these fragmented channels, each channel becomes another part of the complex communications environment that an organisation has to manage.

The impact of viral marketing

The continuous power shift to consumers is further illustrated by the growing adoption of social networking tools such as Facebook, MySpace and Twitter. Twitter attracted a total of 44.5 million unique visitors in June 2009 (source: comScore, August 2009) and, according to Nielsen Online, social networking is now the fourth most popular online activity, ahead of personal email. The advent of these so-called "Web 2.0" technologies means customers can share their opinions online instantly and influence millions of people to buy a product or service—or to pass on

The "connected" interactive consumer

The rise of social media: 43% of the online community now uses social networking sites, up from 27% in 2008. (Source: The Consumer Internet Barometer)

Retail banking: The number of adults using online banking between 2001 and 2006 grew by 174%, with a 350% increase in the over 55 age group. (Source: APACS, August 2007)

Online purchasing: According to Verdict Research, online retail sales in the UK are predicted to grow by 13.3% to £20.9bn in 2009 and will reach £31.2bn by 2013. (Source: Retail Week, June 2009)

Email: There are 1.3 billion email users worldwide and it is estimated that 210 billion emails were sent per day in 2008. (Source: Radicati Group, January 2009)

Mobile phone usage: There are 4.4 billion mobile users, more than half the world's population. (Source: ITU World Telecommunication, August 2009)

Mobile internet: Mobile internet users in the US grew by 74% between February 2007 and February 2009. (Source: Nielsen Mobile, April 2009)

SMS: On average, in the UK, 6.5 billion text messages are sent per month, or almost 217 million per day. (Source: Mobile Data Association, February 2009)

negative feedback that will impact buying intentions for many more. According to a study by CM Insight on behalf of BT, while 70% of people will share the experience of bad interaction with a company, only 49% will share an exceptional one. Meanwhile, a customer experience study by RightNow Technologies in 2008 showed that 22% of US consumers have blogged about a negative customer experience, up from 13% in 2007. Such viral (or “word of mouth”) marketing makes it very difficult for organisations to ignore or hide from bad customer experiences. While positive endorsements can boost the popularity of a brand, one poor customer interaction can tarnish reputation for a long time.

For any organisation seeking to retain customers and strengthen customer loyalty it is essential that they focus resources on delivering effective, coordinated and timely customer-centric communications across today’s complex multichannel environment. Customer communications plays a critical role in building customer loyalty and increasing customer satisfaction, not least because capturing additional revenues from existing customers will generally be more profitable than the expense of finding and cultivating new customers.

Intelligent customer communication—an opportunity to gain customer insight

Whether printed or electronic, customer communications are critical customer relationship tools; they are the foundation for every customer interaction, whatever the media channel of delivery. For example, the monthly bill or quarterly statement may be the only regular link a financial service or utility company has with its customers and, with the move to paperless statements and online account management, banks, for example, may have the capability for interacting far more frequently with customers as they keep more regular tabs on their financial situation. Every customer interaction is therefore an opportunity to gain customer knowledge and strengthen the relationship through personalised communications. By customising these communications, an organisation can respond to customer preferences, take into account previous interactions and incorporate messages based upon an individual’s current and potential future value.

Customer communications can be broken into three categories:

- **High volume transactional communications**, which are generated for a large number of customers, such as financial statements, bills and direct mail. These documents are structured, scheduled, consistently formatted and sent as part of an existing customer relationship and may be delivered via print or digital media.
- **Event-driven communications** are low volume documents that are triggered by a business process or by a user, resulting in the generation of a particular document, such as an advice slip or order confirmation. These documents can then be produced in a similar way to high volume or batch documents, but at a lower volume.
- **Interactive communications**, such as letters, personalised offers, proposals and contracts that require real-time information and human interaction, and are unlike transactional and event-driven documents that rely on automated creation and production processes. Examples include insurance quotation or renewal documents generated by a call centre representative by inserting customer information into existing standardised documents.

