EMEA Region

Customer Service Strategies for the Retail Banking Industry
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Introduction

In the face of changing market dynamics across Europe, retail banks today are under tremendous pressure to grow organically. With formidable competition from many sources — including traditional brick and mortar operations, emerging Internet banks and newer cross-border and non-banking entrants — a large number of banks are having trouble meeting performance expectations because they are unable to differentiate their business, reach customers likely to respond to new sales opportunities or make the most of their valued staff.

Banks that define and implement solutions to these challenges are those that will successfully compete and thrive into the future. This paper examines the strategic role of the contact centre in retail banking, and how it can deliver the increased revenues and cost savings that will drive profitability and shareholder value.

The paper introduces **ten essential strategies** you can use to realise this potential by improving the customer experience, leveraging cross-sell and up-sell opportunities and promoting agent productivity and satisfaction:

- Facilitate Integrated and Consistent Interactions Across All Channels
- Offer an Inviting “Customer Front Door”
- Integrate Self-Service with Agent Assistance
- Handle Calls More Intelligently
- Initiate Proactive Contact
- Make More Effective Use of Customer Data and Segmentation
- Use Inbound Marketing to Reach Customers Outside the Branch
- Leverage Demographic Profiling to Establish Customer Intimacy
- Create a Winning Team Effort with Contact Centre Virtualisation
- Boost the Productivity of Your Agents through Interaction Blending

This paper further explains how the **Genesys Dynamic Contact Centre** provides integrated communication technologies to optimise customer traffic, internal resources and business outcomes for today’s changing conditions. It concludes with a real-world customer case study that illustrates how IntesaBci, Italy’s largest bank, has used Genesys solutions to make its contact centre vision a reality.
The Key Challenges Facing the Retail Banking Industry

Increased Competition Calls for Better Customer Service

Competition is increasing across all retail banking markets in Europe. Already, traditional retail banks are feeling the impacts of Internet banks and non-banking sector competitors who are using lower cost structures to offer their customers very attractive products at aggressive rates, and a wide range of lending products at typically lower interest rates with simpler and lower fee structures.

The newest wave of competition is stemming from cross-border activity — over the past few years, retail banks have expanded across borders, established subsidiaries and branches abroad, acquired foreign banks and pursued merger and acquisition deals. In fact, the year 2006 was a particularly strong year for European financial services merger and acquisition activity, which increased by 77% on 2005’s robust activity.

Value of European Financial Service Deals Announced in 2006 by Target Country

- Italy 48.3%
- Spain & Portugal 1.2%
- CEE & Russia 2.0%
- France 8.8%
- Germany 1.7%
- Netherlands 6.9%
- Switzerland 6.3%
- Turkey 3.4%
- Greece 4.4%
- Other 4.9%
- Other SEE .8%
- Other 4.9%

Note: Scandinavia is defined as Norway, Sweden, Finland and Denmark. CEE is defined as Poland, Czech Republic, Romania, Estonia, Lithuania and Croatia (only CEE countries with announced FS deals in 2006 listed). South Eastern Europe (SEE) is defined as Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, Serbia and Montenegro, Bulgaria (only SEE countries with announced FS deals in 2006 listed. All remaining European countries, defined as European by mergermarket and not analysed elsewhere, are defined as ‘Other.’

Source: mergermarket and PwC analysts
As barriers to integration erode, large pan-European banks are expected to compete with medium-sized and local banks, as well as niche specialists. With the export of banking services, the downward pressure on prices is expected to intensify. A study of 2,300 retail banking customers by YouGov — a British Internet-based market research firm — showed that 68% of them would be willing to buy products from pan-European banks. One reason is that large differences in prices for banking services across Europe have made consumers receptive to more competition.

According to industry analyst Datamonitor’s “European Branch Manager Survey 2006,” more consumers are shopping around for financial service products than ever before.

**European Banking Customers Shop Around More Often Than Before**

Increased consumer awareness of financial service products, growth in online banking, and an increase in competition between established players are the major drivers for the increase in customers who shop around.
Factors That Lead Customers to Shop Around More

Which of the following factors have influenced more customers to shop around in general for financial services products than they used to a few years ago?

- Increased consumer awareness of financial service products
- Growth in online banking
- Increased competition between established players
- Increased competition from the upsurge of direct players
- Decreasing customer loyalty
- Increased competition from the entry of foreign players
- Regulatory changes

Source: Datamonitor’s European Branch Manager Survey 2006

Because many banking products are undifferentiated commodities, retail banks are constantly looking for ways to set themselves apart from the competition to help them win and retain customers and improve the bottom line. As more customers begin to view all banks as the same and make their product selections based solely on the best price, one method that retail banks can employ to differentiate themselves is to optimise their customer service.

