Interlink Network Systems Inc.

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CIO APPLICATIONS TOP 10 CONTACT CENTER SOLUTION PROVIDERS - 2019

An annual listing of companies that provide Contact Center Solutions to help clients build competitive advantage and transform their business

Joe Phillip
Managing Editor

Company:
Interlink Network Systems Inc.

Key Person:
Prem Puthur
Chairman & CEO

Description:
Develops Telephony and Enterprise Integration Application solutions to enable real-time information exchange, Interactive Voice Response (IVR), and voice/quality recording

Website:
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Top 10 Contact Center Solution Providers - 2019

Today, technological advancements continue to bridge the gap between call centers and consumers in many fascinating ways. While moving to the 2nd quarter of the year, we can expect a general upheaval of contact center operations and the way they serve their customers. In this mix, the proliferation of chatbots, virtual assistants, and RPA have invigorated contact center operations with customers expecting responses in real-time. With AI gaining traction, a call centers' goal of delivering frictionless, predictive, proactive, and personalized customer services now seems a reality.
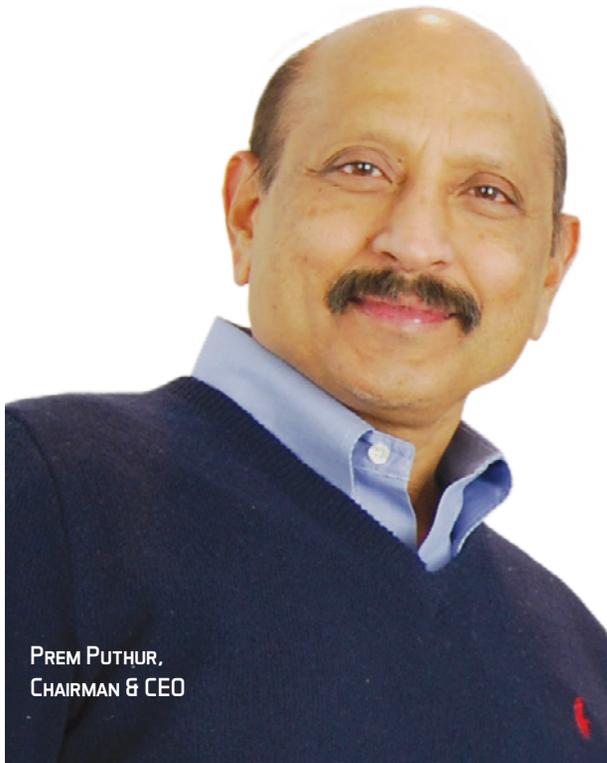
A few years ago, AI was leveraged in contact centers for automating routine tasks or handling FAQs that can allow agents to focus on high-level requests. However, now AI embedded with "agent assist" and "virtual agent" functions work alongside agents to comprehend customer issues and can prepare responses accordingly. Powered by NLP and IVR technology, AI listens and examines the need of consumers across multiple channels including chat, email, SMS and the phone and suggests the most appropriate response to the concerned agents.

To help CIOs maneuver in the right direction while adopting contact center solutions, a distinguished panel of CEOs, CIOs, VCs, and analysts along with the CIO Applications' editorial board has selected the leading contact center solution, providers. The companies featured in this edition demonstrate an ability to develop innovative technologies combined with outstanding customer service.

We present to you "Top 10 Contact Center Solution Providers - 2019."

Interlink Network Systems Inc.
Delivering Unparalleled Contact Center Experience

Prem Puthur,
Chairman & CEO

As digital technologies make deeper inroads into the lives of the people, the demand for greater customer experience (CX) has touched new heights. To cater to the customer needs anytime, anywhere, companies need forward-looking digital transformation strategies and intelligent solutions. US-based Interlink Network Systems develops contact center solutions that enable secure data acquisition. In this interview with CIO Applications, Prem Puthur, Chairman and CEO of Interlink Network Systems Inc., discusses how the firm empowers the contact center industry with end-to-end solutions that guarantee data/voice acquisition and delivery in innovative and secure ways.

Give us an overview of Interlink Network Systems.

Founded in 1991, Interlink Network Systems is a Telephony and Enterprise Application Integration (EAI) software solution and services company. All of our senior management was former employees of AT&T Bell Labs, so we all shared the experience and passion to create the best telephony products for our customers. We now have over 20 years of experience in making products for the contact center space. Our flagship customer service product, TxContact, is found supporting the best customer service centers, providing innovative solutions to some of the industry's most expensive problems.

