



RedNews

The newsletter of Redwood Technologies

Spring/Summer 2009

Headlines



REDWOOD
TECHNOLOGIES

Welcome to the Spring/Summer 2009 edition of RedNews – a selection of Redwood's top news stories from the Spring and Summer.

The global economic climate has served to further endorse Redwood's core strategic positioning. The company's mantra of enabling clients to deliver better customer service whilst reducing costs has translated into numerous new major accounts switching their communications offering over to Redwood's latest cutting-edge solutions.

This edition takes a look at Redwood's recent projects focusing on improving the customer service experience, both with National Rail Enquiries and Utilities companies.

Redwood announces its new Technology partnership with Cisco on page 2, whilst the Technology Focus section puts the spotlight on Redwood's latest developments in ASR.

Also included in this edition is a celebration of Redwood's new Product of the Year Award for its RedCentrex IP Centrex solution and an interview with another key member of Redwood's senior staff team.

For further information on any of the news articles, or for details of Redwood's Value Added Services product portfolio, please register on Redwood's RedExec™ Partner Programme via the website or contact Joanne Williams on: +[44] (0) 1 344 304 344 or jmw@redwoodtech.com.

National Rail Enquiries: the right kind of STORM

National Rail Enquiries handles more than 450,000 enquiries every day, with more than 14 million calls to its call centres every year. Its service is vastly complex, giving people the ability to plan train journeys that could involve anything from a simple trip between stations, through to a series of different journeys across the country, spread across days or even weeks.

The service is a crucial part of the UK's transport infrastructure and a key new element of its front line services now runs on STORM™. Customers calling a non-geographic number - 08457 48 49 50 - can get up-to-the-minute information on any train service in the UK, and details of scheduled services run by all the train operating companies.



Multi-channel service

National Rail Enquiries (NRE) is the official information service for National Rail, the collective of Britain's train operating companies. It operates a range of channels that include call centres in the UK and India, the National Rail Enquiries website and the TrainTracker™ automated voice service for arrivals and departures.

TrainTracker™ Text (the SMS version of TrainTracker™) and the TextMe Journey Planner allow users to have a copy of their journey details sent to their mobiles.

One of NRE's most important innovations has been the launch of an iPhone application, which has proved an instant hit with customers. Nevertheless, the main telephone line remains a key element of the service, handling tens of thousands of calls every day. STORM's huge capacity and advanced functionality will help NRE achieve high levels of customer service including low answer times, improving the overall customer experience.

Versatility

STORM's open architecture and sheer scale - it has the ability to offer up to 30,000 channels of simultaneous connection – gives National Rail Enquiries the versatility and power it needs to deliver the quality of service demanded by its millions of customers. The platform offers resilience and backup call routing, as well as network-based IVR (Interactive Voice Response), which provides a simple menu of two options to customers before routing calls to an agent, or the appropriate automated service.



With STORM, National Rail Enquiries now has advanced mass calling capabilities, with the ability to edit routing scripts via a secure web interface from anywhere in the world, and to load and manage announcements in real time via the web, or over the phone. There is also a future option to offer proactive notification of delays or changes affecting a customer's booking.



National Rail Enquiries

Mobility

Alastair Page, Operation Manager for National Rail Enquiries, explains that this ability to work remotely was a key factor in the decision to choose STORM.

"We run a lean team, with just three people authorised to configure the call flows across the two centres," he says. "Often, there is a need to make changes when we're working remotely, particularly on one of the regular trips to the site in Mumbai."

"STORM's easy interface, with its drag-and-drop functions, is fast and highly intuitive. We can access it from laptops, wherever we have an Internet connection, which has saved us a vast amount of time and effort. We can be more responsive to changing patterns of calls, helping to refine and improve our service almost hour-by-hour."

Says Irfan Habib, Business Development Manager for Redwood: "This is an excellent example of the versatility and scalability of STORM. National Rail Enquiries is an organisation with a strong customer focus and it is using sophisticated technology to deliver outstanding service."



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Technology Focus - Automatic Speech Recognition

Speech recognition technology delivers the best of the latest automated telecommunication systems, combined with the defining characteristic of traditional phones. With Automated Speech Recognition (ASR) from Redwood, automated systems can answer calls and handle them almost as naturally as a receptionist or a contact centre agent, because they can recognise what callers are saying.