Research supports the high stakes of customer service in the retail banking contact centre. A study by Claes Fornell International (CFI) Group, an employee and customer satisfaction consultant, shows that 53% of people who have had a bad experience with their bank’s contact centre definitely will not do business with that bank again. Further, the Genesys Consumer Research Study 2006/07 of the European market discovered that 35% of consumers say that customer service has the biggest impact on their loyalty to a company.
Banks are Dissatisfied with the Results of Their Cross-Selling/Up-Selling Efforts

Banks have had tremendous success in shifting to day-to-day banking services from walk-in branches in order to lower cost channels. For example, according to a 2005 Capgemini study of 41 retail banks, 58% of all transactions were conducted through remote channels such as automated teller machines (ATMs), Web sites and call centres. However, banks have been disappointed by their relative inability to cross-sell across these non-branch channels — the same Capgemini study found that only 14% of sales were closed through remote channels in 2005.

**Distribution of Services Among Channels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>ATM</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>70%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>28%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Capgemini interviews with 41 retail banks*

**Distribution of Sales Among Channels**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Branch</th>
<th>ATM</th>
<th>Web</th>
<th>Phone</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>94%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>4%</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>86%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>8%</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>67%</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>17%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Based on Capgemini interviews with 41 retail banks

Source: Capgemini World Retail Banking Report

Banks have responded to customer reluctance to engage in sales via remote channels by increasing investments in branches and by focusing branch activity on providing sales and advisory services. This is a questionable strategy for a variety of reasons. First, according to a Forrester Research study, profitable client segments have decreased their visits to branches across Europe, meaning there are less in-person cross-sell and up-sell opportunities with these customers. Second, although the closing stage of a sales process may be at the branch, customers prefer to initially perform other steps in the process via remote channels, most notably the Web.

Banks have had success in shifting day-to-day banking services from walk-in branches to lower cost channels, but have been disappointed by their relative inability to cross-sell across these non-branch channels.
For example, Forrester Research has found that mortgage customers prefer using a mix of sales channels, such as researching lenders and obtaining rate and fee quotes online before applying for a mortgage in person. This behaviour makes it difficult to engage the customer during the key points in the decision making process, and banks may be losing sales by not being able to provide relevant information or sales and advisory assistance.

### Mortgage Customers Prefer a Mix of Sales Channels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Step in the Process</th>
<th>Online</th>
<th>In Person</th>
<th>Phone</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Research the best lender</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research the right loan</td>
<td>53%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educate myself on the lending process</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Obtain rate and fee quotes</td>
<td>43%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Determine my payments</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>24%</td>
<td>16%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply for a mortgage</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive application status updates</td>
<td>26%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receive final loan approval</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Base: Compete panelists who applied for a mortgage

Source: Compete and Forrester Research, Inc.

Forward-looking banks are discovering that segmenting sales and service by contact channel is a mistake that will cost them new business. They realise they need to seamlessly link their channels so they can reach the right customers and expand wallet share.

### Agent Productivity Continues to Suffer

The Corporate Executive Board, a provider of best practices research and analysis focusing on corporate strategy, operations and general management issues, reports that the average employee attrition rates in the retail banking industry are 26% for branch staff and 33% for call centre staff. Even worse, entry-level call centre staff may have attrition rates of over 70%, whilst outbound-selling staff have attrition rates that surpass 180%.

Across the contact centre, retail banks are uniquely challenged because the diverse, and often complex, products that they offer usually require highly-skilled, expensive agents — typically found at bank branches — to give effective sales presentations and provide service. In their efforts to maximise branch agent productivity, banks...
have done a good job of reallocating routine branch calls — such as requests for account information — to less costly channels and self-service options, but the other half of the equation is frequently missing.

Banks are challenged in their ability to offer available branch agent expertise, as needed, throughout the contact centre. As a result, agents become frustrated when they can’t do their jobs, and customers become frustrated when they can’t get their questions answered, or are routed to yet another agent where they must begin their dialogue all over again. And, too frequently, agents simply haven’t been properly trained to know what questions they need to ask the customer to make cross- and up-sell offers.

