



Beefing Up Mobile Customer Care

Motive, a Division of Alcatel-Lucent, Teams Up With WDSGlobal

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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.

From WDSGlobal's 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."

The call-handle time for users with regular feature phones is about 10 minutes, while call 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."

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.