Most organisations may be using a set of disparate tools, systems and processes for creating the above communications, giving rise to significant challenges relating to technology, performance and integration. Existing systems, accumulated over the previous years, are mainly based on outdated and non-service oriented architectures. As a result they are challenged to address the growing technology requirements as communications proliferate across channels.

Impact of a poor customer communications approach

With the multichannel communications environment becoming ever more complex, those businesses that operate a siloed, disconnected approach to customer interactions face significant consequences, specifically:

- **Higher operating costs:** A reliance on paper-based communications leading to high postage expenses along with higher fulfilment costs as a result of manual processes. Also, the traditional approach, of using a range of distributed solutions requiring IT resources to develop and maintain templates, is costly and time consuming.

- **Higher customer care costs:** Unclear communications often increase customer care costs due to unnecessary support calls, which can then lead to increased customer frustration and, ultimately, to attrition.
- **Lower customer satisfaction:** Lack of compelling and relevant communications makes it harder to attract new customers and also leads to declining client loyalty with the consequential loss of repeat business. When recurring communications fail to be delivered in the context of an existing customer relationship the situation is exacerbated—whether it's receiving an irrelevant loan offer from a bank or a promotion for inappropriate goods from a retail outlet.
- **Brand damage:** Inferior communications, which do not meet corporate brand standards, may reinforce a negative experience and embed poor perception of a company—and the customer may well use their personal channels of communication to share this perception across and beyond their immediate circle of influence.
- **Regulatory non-compliance:** Businesses that rely on central archival and storage of critical customer communications are subject to a range of compliance requirements such as Sarbanes-Oxley, Patriot Act, Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) and the UK Data Protection Act. Reliable records management practices, which enable data to be retained and retrieved efficiently and securely, are essential for compliance to these regulations. Lack of adherence to such regulations may lead to direct fines as well as brand damage through consequent bad publicity.
- **Lack of customer knowledge:** Although many organisations have amassed a wealth of data after having invested heavily in customer relationship management (CRM) systems to help gather, analyse and segment customer data, few are able to turn this into true customer knowledge. Lack of integration with CRM, enterprise content management (ECM) and enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems prevents organisations from exploiting the investments they have made in enterprise systems for creating personalised and consistent communication.
- **Lack of visibility and management of SMS and email communication:** While many organisations have rushed to implement new communications channels, such as SMS and email, few are able to track the delivery of both outbound and inbound messages, and automatically archive these communications. This means it is almost impossible for an organisation to obtain an up-to-date view of all customer communications. Worse still is the potential compliance risk. Existing regulations such as Sarbanes-Oxley, HIPAA and the FRCP treat email as equal to paper-based documents in terms of being valid and admissible documentation in a court of law. Such documentation can be requested by attorneys or courts in the form of an eDiscovery request.

The impact of uncoordinated and inferior communications cannot be underestimated. Astute organisations are turning to a unified CCM platform to overcome the pitfalls associated with disparate communications systems. A coordinated CCM strategy has enabled forward-thinking organisations to drive efficiency in the management of inbound and outbound communications across all customer interactions. In the face of the growing empowerment of consumers, the increased complexity of multichannel communications and greater cost reduction imperatives, organisations that adopt a CCM strategy can effectively reduce enterprise-wide communications costs, strengthen customer loyalty and build competitive advantage.

2. CCM—a proven approach

A CCM platform enables an organisation to use enterprise customer data to generate content across business areas and integrate this across delivery channels and formats so that every communication across every touch-point is relevant, timely and accurate.

Quocirca defines CCM as encompassing the creation, delivery, storage and retrieval of all outbound and inbound communications, across every customer touch point (Figure 1 – see next page). CCM connects with most enterprise systems, providing the missing component to link customer communications to enterprise-wide applications that store customer data. Through sophisticated capabilities that support data quality and integration, predictive analytics and the harnessing of geo-demographic data, next generation CCM tools offer organisations an effective means of creating clear and targeted communications across all delivery channels.