Successful retail banks are now looking at new ways to ensure their agents are as productive as they can be across all contact channels in order to increase agent satisfaction, as well as customer satisfaction, and boost the bottom line.

The Strategic Role of the Contact Centre in Retail Banking

Banks are having trouble fully realising the potential strategic value of their contact centres because interaction channels are not being used as broadly as they should, and because these channels aren’t fully integrated. The result is that banks cannot execute on the goals of the company as a whole — such as creating a great customer experience, cross-selling and up-selling more products and services and increasing agent productivity and satisfaction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Top Customer Service Objectives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Customer Experience</strong> — People evaluate their business relationship every time they contact a company; therefore, making this experience as enjoyable as possible is essential to customer acquisition and retention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Cross-Selling and Up-Selling</strong> — Generating revenue through cross-selling and up-selling has become just as important in contact centres as providing customer service. Every customer interaction, regardless of channel, must be explored as a sales opportunity and acted on accordingly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Agent Productivity and Satisfaction</strong> — Since the majority of contact centre costs lie in employing agents, any increase in their productivity and satisfaction can significantly enhance return on investment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Depending on contact centre maturity and business requirements, this paper presents ten contact centre strategies to make your customer service goals a reality.
Strategy 1: Facilitate Integrated and Consistent Interactions Across All Channels

Whilst customer reluctance to interact with banks on a broader basis makes it challenging to pursue organic growth by increasing wallet share with existing customers, there’s still ample opportunity to achieve this goal by developing deeper relationships with customers who engage with the contact centre.

Just because high-value customers are decreasing their visits to bank branches doesn’t also have to mean that banks will subsequently lose their personal connection to these customers. The first step is to offer an exceptional customer experience via multi-channel interactions comprised of branches, ATMs, phone, fax, e-mail, SM S and Web chat so that customers can conduct business exactly when and how they like. Providing a seamless experience across all channels so that interactions are as consistent and efficient as possible will help to build a solid relationship with the customer.

For relationship selling, agents require a unified view of interactions across all channels. In the early promotional stage, this means ensuring that banks don’t repeat the same offers to customers at different touch points, such as the call centre and the branch. As the customer responds to the promotion, agents can pick up where the customer left off at each stage in the sales process, regardless of which channel the customer was using. For example, if a customer (let’s call her Samantha) had asked questions about a loan online, the call centre would be aware of this and take steps to close the deal with her.

Strategy 2: Offer an Inviting “Customer Front Door”

When customers use the call centre channel, the Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system provides the customer’s first impression of the bank. It also serves as a guide to the bank’s services, and determines how well the bank can decrease the volume of calls that agents must handle or reduce handling times.

Open dialog call steering is emerging as an innovative alternative to traditional IVR menus. By asking what the customer wants and recognising key words in natural speech, and by integrating with business rules and routing strategies, open dialog call steering applications take intelligent action to ensure the most efficient resolution of the call.
An example:

- IVR: “Thank you for contacting Premier Financial Services. How can we help you?”
- Samantha: “I would like to increase the spending limit on my credit card.”

The Customer Front Door application can then either locate an agent who handles credit card spending authorisations, or execute a self-service application for processing Samantha’s limit increase request.

Strategy 3: Integrate Self-Service with Agent Assistance

Integrating self-service with agent assistance allows the customer to interact with the bank in a convenient way whilst still receiving the same personalised advisory service available in branches. As customers engage in online research and transactions, they can be offered agent assistance to make their interaction go more smoothly.

For instance, Samantha logs into her online account and checks her savings account balance, and then clicks on a link for the mortgage page and begins reading through information about loan options. As she reads, an online chat window pops up inviting her to speak with a loan specialist. Samantha accepts and is able to immediately ask the outstanding questions she has after reviewing the online materials.

Strategy 4: Handle Calls More Intelligently

Call centre automation not only identifies customers, it indicates why they are ringing based on IVR input. With this knowledge, intelligent routing can be put in place to determine whether the call should go to a self-service menu or to the agent most qualified to handle the call. Intelligent handling includes routing based on skills, making sure that each caller is matched to the representative with the right skill set — one who can speak the same language, answer questions about a particular product or handle a specific type of enquiry concerning service, sales or billing.

Intelligent call handling allows banks to match service priorities with customer value. For instance, premium customers who generate the most profits for the bank are often extended priority of service. This type of routing — called business priority routing — lets banks prioritise calls based on a wide range of considerations in addition to customer value, such as available channel resources, hold times and other factors.
When Samantha, a premium customer, rings the bank during a period of peak demand, she is passed straight through to a contact centre agent. At the same time, lower-value clients are provided excellent customer service by routing them to a self-service channel or offering them the opportunity to receive a ring back as soon as an agent is available.