One of the nagging disadvantages of automated call handling is the potential for dehumanising the process of dealing with customers. Not everyone is comfortable with keypads and digital systems, including the growing number of older people who are rapidly becoming one of the most important market sectors for many industries.

Redwood ASR allows more natural communication, while still delivering the efficiencies and cost savings of automation. It can also add substantial value, by presenting customers with an ingenious and impressive service that saves them time and makes it easy for them to conduct their business over the phone.

ASR in action

Callers are played a recorded greeting, giving them the option to speak a response, rather than using the keypad. The script can recognise keywords that may fall within the response, prompting a recorded confirmation, such as "Do you want to check your balance?", or "Do you need technical support?" The customer can then navigate through the system, being spoken to in complete sentences and with the inflections and tones of ordinary speech.

The ASR integrates with back office systems, such as CRM solutions, and uses text-to-speech technology to read back customer-specific information, such as balances or transaction

histories. Routine enquiries and sales transactions can be completed without the need for human intervention, while still involving the caller in an engaging, familiar form of interaction.

24/7 response

Redwood ASR helps organisations to save money by allowing a more customer-friendly service to be delivered round the clock, with fewer agents required to deliver it. At peak times, ASR can be used to filter many routine calls, easing the pressure on agents and freeing them to deal with more complex enquiries. Note that the ASR system can route calls through to agents if it cannot provide a satisfactory solution for the caller.

A key benefit of ASR is that it offers greater versatility than standard keypad-driven automated systems. With ASR, alphanumeric terms such as postcodes or passwords can be captured as easily as numeric codes, with the provision for double-checking of spoken entries in the event of any ambiguities, such as "S" and "F", or "M" and "N".

By deploying ASR as a hosted service via the STORM™ platform, organisations can introduce an enhanced service without the need for substantial capital outlay, and with predictable and manageable operating costs. STORM is



Europe's largest mass interactive communications platform, offering proven stability and capacity, while ensuring uninterrupted availability of the ASR service.

Accountability

Responses can be monitored and tracked, with the ASR system used to recognise keywords that can be captured for quality control, compliance and service improvement. ASR can also integrate with Redwood's call recording solution, allowing real-time tracking of trends and issues, as well as detailed post-campaign analysis.

Automated outbound campaigns from contact centres can be made more effective, by allowing customers to respond spontaneously with speech, rather than resorting to keypads. With ASR, inbound and outbound transaction rates can be increased by increasing the volume of calls handled, and the speed at which they are processed.

When it is operated at the network level as a hosted service, ASR can also be delivered as a resource to mobile devices, enabling services such as automated dialling and other speech-activated functions.

The complete solution

STORM ASR can be a completely tailored solution, encompassing everything from the development of the scripts to the deployment of the solution. It is the next logical step for automated telephony, allowing more people to gain access to phone-based services by restoring the power of speech to customer-facing systems.

Cisco Approval for Redwood

Redwood Technologies has been confirmed as an Affiliate member of the Cisco Technology Developer Program (CTDP). The program ensures that members' products and technologies have verified interoperability with Cisco platforms, follow strict design and manufacturing standards, and offer exciting new capabilities for Cisco joint customers.

It is a crucial stage in the evolution of Redwood solutions, in that membership of the program confirms the compatibility and integrity of the Redwood platform wherever it interfaces with a Cisco environment.

Leadership

A key qualifying requirement of the CTDP is that members should hold leadership positions in their particular market segments. Members' products should showcase the innovations made possible through collaboration with Cisco.

Cisco and program members work together to ensure that customers receive consistent levels of

service and support for interoperable applications. Both groups have direct access to each organisation's technical support facilities, to provide timely and satisfactory call resolution.

Redwood's affiliate status means that service providers, carriers and corporate customers operating Cisco-based infrastructures can be confident that deploying Redwood solutions within their networks will complement and enhance the capabilities of their networks. As a Cisco Technology Developer Affiliate, Redwood has demonstrated its ability to develop applications



and services that can add value to a Cisco platform, giving Redwood customers new opportunities to introduce competitive and differentiating offerings.

