

Travel commerce services provider

The premier provider of financial settlement solutions and data and analytic services for the travel industry

Overview

The need

As it migrated all of its applications to the Internet, the travel commerce services provider needed a way to replicate both of its critical customer service business capabilities without rebuilding or disrupting their new, web-based applications.

The solution

The travel commerce services provider turned to IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, which allow it to confidently meet its legal and compliance requirements to monitor and capture all user transactions, providing service representatives and customers with the level of service they are accustomed to giving and receiving.

The benefits

IBM Tealeaf solutions have become a corporate standard for the delivery of all online products and services at the travel commerce services provider, increasing the first call resolution rate by 50 percent and reducing the time to identify, reproduce and resolve site flaws by more than 50 percent.

This travel commerce services provider is an airline-owned company that powers the US-based travel network with premier business solutions, travel agency accreditation services, process and financial management tools, and powerful data and analytics. Nearly 14,000 travel agencies and 190 airlines use this provider's settlement services, which in 2012 totaled more than \$84 billion.

Vital to fostering positive client relations, Customer Experience Management has become a competency at the travel commerce services provider and IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions is the corporate standard for delivering it.

Building on more than four decades of experience as the premier provider of financial settlement solutions and data and analytical services for the travel industry, the travel commerce services provider continues to develop innovative technology solutions designed to accommodate the needs of travel agencies and corporate travel departments across the United States.

With more than 4 million travel transactions occurring each week, it was only a matter of time before the company began migrating key applications from a legacy, terminal-based environment to a new, more flexible, web-based environment. Given the world's foremost carriers place their trust in the travel commerce services provider for prompt and reliable settlement services, the company needed to ensure it could maintain its high level of service during this time of transition – and beyond.



Solution components

- IBM® Tealeaf® cxConnect for Data Analysis
 - IBM® Tealeaf® CX
 - IBM® Tealeaf® cxImpact
 - IBM® Tealeaf® cxView
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“From customer service and the development team, to product management and the executive staff, IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions provide the common thread in how we talk about servicing our customers better.”

— Customer Experience Management Lead,
travel commerce services provider

Challenges

The travel commerce services provider knew its clients were eagerly awaiting the rollout of their new, web-based applications, and the inherent enhancements that would come with them, such as improved task flow and point and click navigation. However, the company was concerned that they would not be able to provide the requisite level of service its customers had come to expect. The travel commerce services provider’s former “green screen” applications enabled mirror logins, so whenever a travel agent called into customer support with an issue, the travel commerce services provider’s service representative was able to simultaneously log into the application as that travel agent and help them quickly resolve the problem. In addition, the travel commerce services provider’s legacy applications incorporated homegrown functionality that monitored and captured all user sessions in order to meet the company’s legal and compliance requirements. The challenge for the travel commerce services provider, now that all their applications were migrating to the Internet, was figuring out a way to replicate both of these critical business capabilities without rebuilding or disrupting their new, web-based applications.

A new approach

After conducting a diligent search of the market for a potential solution, the travel commerce services provider selected IBM Tealeaf Customer Experience Management (CEM) solutions. With IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, the travel commerce services provider confidently meets their legal and compliance requirements to monitor and capture each user transactions. In addition, the unique replay ability of IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions – a page-by-page, browser-level recording of the actual customer experience – provides the travel commerce services provider’s service representatives and customers with the level of service they are accustomed to giving and receiving.

But robust IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions afford even greater benefits to the company. Unlike their legacy, homegrown solution, IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions include sophisticated search and indexing functionality that enables the travel commerce services provider to quickly discover the magnitude of specific customer experience flaws and prioritize fixes accordingly. And, because IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions are so intuitive, the travel commerce services provider has rolled out access to more than 100 users across the enterprise – from customer service, production support and development, to product management, compliance and legal. When resolving issues or discussing product enhancements, the travel commerce services provider relies on customer experience information gleaned from IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions to identify opportunities for improvement, drive requirements and set priorities. In fact, IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, and the capabilities that they deliver, have become a corporate standard for the delivery of all online products and services at the travel commerce services provider.

Win 1 – Customer service team improves first call resolution rate by 50 percent.

Problem

When the initial web-based applications went live, the company's customer service representatives (CSR) lacked the ability to log in as a specific travel agent in order to see and resolve issues. Accustomed to this level of support, travel agents who were experiencing problems on the new applications began printing screens and faxing them into the travel commerce services provider's CSRs. The repetitive back and forth faxing was extremely frustrating and led to an increase in problem escalations to the travel commerce services provider's production support team.

Solution

Once access to IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions was rolled out within the call center, the travel commerce services provider's CSRs had the ability to quickly pull up Tealeaf sessions and again "see" customer experience problems firsthand. As a page-by-page, browser-level recording of a customer's unique visit, the session replay functionality of IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions allows CSRs to review the exact screens and actions a specific customer saw and took on the site. This visibility enables the CSR to quickly diagnose whether the customer complaint is a real, technical obstacle on the site, which should be escalated to production support, or whether the problem is simply due to user error or confusion, which the CSR can resolve single handedly.