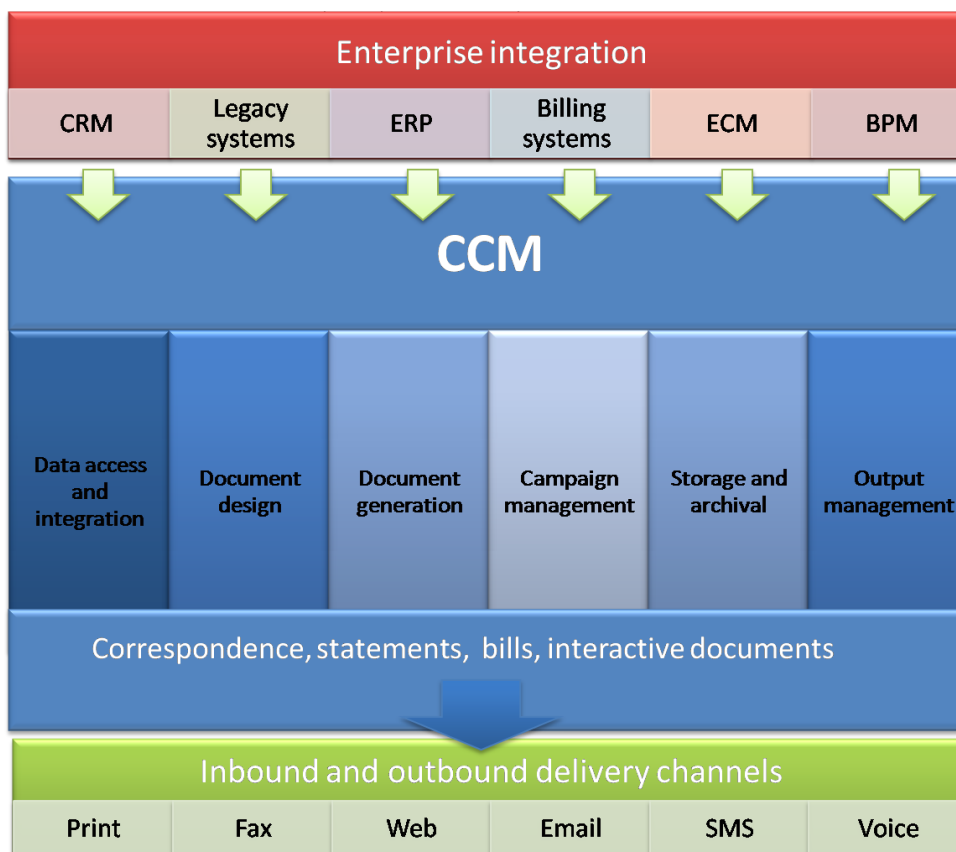


Figure 1: A framework for CCM – Source: Quocirca

2.1. Fundamentals of a CCM platform

In addition to changing economic and consumer market conditions, shifts in technology have also raised the bar for what a next generation CCM platform should offer. Nearly all business users are now familiar with office tools such as Microsoft Word as well as, in some cases, accessing web-based tools from the likes of Google, Amazon, Microsoft or salesforce.com. Meanwhile, XML-based open standards are also being adopted as the means to exchange information across the enterprise and with customers and suppliers.

CCM products are sold as either an end-to-end suite or as point solutions. A true enterprise approach to CCM should be taken that will leverage existing systems, but it can also be deployed as independent components to enable a business to quickly implement a CCM strategy.