Strong foundation

Membership of CTDP allows Redwood customers to install new Redwood products with verified interoperability, and make the most of their investments in Cisco network infrastructure. It also means that they have more choice in the range and scope of the applications they want to deploy, and that they will be able to do more with those applications.

"This is an important step for Redwood," says Ron Perry, Technical Director of Redwood Technologies. "It formalises and endorses the long and highly successful working relationship we enjoy with Cisco, and establishes a strong foundation for future developments."



How a Utility's LOSS becomes a customer's gain

A leading international utility company is using STORM to deliver an innovative customer service improvement in the UK. STORM™ LOSS™ (Loss of Supply Service) is a suite of inbound and outbound services developed specifically for utilities and service providers. It is designed to reduce pressure on contact centres when there is a loss of supply, and to help organisations offer a more proactive service.

Proactive Communication

STORM LOSS allows organisations to instantly notify customers via SMS or voice when a loss of service is detected. The message can be sent to everyone who has registered to receive the service and is affected by the event. It tells them that their provider is aware of the problem and that something is being done about it.

Reassurance

STORM LOSS provides a way of reassuring customers quickly when a problem arises. Many customers will be satisfied to know that the fault has been registered and action is being taken, and will not therefore call a contact centre to find out what is happening.

More messages can be sent as work on the fault progresses, keeping customers informed of what is happening and reducing the likelihood of further calls to the contact centre. STORM LOSS helps to mitigate spikes in traffic, and also frees more agents to speak to the people that do call, further enhancing the service provided to customers.

Communication

"It is a simple concept, but a very important one," says Martin Taylor, Sales and Marketing Director for Redwood. "Good communication is essential when there is a problem, because people get stressed when they feel that they do not know what is going on."

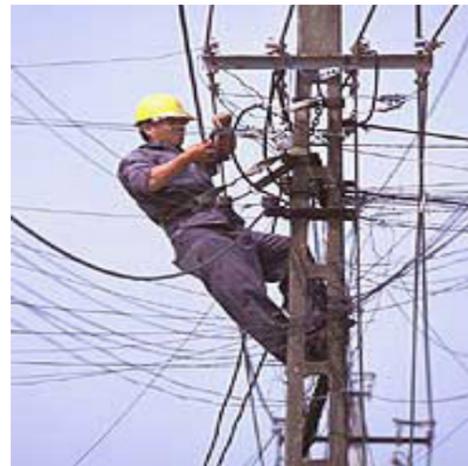
With pressure building on UK energy firms to publish the number of complaints they receive, STORM LOSS can be a powerful customer relationship management tool. "Firms who take the trouble to communicate proactively can gain a rapid competitive advantage," says Martin Taylor. "The simple act of apologising when a problem occurs, without being asked, can make the difference between creating a loyal advocate, or an unhappy antagonist."

Hosted

As a hosted service running on STORM, STORM LOSS requires no capital outlay or investment. You simply pay a pre-agreed management fee, making budgeting easy. STORM's open architecture means that it can integrate with any standard back-office system, and that the messaging service can be delivered over any network. Customers can even choose to have STORM LOSS messages delivered by email, or as pre-recorded voice messages over the phone.

Says Martin Taylor: "British people in particular are renowned for their unwillingness to complain, but their reaction is often to take their business elsewhere. It is also true to say that for every complaint you receive, there will be many more people who are unhappy, but have not bothered to get in touch."

"STORM LOSS means that even if your core infrastructure suffers a major outage, your customer's lasting memory should be of the great customer service."



Redwood's IP Centrex is Product of the Year

RedCentrex™, the groundbreaking IP Centrex solution from Redwood Technologies, has been selected as Product of the Year by Communications Solutions, the ICT portal of the Technology Marketing Corporation (TMC).

The citation from TMC Group Editor-in-Chief Rich Tehrani reads: "Redwood Technologies has been recognized for their excellence in the advancement of voice, data and video communications. They are committed to quality and excellence in solutions that benefit the customer experience, as well as ROI for the companies that use them. I am pleased to honor their hard work and accomplishments and look forward to more innovative solutions from them in the future."

RedCentrex is a completely new product designed to revolutionise telephone networks. It gives the user total control over system functionalities, eliminating the cost of PABX installation and associated engineering costs.



