NICE®

Realizing
Long-Lasting
Value From Your
Back Office

Part 3
Roll-Out

About NICE

NICE (Nasdaq: NICE) is the worldwide leading provider of both cloud and on-premise enterprise software solutions that empower organizations to make smarter decisions based on advanced analytics of structured and unstructured data. NICE helps organizations of all sizes deliver better customer service, ensure compliance, combat fraud and safeguard citizens. Over 22,000 organizations in more than 150 countries, including over 80 of the Fortune 100 companies, are using NICE solutions.

www.nice.com

In Q3 2015, NICE Systems and the Aberdeen Group brought together representatives of seven corporate giants, in a multi-state conference call, to discuss how to get maximum value from their back office operations. The companies taking part in the conversation included both current NICE clients and prospective customers.

What took shape was an enriching, open exchange of ideas that included practical advice and much experience from the field. The questions raised and the various answers considered focused on enhancing productivity and performance through integrated back office management.

The topics covered were:

- The Importance of Back Office Visibility
- How to Manage and Improve Back Office Performance
- How to Roll Out a Back Office Solution

The discussion, which included nearly 30 people in nine different locations, was moderated by NICE Back Office Solutions Experts and a Research Director from Aberdeen Group.

NICE Virtual Roundtable
Overview

Who Was There?

Inovalon

A leading technology company that combines advanced cloud-based data analytics and data-driven intervention platforms to drive improved healthcare for millions of Americans.

Voya Financial

A premier retirement, investment and insurance company serving the financial needs of approximately 13 million individual and institutional customers in the United States.

Target

A leading American retailing company with over 1,800 stores and 37 distribution centers across the United States.

Prime Therapeutics

An independent pharmacy benefits manager, collectively owned by non-profit health plans, that uses extensive data and patient insights to create programs that lead to the best health outcomes.

UPS

The largest express carrier and package delivery company in the world, and a leading provider of specialized transportation, logistics, capital, and e-commerce services.

Jpmorgan Chase

A leader in investment banking, financial services for consumers and small businesses, commercial banking, financial transaction processing and asset management.

Aetna

One of America's leading diversified health care benefits companies, serving an estimated 46 million people, with a broad range of traditional, voluntary and consumer-directed health insurance plans and related services.

The Aberdeen Group

A provider of fact-based business intelligence, primary research and unique content-neutral analysis regarding information technology companies and products.

As noted in parts one and two of this Virtual Roundtable Report, the roundtable discussion focused initially on the importance of visibility into the back office, followed by a rich exchange on performance management and improvement strategies. The roundtable then turned to the issue of rolling out a back office management solution, with input from a company that has already implemented the solution and another that was on the verge of a roll-out.

How to Roll It Out:
When the Sum is Greater Than Its Parts

The roll-out discussion raised some key questions – as well as a few contrasting answers.

IIntroducing the new topic for the roundtable, It was noted that workforce management, desktop analytics and performance management may be implemented as separate components. However, it is the synergy between them that provides the greatest value for the back office, so any back office seeking to improve its productivity should ultimately look at implementing all components.

Nonetheless, implementation has to start somewhere. What would be the best way to begin rolling out a comprehensive solution for the back office? What do we do first?

'Start small'

Aberdeen has seen the question of how to roll out a multi-component solution raised quite a lot in the customer service marketplace. In light of accumulated experience, the Aberdeen research director suggested that companies "start small."

"Absolutely make sure obtaining measurements is step number one," the Aberdeen representative emphasized. "This helps you understand where you are with your back office, giving you visibility into what works and what doesn't" Employee behavior should be monitored in real time, categorized and measured against certain metrics. This gives managers and executives an idea of what their personnel are spending their time on, and how operating processes look in actual practice.
Once you have the measurements, the Aberdeen director continued, "it makes sense to move to forecasting and scheduling, because that's going to ultimately help you maximize your employee utilization." This, in turn, will provide the resources and manpower to impact the performance metrics discussed earlier in the roundtable discussion.

Core components of a typical roll-out

In addition to measurement, forecasting and scheduling, there are several other core components of a typical roll-out. The Aberdeen representative said that two of them seen often in the marketplace are alerting and task management. The latter pivots off measurement and scheduling by assigning employees specific tasks based on their availability throughout the day, as well as case completion times.

The stages of a successful rollout of productivity measurement

Define sub-group to measure and establish standards and goals

Update sub-group on productivity goals, track changes in productivity and adjust goals accordingly

Roll out solution throughout all groups with defined goals and standards

To Tell
or Not to Tell?
Establish
a Baseline

A question was raised regarding how best to introduce a back office management solution to the relevant employees, especially the desktop monitoring aspect. There were concerns over the impact an announcement before deployment could have on employee behavior. On the other hand, there were compelling reasons to make sure everyone was on board with the program from the start.

Option one –
Under the radar

A member of the roundtable whose company was planning on rolling out a back office management solution very soon said that they are not telling any of the staff ahead of time For six weeks, the company intends to run the monitoring and measurement tools, collecting and analyzing the data, "so we get a true baseline to see what the performance levels look like."

A corporate project coordinator concurred: "Deploying without revealing that [employees] are being monitored is key, because then you get a valid baseline that you can work from." Often, she observed, when this approach is not taken, the next stages of the roll-out are based on an inaccurate or false baseline. This can seriously compromise efforts down the line.