Key capabilities include:

- Data access and integration**
 CCM data access tools provide seamless access to customer information, wherever it resides, to develop a full customer profile. Data access tools can also be used to generate marketing campaign analysis and customer segmentation. CCM data manipulation tools validate customer data and can also perform analysis using lifestyle, geographic and demographic information to enrich customer profiles.
- Document creation**
 CCM document creation or composition tools provide easy content creation for multichannel personalised communications. A wide range of document types—for example, letters, direct mail and statements—can be designed for delivery to paper, email, SMS and online channels, as well as the burgeoning social media environment. In contrast with traditional tools, document templates can be created and managed by business users, reducing dependency on IT resources. Marketing, sales, service and legal personnel can all produce graphically rich, personalised communications, while the business still retains suitable levels of

control. Document automation processes are much faster, as dynamic templates enable a “write once, publish many” model that supports personalisation, multiple languages and multiple delivery channels.

- **Campaign management**

This enables marketing messages to be customised and coordinated across print and online channels, using business rules and predictive analytics to define target customer profiles. Geographic and demographic criteria can be used to identify best candidates for a given promotion, which is used by document composition tools to create personalised and targeted correspondence.

- **Production and output management**

CCM production and distribution tools optimise the production of both high volume and on-demand customer communications in multiple print and digital formats. Using CCM output and production workflow capabilities, output can be delivered to all channels, from high volume print and mail environments to online and email/SMS.

- **Storage and retrieval**

CCM solutions manage the storage and security of all documents, outbound and inbound, electronic and paper, using high speed, secure archive and storage facilities, including email management. Accessing a high-performance central repository, customer-facing business users such as CSRs, agents and brokers can search, instantly retrieve and view exact replica documents to quickly answer questions, while ensuring regulatory compliance. Centralised CCM storage can also be used to deploy customer web self-service and online account management, which can further drive customer service activity, deflecting calls that would have been handled by the call centre.

2.2. The benefits of CCM

Today’s economic climate puts increasing pressure on organisations to reduce enterprise wide communications costs through the development of a CCM strategy:

- **To create efficient and consistent multichannel communications:** As the number of channels increases, the risk of inconsistent and inaccurate communications reaching customers also goes up. CCM helps to gain efficiencies and cost reduction in the creation and delivery of consistent communications across all media channels.
- **To deliver accurate, current, personalised and high quality communications.** Fully exploiting existing customer data to create a “single view” of a customer ensures communications can be personalised to that individual’s specific needs.
- **To integrate print and electronic delivery:** Print communications will continue to be the preferred delivery format for many customers, and many communications are far more effective when printed. Costs can be reduced significantly by using a single platform that manages to generate and distribute print and electronic communications, rather than separate incompatible systems.
- **To lower customer service costs through “avoidable-touch” strategies:** Accurate and clear “self-service” communications can deflect costly customer service calls to more cost-effective, web-based interactions.
- **To reduce operational costs.** Traditional document creation and generation tools are often print-centric, highly IT-reliant and costly. CCM document creation tools place the ongoing maintenance of documents in the hands of business users rather than IT staff, reducing time and cost.
- **To improve call centre operations.** Equipping call centre agents with accurate information to service calls ensures that call handling is prompt and reliable, while integrating information captured by call centre agents

Reducing call centre expenses

Reduce time-based costs by lowering the average time it takes agents to retrieve or update billing information, service histories, product and promotion offerings, and other information from back-end systems. This can reduce service costs by up to 25%. (Source: McKinsey & Company)

Reduce transaction costs. A transaction that costs \$2 to \$10 when handled by a live agent will cost just \$0.02 to \$0.10 if the customer can self-serve online; making customer service information and applications available online an imperative. (Source: McKinsey & Company)

Increase revenue by allowing agents to quickly access customer data for up-sell and cross-sell opportunities. Making this information easily available can increase service revenue by up to 35%. (Source: McKinsey & Company)

with business systems such as CRM and enterprise content management (ECM), CCM ensures that customers receive timely and accurate communications based on a complete knowledge of the customer's interactions.