Using softswitch-based IP Centrex architecture, RedCentrex provides a rich list of features that can be employed by large organisations, SMBs and individual users. In conjunction with the iPath™, Redwood's next generation soft phone, RedCentrex is suitable for carriers, ASPs or ISPs looking to provide an IP Centrex solution, or enterprise network managers seeking to outsource their IP Centrex functionality.

RedCentrex provides users with all the familiar functions of a business telephone network, while introducing valuable additional capabilities. Incoming calls can be placed on hold and transferred to staff in remote locations, giving the external appearance of a workforce united in one office. All conferencing and call recording requirements can be delivered via IP networks, and, when combined with the iPath softphone, the system can replace the controls usually associated with a hard phone. Management of the phone network is made easier and users and administrators have greater control.

Redwood is excited about the interest RedCentrex has generated. Says Office Manager Rachel Love, "We are very proud of this latest award and pleased the product is getting the recognition it deserves. It could revolutionise the telephone network."



The Redwood Team – An Interview with Viv Mitchell, Senior Technical Writer



Viv joined Redwood in 2001 after a busy family life. She holds a degree in Philosophy from University College London (UCL), and another in Physics from Imperial College London. She also has a PhD in Cybernetics from Brunel University. Viv gained telecoms experience with Plessey and brings a truly polymathic brain to the challenge of technical writing for Redwood.

What is your role at Redwood?

I'm involved in all the documentation that goes with the applications and services we produce. I'm responsible for user guides and help files, and for creating the slides used for training. I work with the engineering teams as the products are developed, putting together the documents that users will refer to when the products are deployed. I'm also responsible for creating diagrams, and for the house style in terms of how the documentation is presented, from the font size to the way logos are used.

What are the challenges of the role?

As a technical writer, I am effectively the voice of the user within the development process. I'm usually the first person outside the actual engineering team to work with the applications and services we develop, even before our test staff get involved in the formal shakedown. This means I am the one who first encounters any problems! I must say, the development team is very gracious in the way they listen to my feedback! I see it as an important aspect of our quality control, because it provides the first real working test of interfaces and procedures.

What do you enjoy about the role?

My position gives me a chance to apply all the disciplines I have learned over the years. I am a relentlessly curious person, learning all the time, and this role tests all aspects of my knowledge and skills. Philosophy taught me logic and disciplined thinking, as well as skills such as Boolean algebra, which have a valuable relevance to the development process. Physics and cybernetics gave me the technical background that helps me challenge the development teams on their own terms, when I need to.

How do you see the future for Redwood?

The pace of change within our markets, and our responsiveness to customer demands, have accelerated the process of product development and are changing the character of what we do. Today, our products have broken out of the purely telecoms space to be complete business solutions, performing important roles such as loss of service handling for utility companies, or secure credit card payment processing. As more and more essential services migrate into the cloud, Redwood will be there with the technology to deliver them.

Yes, Prime Minister - Downing Street calls for Redwood

It's not every day that the Prime Minister invites you to breakfast. But for Sean Taylor, Managing Director of Redwood Technologies, the invitation to step through the world's most famous front door came as part of a Government consultation programme with the Confederation of British Industry (CBI).

Sean was among a select group of business innovators who met with Prime Minister Gordon Brown and Business Minister Baroness Vadera at Downing Street in May. The invitation was to a round table discussion, at which the PM could "hear from energetic businesses their views and ideas about the current business environment."

A group of decision-makers from a variety of industry sectors attended the gathering at Number 10. They took the opportunity to voice their concerns and ideas about the future of enterprise in the UK and the role of government. Inevitably, the economy was high on the

agenda, with a wide-ranging discussion on ways to accelerate the recovery from recession.

Key issues arising included access to capital finance, regulation and employment law, levelling the playing field when bidding for public sector contracts, and the perennial question of corporate taxation.

"It was an interesting glimpse into the inner workings of government," said Sean Taylor, "and a rare chance to express a view about the state of things directly to the man responsible. I was struck by the consistency of the views being expressed from a broad diversity of industries."

"Time will tell whether or not our ideas will make any difference to government policy, but at least we had the opportunity to get our views across. In fairness, however, Mr Brown's thoughts may well have been more focused on other issues since, only a couple of hours later, the Speaker of the House of Commons resigned."



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