What keeps you ahead of the pack in the contact center space?

What makes Interlink stand apart from its competitors is our ability to resolve the clients' challenges with holistic solutions. We offer a contact center platform (TxContact) that leverages open standards for easy and faster integration with any CRM software. TxContact's hardware footprint is also highly optimized and can run on mini-computers that can be placed in a handbag. These flexible little machines allow us to address capacity from five agents to thousands of agents. Our competitors rely on four to five times the amount of hardware to deliver what we offer. We have also developed our own messaging and in-memory distributed database system to create a highly available telephony architecture. All this allows TxContact to handle enterprise level call demands, while still offering low cost of ownership.

Provide us insights into the core functionalities of your product.

Customers today expect quicker support service across all communication channels. To this end, we offer TxContact, our flagship omnichannel contact center

solution that comprises of six modules. First, we have, TxTalk, handles voice calls, live chats, emails, social media channels and also supports the standard SIP features to enhance customer engagement. Contact center agents can easily access the customer information with TxTalk's built-in automated pop-up window. The second module is TxIVR, an intelligent Interactive Voice Response (IVR) that supports touch-tone, speech recognition, and text to speech (TTS) in multiple languages. Organizations can block bots or spam callers from using the IVR resources with TxIVR. Every contact center requires predictive dialers and call progress analysis, and our third module TxDialer caters to this need. All the call recordings are stored and managed by our recording system TxRecord. The fifth module, TxSmartQ is our universal channel distributor that can route calls, chats, emails, and social media interactions to the right agents based on priority, skill, and other configurable parameters.

What makes platforms like Interlink stand apart from its competitors is its ability to resolve the clients' challenges with holistic solutions

Our computer telephony integration (CTI) can connect TxContact's modules to multiple software systems at the same time. For example, TxContact supports easy integration with various on-demand CRMs such as Connectwise, Microsoft Dynamic CRM, Salesforce, Oracle, Sugar CRM, VTiger and Siebel among others.

Enhanced levels of productivity, with minimum training, effectively add to the contact center's performance. Our sixth addition to TxContact, TxVirtualGuide, cuts training costs drastically to enable new agents to work faster. The striking feature of our capabilities is that all of TxContact's modules can be customized to our clients' requirements.

Can you share a case study where your company has helped its clients attain the desired outcomes with your offerings?

In the contact center of a major US-based healthcare solutions provider, when a service executive calls a health insurance company, the call is typically directed to the insurance company's DTMF and speech-enabled IVR rather than connecting to the insurance agent. The service executive, then, must provide medical record number, episode number and other such details to the IVR. However, the speech-enabled IVR can misread the data at times due to the background noise in the contact center or any other mechanical faults. Later, the service executive is placed in a queue to wait for almost 25-40 minutes until the insurance agent comes online. The conversation may take another three to five minutes. For a call that takes only five minutes, the executives end up spending 5-8 times the required time. The firm approached us to resolve this issue for better time management.

We deployed the TxContact suite to solve this problem. Instead of 100 agents calling 100 numbers simultaneously and waiting in the queue, we let the TxDialer make those 100 calls and then route the call to TxIVR. TxIVR then navigates the remote IVR menu, by interpreting the menu and playing/typing the right input at every stage. Once TxIVR successfully navigates the remote IVR menu, it gets placed in the queue. Now TxIVR does the 25-40 minutes of waiting. When the remote queue transfers the call to the live agent, TxIVR detects that event and transfers the call to the live agent on the local TxSmartQ system. In other words, live agents on both sides pick up the call almost simultaneously. This reduced the required agent count from 100 to just 20. Our solution not only optimized the number of agents required, but provided huge cost savings in overall call time.

What does the future have in store for Interlink Network Systems?

Interlink remains focused on innovation to strengthen its position as a leader in customer service solutions. Our first application-to-application (A2A) in-voice product is in the development stage and we expect to launch it shortly. Our short-term plan for this year includes developing advanced signal processing and analytics and employing AI in our innovations. A contact center generates a huge amount of voice and metadata on a daily basis. And unfortunately, very little of this data has been turned into something useful for the industry. In long term, we plan to develop products to unleash the intelligence from this untapped repository. CA