- **To support green initiatives:** moving from traditional structured printed output to electronic documents eliminate paper and postage costs as well as reduces the environmental burden associated with the printing and transportation of paper documents.
- **To comply with regulatory requirements:** regulations such as the Data Protection Act (DPA), ISO17799 and Basel II, and Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) means document security and compliance needs are reshaping customer communications requirements. CCM data manipulation tools manage content inclusion or exclusion based on jurisdictions while approval workflow mechanisms ensure communications meet corporate and regulatory standards.

3. CCM in practice

As seen, CCM can be applied across every customer communication touch point. Businesses manage many types of documents: customised high-volume transactional documents, on-demand documents for marketing, and online self-service and interactive communications such as personalised correspondence that is created by customer-facing employees. This section highlights two key areas where CCM can help organisations reduce costs and drive operational efficiencies by improving the processes around creating, managing and delivering outbound and inbound communications.

3.1. Making a statement with TransPromo communications

The challenge

The average consumer is exposed to as many as 3,000 advertising messages per day through different media channels. For organisations who want to be heard through this clutter, it is necessary to deliver targeted and relevant communications that will make the targeted prospect sit up and take notice.

The CCM approach

Transactional documents can be powerful direct marketing tools as they are usually opened and read, so that they have the potential to achieve a much higher response rate than traditional direct mail. It is estimated that consumers spend an average of two to three minutes reviewing each statement; in contrast, most direct mail is discarded without reading.

TransPromo communications require a combination of document composition software and data mining, together with variable data publishing tools to enable documents to be formatted dynamically using a combination of data and business rules. TransPromo messages aren't limited to printed documents—they are even more effective on e-statements and bills, delivered via email and SMS, linking customers directly to an organisation's web site through, for example, personalised URLs.

What can make TransPromo even more powerful is the use of customer analytics to predict customer preferences. The use of location intelligent, geo-demographic data can further drive the relevance of communications, based on customer lifestyle and location information. The success of any TransPromo campaign lies in the data quality—CCM data management tools leverage existing customer data to derive a single view of the customer to ensure that the right customers are being targeted with the right offer at the right time.

What is TransPromo?

TransPromo is the integration of promotional, marketing or educational messages with transactional statements (such as invoices, bills, statements or event notification).

TransPromo in retail banking

Before:

- Customer receives paper statement or online statement, and separate marketing offers for insurance, loans and credit cards from same bank. These are generic offers with no personalisation.

After:

- Retail bank uses white space on statement to include personalised marketing and educational messages such as new offers from a local branch, appropriate account options based on account balances, or relevant savings advice.

Benefits:

- Clear, easy-to-read bills and statements have reduced call centre traffic.
- Special offers have enabled bank to cross-sell other financial products to existing account holders.
- Eliminating separate monthly mailings has led to significant cost savings in relation to printing, transport and energy usage.

3.2. Transforming call centre communications with interactive documents

The challenge

Interactive documents are point-of-need or event-driven and include letters, proposals, contracts and quotations. These are often interactively completed by customer-facing employees such as insurance claim handlers, financial advisors and customer service representatives working in call centres.

Typically, organisations create and manage interactive documents across many different departments using siloed document creation systems, such as Microsoft Word-based solutions. A multitude of incompatible templates can be costly and time consuming to manage and a lack of centralised management and administration means it is almost impossible to keep templates up-to-date.

Further, interactive documents typically require review and approval before delivery to the customer, yet have to be delivered to the customer within tight timescales. Therefore, corners tend to be cut, meaning that these communications can be error-prone with no controls to ensure consistent branding and compliance.

The CCM approach

With good CCM, the challenges of creating interactive documents can be overcome, providing customer-facing employees with controlled editing. Business users create documents based on pre-defined templates stored in a common repository. These templates may be role-based and dynamically retrieve content from enterprise systems. Customer-facing users access relevant communication templates which guide them through completion of an interactive document.

Certain sections may be pre-completed with approved content according to user selection, and personalised messages can also be inserted. Accuracy is ensured by workflow and approval features and can be integrated into existing CRM or business process systems so that the most accurate content is accessed and retrieved and management approval ensured as required.