Knock it off

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Don't be afraid of warning employees to stay off unproductive applications. This will increase productivity and in addition enable management to identify processes which require fixing.

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The stages
for improving
productivity

Then what? 'Knock it off' management followed by WorkForce Managementof a typical roll-out

In addition to measurement, forecasting and scheduling, there are several other core components of a typical roll-out. After the period of data collection, the company is planning to inform the employees about the monitoring and management tools being used. At that point, they "expect a big jump in productivity."

The following three to four months, the company expects its managers to be involved in what was called "the 'knock it off' management." That is, warning employees to stay off of Facebook and the like, and directing them to more productive work activities.

While that step is a necessity for combatting unproductive behavior, more focused worktime will also provide the company with better data on how long various back office processes actually take. At the same time, the company will be working on mapping these processes and identifying workflows within the system.

Then, after everything is up and running, "and we're comfortable with the data we're getting, we will be ready for rolling workforce management in on top of it."

"Knock it off"
align
employees
on goals

Identify
productivity
gaps
due to
the use of
unproductive
applications

Identify
productivity
gaps
due process
bottlenecks
and
inefficiencies

Option two –
full visibility

Another participant in the roundtable, heading a company that already implemented a back office suite of solutions, offered a different perspective. Originally commenting on the issues of visibility, the company manager expressed support for up-front communication. She said that her company made sure the employees knew they were being monitored, and why.

For a successful roll-out of the performance visibility tool, the corporate leader continued, she made sure supervisors were on board with the project and knew what metrics they would be seeing. It was an important piece of the roll-out, she added, "which not everyone does." Company leaders made sure employees at all levels understood the intent of the increased visibility and what was driving the numbers.

Privacy concerns? It depends how you package it

In light of the debate regarding openness with employees in a back office suite roll-out, one of the roundtable participants representing a company with international assets noted possible privacy issues with employee monitoring. He especially noted the negative attention uninformed monitoring during a rollout would attract from European work councils.

A company that already deployed a back office suite encountered just such pushback in the United States, especially in those regions with heavy union activity. One way to avoid such opposition, the company representative noted, is to roll out the solution openly, as in the aforementioned case. Such an approach provides some protection from criticism by labor unions or work councils.

Another roundtable participant added that, based on his company's experience in Europe, "a lot of it is just how it's positioned to them. We can point to a lot of benefits for both work councils and unions." He noted, for example, that common concerns regarding uncompensated work can be addressed during a monitoring solution roll-out.

"We've actually seen cases where [people] weren't being paid for [their labor], and [the solution rollout] created visibility on that. And companies closed the gaps for them," he said. "We've seen both work councils and unions pleased with those aspects."

It was also noted by the roundtable that there was union opposition years ago when call recording was introduced into the contact centers. Now, however, unions are great supporters of recording, because it often provides hard evidence in support of customer service representatives. Desktop analytics can serve a similar function even more broadly in the back office, vindicating employees in the event of a workrelated dispute.

How to get employees on board

Will help to identify top performers and give them their well due credit

Will identify which processes are problematic and will be fixed

Provides hard evidence that employee was working (similar to the way call recording was used in contact centers years ago)

Roll-out Across a–
Diverse
Enterprise

A new back office solution customer at the roundtable was asked how his large and diverse company is rolling out components of the back office suite across the entire enterprise.

He replied that roll-out is slightly different for each section of the business. Workforce management, for example, is being specifically rolled out for the back office. "Certain parts of the organization will be getting a new tool, while for other parts of the organization [the roll-out] will be a complete transformational change," he explained.

In all cases, however, the company is taking a step-by-step approach. They are testing each solution, collecting the data and validating it, and only then broadening the user base. It is "a very controlled roll-out," he quipped, "as opposed to coming in one morning and just flipping the switch."

A project coordinator for back office solutions noted that such careful study and evaluation is "a key component of our performance management piece in the back office – knowing how long some of these activities and processes are going to be. That's how we can make sure folks are efficient."

Does a complex roll-out have to be a lengthy one? Not if you choose SaaS

A project manager said that a complex roll-out of a back office suite can be made faster by opting for a hosted or Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) model. However, she noted, it is not necessarily the case that a hosted solution is always best for every company.

Depending on deployment times and related issues, on-premises deployment may be the preferred option. Many companies have, in fact, deployed their back office solutions inhouse for a sense of greater control.

Coming
Full Circle

The roll-out discussion was concluded by Aberdeen with a reiteration of the key recommendations that apply to any back office solution deployment.

While the power of an integrated back office solution is in its comprehensive synergy, implementation should begin with measurement.

Accurate measurements – achieved with desktop monitoring – ultimately provide greater visibility.

With that visibility, scheduling and forecasting are the next stages of a successful roll-out.

With this methodical approach, the next steps of improving performance and processes are almost a natural outcome.

A Final Word

Looking back over the entire virtual roundtable, a NICE representative summarized the goals of an integrate back office management solution:

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The focus is on measuring, managing and motivating back office employees – making sure we have the right measurements, the right coaching activity and the right visibility, as well as the right alignment, throughout the back office organization.
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