Benefit

The full user experience replay provided by IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, which has become part of the travel commerce services provider's customer service process, enables CSRs to address customer issues immediately – resulting in a 50 percent improvement in the team's first call resolution rate. In addition, for those calls that still require escalation, the travel commerce services provider's CSRs are now required to include the Tealeaf session ID in the problem ticket. Instant access to the user session in question has reduced the time the travel commerce services provider's production support and development teams require to identify, reproduce and resolve site issues by more than 50 percent.

Win 2 – Production support gets proactive, reduces escalations by 50 percent.

Problem

The original web-based applications were built so that when an internal error did occur, the application automatically displayed an “application error, please call support” message. Following instructions, travel agents who saw this message would call the travel commerce services provider’s customer service center. But the CSRs handling these calls had no visibility into the site’s problems; as a result, they would have to escalate all of these issues to production support. Production support would then research the problems and report their findings back to the CSRs, who in turn would get back to the travel agents who had called. The process was reactive, cumbersome and costly – to say the least.

Solution

Using the real-time alerting capability of IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, the travel commerce services provider’s production support team was able to establish a new, proactive approach to the problem. Now, every time one of the applications generates an “application error” message, the production support team is instantly notified – allowing them to rapidly intervene. Often times, this means before a travel agent has time to call into the help desk, the issue has either been fixed, or the help desk is at least made aware of the problem and can communicate appropriately with incoming callers.

Benefit

Because the travel commerce services provider is now proactively resolving issues as they happen, instead of waiting for customers to encounter them first and report them, the company has been able to limit the number of customers who are impacted by these types of errors. In addition, the travel commerce services provider has been able to reduce the number of escalations to production support by 50 percent. And, the company is now able to quantify the magnitude of each problem – how many users experienced this obstacle – in order to prioritize fixes appropriately.

Win 3 – The visibility afforded by IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions leads to surprising business discoveries.

Problem

Given the nature of their business, the travel commerce services provider is potentially a target for fraudulent activities. Because of this, the company needs to be diligent about tracking who is using their web-enabled systems and where are they located.

Solution

With IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions, the travel commerce services provider has unprecedented visibility into each user's unique online transactions – beyond typical aggregate information – which allows the company to verify its users on a daily basis.

Benefit

When IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions calculated that more than 25 percent of the travel commerce services provider's users were coming from outside the United States, this immediately raised red flags within the legal and compliance departments. But because IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions capture each individual session, the company was able to quickly determine that these were in fact genuine customers. What IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions enabled the travel commerce services provider to recognize was the fact that many of their accredited travel agencies and corporate travel departments were hiring outsourced employees from international locations. The realization that the travel commerce services provider was truly a global company allowed the organization to make some simple changes to business operations that would allow them to service their global customer base better, such as 24x7 access to critical applications and more appropriate service windows. This one discovery made the travel commerce services provider realize the powerful customer experience visibility IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions afford. Now, the travel commerce services provider's product managers and executives regularly use IBM Tealeaf CEM solutions to explore opportunities for improvement and innovation to build better online solutions for their customers.

About IBM Enterprise Marketing Management

The IBM Enterprise Marketing Management (EMM) Suite is an end-to-end, integrated set of capabilities designed exclusively for the needs of marketing organizations. Integrating and streamlining all aspects of marketing, IBM's EMM Suite empowers organizations and individuals to turn their passion for marketing into valuable customer relationships and more profitable, efficient, timely, and measurable business outcomes.

Delivered on premises or in the Cloud, the IBM EMM Suite of software solutions gives marketers the tools and insight they need to create individual customer value at every touch. The IBM EMM Suite helps marketers to understand customer wants and needs and leverage that understanding to engage buyers in highly relevant, interactive dialogs across digital, social, and traditional marketing channels.

Designed to address the specific needs of particular marketing and merchandising users, the IBM EMM Suite is comprised of five individual solutions. Digital Marketing Optimization enables digital marketers to orchestrate relevant digital interactions to attract and retain new visitors and grow revenue throughout the customer's lifecycle. With Customer Experience Optimization eCommerce professionals can turn visitors into repeat customers and loyal advocates by improving the digital experience of every customer. With Cross-Channel Marketing Optimization customer relationship marketers can engage customers in a one-to-one dialogue across channels to grow revenue throughout the customer's lifecycle. Price, Promotion and Product Mix Optimization allows merchandisers and sales planners to make price, promotion and product mix decisions that maximize profit and inventory utilization. And with Marketing Performance Optimization, marketing leaders, planners and decision-makers can model and assess mix, and manage marketing operations to maximize ROI.

Over 2,500 organizations around the world use IBM EMM solutions to help manage the pressures of increasing marketing complexity while delivering improved revenue and measurable results. IBM's time-tested and comprehensive offerings are giving companies such as Dannon, E*TRADE, ING, Orvis, PETCO, Telefonica | Vivo, United Airlines and wehkamp.nl the power and flexibility required to provide their customers and prospects with what they expect today – a more consistent and relevant experience across all channels.



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