Insurance call centre organisation uses CCM interactive documents to improve customer service across different brands and products.

Before:

- Customer quotation, proposal, claims and renewal documents are created based on a range of different templates for different insurance brands and products.
- A customer service representative (CSR) has to locate correct template, complete the template and modify based on product or insurance brand and send for approval.
- The letter is then printed and posted to the customer, which initiates a manual fulfilment process for postage and document archiving.

After:

- CSR selects pre-defined template and pre-approved content based on document type.
- CSR can choose appropriate brand or product and select delivery channel (e.g. letter, email or text).
- The CCM tool automatically formats document for appropriate output.

Benefits:

- Moving document control to the CSR means that the application process is reduced from days or weeks to minutes or hours.
- Less time is spent by IT on maintaining documents and the amount of new customer quotes increases.
- Faster time to market leads to higher customer satisfaction and increased revenue.
- Enterprise workflow approval ensures that all correspondence meets corporate and government compliance standards.

3.3. Improving customer service with email and SMS communications

The challenge

Email and SMS have emerged as increasingly popular ways for organisations to communicate with customers on the go 24 x 7. Documents that may be delivered through these channels could be event notification (e.g. renew car tax), an email of a document (e.g. insurance claim) or an SMS as a summary notification (e.g. travel confirmation details). Many organisations use document composition tools to personalise printed communications, but may use third party solutions to deliver email and SMS communications, as well as a separate tool to manage inbound communications. This poses challenges in respect to managing, controlling and coordinating information that customers receive.

The CCM approach

CCM tools can enable business users to deliver personalised communications in a variety of formats, including SMS and email, with future potential integration across social media channels such as Twitter, Facebook and blogs. CCM e-messaging solutions can index email communications for archiving call centre access or records management in CCM document repositories. Some CCM solutions also offer two-way communications—encompassing composition and delivery as well as reporting on and managing responses. Inbound email and SMS messages can be routed to appropriate staff based on the message's content and urgency whilst complying with storage and retrieval regulations.

The benefits

By creating automated and personalised emails and SMS communications using a CCM platform, organisations can benefit from an integrated approach to managing and controlling email and SMS messages rather than using disparate third party solutions. This enables all emails and SMS communications to be archived with existing customer communications content, providing a single view of all content exchanged with customers regardless of channel (in- and outbound hard copy, web, fax, email and SMS communications).

4. Conclusion

To maximise the effectiveness of customer communication, organisations should develop a CCM strategy to integrate existing approaches to creating, managing and delivering communications. This means evaluating all communications processes, from billing through direct mail marketing, to customer call centre operations. CCM maximises the potential of existing investments in CRM by providing a key component that is often missing—a consistent, coordinated customer experience across every channel and at every touch point. Through streamlining the communications process at each customer interaction, CCM can uncover opportunities for lower costs, greater operational efficiencies and an improved customer experience.

Effective Customer Communication Management establishes a platform to build trust and value within a customer-base; if done well, it encourages the customer to open up additional communication channels and delivers impact beyond traditional marcoms activity.

Forward thinking customer-centric organisations are recognising the influence that social media channels can have on their brand. Future CCM capabilities will enable organisations to provide individualised customer service across these channels as a more dynamic way to create more engaging relationships with customers, enhancing communications creation and delivery across existing channels. Through streamlining the communications process at each customer interaction, CCM can uncover opportunities for lower costs, greater operational efficiencies and an improved customer experience.

The key to success lies in first identifying those communications processes which can benefit most immediately from transitioning to CCM. CCM should be viewed as a long term strategy which can be built up gradually to enable an organisation to benefit from a true enterprise approach to CCM. The benefits are clear—stronger, more profitable customer relationships leading to greater customer loyalty, increased revenues and distinct competitive advantage.

