



Motive, WDSGlobal Team To Support Sophisticated Mobile Devices

Automating the Handling of Repeat Calls Is Key to Profitability

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MOBILE WORLD CONGRESS — All it takes is a single phone call into the call center to wipe out the profit an operator would otherwise generate from a customer in a given month. Deeming that unacceptable, [Motive](#), a division of [Alcatel-Lucent](#) and [WDSGlobal](#), formed a strategic partnership to develop better, more efficient support to mobile broadband users.

The companies will jointly market and develop solutions that will leverage WDSGlobal's knowledge of persistent trouble calls as a managed services provider for call center services, with Motive's mobile device management solutions to better support smartphones and other sophisticated mobile broadband devices.

WDSGlobal, true to its name, has service provider clients worldwide to which it provides mobile customer and device support. From its vantage point on the front lines of customer care it has learned a few things about mobile broadband. The primary lesson to be learned is that the more sophisticated the devices get, the more costly and time-consuming supporting them becomes. And device sophistication keeps growing.

By 2012, 30 percent of mobile devices attaching to the network will be smart devices with advanced operating systems and applications such as laptops, tablets and Kindles, said Ben Geller, senior director of product marketing at Motive. And that's a problem.

"While providers have made big investments in MDM technologies, the strategies and technologies they are deploying today will only fall short of the mark in delivering the operational and economic benefit they need to make their business run efficiently," Geller said. "There is a vastly different spectrum of devices we see attaching to mobile networks than even 24 to 36 months ago."

MDM BY THE NUMBERS

15 – percentage of mobile phones returned within the first 30 days
18 – length in minutes of the average service call for smartphones
25 – percentage of calls in the call center that are configuration related
47 – percentage of technical support calls for smartphones related to configuration
75 – percentage of DSL subscribers Motive supports in North America and Europe
204,000 – number of support calls each month for the average Tier 1 operator
612,000 – amount in dollars each month that MDM can save the operator above

Source: WDSGlobal

When the typical user buys a new device or downloads a new application, they'll fidget with it for about 20 minutes before calling for support or worse yet, abandon the application altogether, Geller said. And although Motive made its mark helping users self-configure their PCs and modems for DSL and other broadband services, the company saw what was happening with mobile devices and decided to partner with WDSGlobal.

"Empirically, they know the top 10 handsets that drive calls to tech support, they know what the issues are, which devices generate calls with the highest average handle time or the fewest first-call resolutions," Geller said. "Their knowledge married with our device management capabilities will make ours a pretty compelling solution to mobile operators."

WDSGlobal knows, for instance, that the call-handle time for users with regular feature phones is about 10 minutes, while the time for iPhone users jumps to 15 or 16 minutes, BlackBerry's to more than 21 minutes and calls about USB modems take over 30 minutes. The key is, the company also believes it can say which of the issues customers are calling about can be automated.

"We sit at the point of escalation for the carrier and we analyze repeat call trends and drivers and when possible automate the fix to those to reduce the [escalating] cost," said John Ainsworth, vice president of partners at WDSGlobal. "When you automate some of these fixes it becomes problem prevention rather than problem management."

That's the Utopian goal, Ainsworth said. "To pre-empt what the user is trying to do and automate as much of that as you can and simplify the experience," he said.

Too many calls that have to do with baseline configuration problems are escalated to his group, Ainsworth said. Totally unnecessary, he said. "The lack of information about how to deploy technology in a consumer-friendly way is crazy."

The two biggest drivers of calls into his department both have to do with configuration. Questions on configuration for generic browsing or picture messaging can be easily automated, Ainsworth said. He added that with a little work and business logic solutions for calls about more personalized services such as IM and e-mail could be automated as well.

"We can automate more than is being automated today," Ainsworth said.

There will be 1 billion mobile broadband devices shipped worldwide by 2012, according to Morgan Stanley's Mobile Internet Report from December. Without automated mobile device management, they won't be profitable.

Together, Motive and WDSGlobal say they will have the industry's largest library of device management capabilities and specifications, a comprehensive library of e-mail settings for accurate configuration of subscribers' e-mail, automatic device detection, identification and configuration without subscribers being required to interact.

The companies are demonstrating portions of their solution this week in Barcelona.