What to look for in a CCM platform

To maximise the potential for creating effective customer communications, and uncovering opportunities for lower costs and higher revenues, CCM should be implemented as an enterprise platform. This can take a phased approach, deploying components based on unique requirements. The following outlines the key considerations when choosing a CCM platform.

- **Single platform versus suite of products:**
 - Does the vendor offer a suite of components rather than a single platform?
 - How well integrated are individual components?
- **Technology considerations:**
 - Does the solution integrate with existing CRM, ECM and transactional systems, including legacy mainframes?
 - Which data integration and cleansing tools are supported to create a single view of the customer?
 - Is it built on open standards to enable broad interoperability for modern SOA environments?
- **Content authoring:**
 - Are tools simple to use for all content authors—from design editors to customer-facing employees?
 - Is communication history recorded for personalisation and compliance reasons?
 - What are its collaboration and change management capabilities? Do workflow tools enable template and document reviews along with full audit trails?
- **Support for multichannel output:**
 - Are dynamic templates offered to provide multichannel support using a single template?
 - What output formats are supported? (such as print, fax, HTML, SMS, RSS, XML)
 - Does it support multiple languages?
- **Flexibility:**
 - Are tools built for users, not IT?
- **Scalability:**
 - Can the solution handle one-off interactive documents as well as high-volume batch applications such as end-of-month financial statements?
- **Secure document archiving**
 - Does it format stored documents with appropriate metadata so that records management and retention policies are adhered to, determining when and how documents can be retrieved?

5. CCM best practice

Thomas Cook UK & Ireland harnesses Pitney Bowes Business Insight's CCM solution to reduce costs and increases revenue

Thomas Cook UK & Ireland is the second largest leisure travel group in the UK with around 19,000 employees. Thomas Cook brands sell through several channels—high street outlets, call centres, www.thomascook.com and Thomas Cook TV. In systems terms, the company found itself running a legacy of differing order processing systems and billing formats. With such a large customer base, multiple service offerings and diverse brands, coordinated communications had become critical to every customer touch point across the business.

The challenge

Thomas Cook recognised the need to consolidate system disparity in order to deliver consistent and efficient customer service. However, it did not wish to go through the major expense, disruption and risk of replacing tried and tested operational systems. The solution would have to be an application that could draw data out of Thomas Cook group companies' legacy system in order to present customers with a consistent and unified front end, branded to each individual company and its sales channels.

The solution

Thomas Cook began working with Pitney Bowes Business Insight to develop a truly integrated CCM system across the company's multiple brands in 2005. Pitney Bowes Business Insight's CCM suite was deployed to deliver an end-to-end solution comprising data integration, document design and generation, and document archive.

Today, the system enables the creation and delivery of personalised travel booklets to global tourists, containing address labels, rail and airline vouchers, flight information vouchers and hotel vouchers. Documents are sorted by itinerary and individually detached for the relevant services. The solution enables travel departments and customer service to display exact replicas of travel booklets in PDF format. It also handles the print control of the individual forms and recognises, at booking level, where the documents must be delivered for printing. The CCM solution incorporates electronic bill presentment and payment, as well as email and SMS delivery of invoices, tickets and insurance documents.

Email integration

In 2009, the integration of Pitney Bowes Business Insight's e-Messaging within the CCM suite enabled Thomas Cook to communicate with customers for important travel information by personal email for the first time. Enabling e-Messaging for its call centres and order processing has produced immediate and tangible benefits to Thomas Cook through the delivery of seamless customer service. The first phase of the roll-out has enabled the company's network of call centres to notify customers on critical communications such as flight and holiday changes.

Thomas Cook Programme Manager, Marian Manson, comments: "With e-Messaging now integrated into our Pitney Bowes Business Insight CCM suite, we can handle large email volumes across the different Thomas Cook brands. The system enables us to deliver personalised communication and quickly pick up bounce-backs to maintain a keen audit on customer data."

Benefits and business impact

Electronic delivery of documents cuts overheads. An early indication of the significant return on investment forecasted by Thomas Cook can be seen by savings in postage alone. As Manson points out: "e-Messaging is not only working to help us deliver high levels of customer satisfaction, which will translate into increased revenues, but will quickly deliver a compelling return on the investment with significant savings already realised on postal and administration costs per customer communication. This will rise substantially as we deploy across our ticketing capability."

With the addition of e-Messaging, Thomas Cook has a seamless, closed-loop system to create a truly integrated CCM capability. The system embraces data integration, document composition, archiving, print stream, high-speed mail insertion and now, email delivery technology.

About Pitney Bowes Business Insight

Pitney Bowes Business Insight (PBBI), a division of Pitney Bowes Software Inc., a wholly-owned subsidiary of Pitney Bowes Inc., provides a unique combination of location and communication intelligence software, data and services that enable organisations to make more informed decisions about customers, competition and market expansion. With the industry's most comprehensive set of solutions for maximising the value of customer data, PBBI provides the tools required to more effectively locate, connect and communicate with customers in today's global markets. Leading organisations rely on PBBI solutions to increase the accuracy and effectiveness of customer information delivery and drive profitable growth. Visit <http://www.pbinsight.com/> and www.pb.com for more information.

About Pitney Bowes Inc.

Pitney Bowes is a \$6.3 billion global technology leader whose products, services and solutions deliver value within the mailstream and beyond. Founded in 1920, the company's 35,000 employees deliver technology, service and innovation to more than two million customers worldwide. For more information about Pitney Bowes, its products, services and solutions, visit <http://www.pb.com/>.



About Quocirca

REPORT NOTE:

This report has been written independently by Quocirca Ltd to provide an overview of the issues facing organisations seeking to maximise the effectiveness of today's dynamic workforce.

The report draws on Quocirca's extensive knowledge of the technology and business arenas, and provides advice on the approach that organisations should take to create a more effective and efficient environment for future growth.

Quocirca would like to thank Pitney Bowes Business Insight for its sponsorship of this report and the Pitney Bowes Business Insight customers who have provided their time and help in the preparation of the case studies.

Quocirca is a primary research and analysis company specialising in the business impact of information technology and communications (ITC). With world-wide, native language reach, Quocirca provides in-depth insights into the views of buyers and influencers in large, mid-sized and small organisations. Its analyst team is made up of real-world practitioners with firsthand experience of ITC delivery who continuously research and track the industry and its real usage in the markets.

Through researching perceptions, Quocirca uncovers the real hurdles to technology adoption—the personal and political aspects of an organisation's environment and the pressures of the need for demonstrable business value in any implementation. This capability to uncover and report back on the end-user perceptions in the market enables Quocirca to advise on the realities of technology adoption, not the promises.

Quocirca research is always pragmatic, business orientated and conducted in the context of the bigger picture. ITC has the ability to transform businesses and the processes that drive them, but often fails to do so. Quocirca's mission is to help organisations improve their success rate in process enablement through better levels of understanding and the adoption of the correct technologies at the correct time.

Quocirca has a pro-active primary research programme, regularly surveying users, purchasers and resellers of ITC products and services on emerging, evolving and maturing technologies. Over time, Quocirca has built a picture of long term investment trends, providing invaluable information for the whole of the ITC community.

Quocirca works with global and local providers of ITC products and services to help them deliver on the promise that ITC holds for business. Quocirca's clients include Oracle, Microsoft, IBM, O2, T-Mobile, HP, Xerox, EMC, Symantec and Cisco, along with other large and medium sized vendors, service providers and more specialist firms.

Details of Quocirca's work and the services it offers can be found at <http://www.quocirca.com>

The logo for Quocirca, featuring the word "quocirca" in a lowercase, sans-serif font. The letters "qu" are in blue, "o" is in red, "c" is in blue, "i" is in red, "r" is in blue, "c" is in red, and "a" is in blue.