**Strategy 5: Initiate Proactive Contact**

To achieve outstanding customer service, banks should consider proactive approaches to their service delivery. For instance, banks can proactively notify their customers based on predetermined preferences (such as e-mail, phone, SMS and so on). These notifications would augment banking service by helping customers respond to certain conditions before they happen, so that the customer has the option to maximise an opportunity or minimise a negative impact to their financial well being.

For example, a young, low-income individual might want to receive proactive warnings through instant messaging (IM) about checking account balances that are below an acceptable level, or a credit card balance that is approaching the individual’s credit limit. A high-income investment client might prefer to receive phone notifications about stock price changes in their portfolio that are either below or above some range so that they can make timely sell or buy decisions.

Proactive contact management is also a useful form of automated telemarketing to scale the contact centre for increased cross-selling and up-selling activities. Banks can further use proactive contact to notify their customers of new products and services or special promotions.

**Strategy 6: Make More Effective Use of Customer Data and Segmentation**

Given that many banking products are commodities vulnerable to significant price competition, some banks are abandoning their product-centric approaches to selling. Instead, they are exploring cross-sell and up-sell strategies based on the customer relationship. In this new paradigm, contact centres reach out to the customer with product configurations, product bundles and prices designed specifically to attract and meet the needs of individual customers.

Front-office integration in the contact centre helps banks move away from their siloed views of customer data. To make relationship selling a success, front-office integration gives agents a 360-degree view of the customer, which helps in focusing on lifetime customer profitability. Agents have access to the right information across all touch points to enable effective interaction with the customer.
In this way, customers may receive branch agent assistance and/or customised offers based on their current behaviour, recent interactions across all channels, existing bank-wide product portfolio, and detailed knowledge of the customer’s demographic data and propensity to buy. Going one step further, high-value customers may interact, when possible, with a life-time advisor who is intimately familiar with the client’s history and needs.

For example, suppose Samantha tells a branch mortgage specialist that the bank’s loan rates don’t appear to be competitive with other offers she’s seen online. Armed with Samantha’s complete portfolio and demographic information about her income and credit status, the mortgage specialist can tell her she is eligible for a premium customer special because of her relationship with the bank and her excellent credit history. Samantha is happy to hear that she can receive a competitive rate at her existing bank, and agrees to the offer.

Strategy 7: Use Inbound Marketing to Reach Customers Outside the Branch

Relationship selling does not have to be confined to face-to-face opportunities. Inbound marketing accounts for more than 25% of revenues for some credit card companies, according to McKinsey & Company.

As customers increasingly conduct business outside the branch, contextual inbound marketing techniques based on a 360-degree view of the customer can be used to make personalised retention and cross-sell offers when customers visit a Web site, make a call or access an ATM.

Strategy 8: Leverage Demographic Profiling to Establish Customer Intimacy

Retail banks are armed with a wealth of demographic details that they can leverage for cross-sell and up-sell opportunities, and they’ve long used their knowledge about customers to implement targeted marketing campaigns. However, banks can do even more with demographic assets to enhance the relationship with their customers.

Demographic matching is a way to assign the customer to an agent who has a common demographic profile. The result is that customers get to interact with agents who will more readily relate to the customer because they share certain commonalities, such as native language, age range, degree of technical competence and so on.
Strategy 9: Create a Winning Team Effort with Contact Centre Virtualisation

Many banks are moving towards a virtual contact centre to allow geographically dispersed agents to operate as a single, winning team. Regardless of location, agents can be called upon, as available, to ensure appropriate response levels and to provide access to needed expertise.

In the case where an agent takes a call that requires the additional skills of the branch, rather than frustrating the customer by providing incomplete information, the agent can quickly locate available branch experts and seamlessly pass the call on to someone who has complete details of the interaction. In this way, the customer isn't forced to repeat details of the previous conversation, and the company gains the benefit of a reduction in costs through operating multiple locations as one centre.

Here is an illustration: Samantha has just telephoned the call centre to ask about a home loan. However, the call centre agent quickly realises that Samantha's detailed questions about a Home Equity Line of Credit (HELOC) loan and her ability to extend the draw periods for using the line of credit require the assistance of a mortgage specialist. The call centre agent is able to quickly locate an available mortgage specialist at a branch office and route Samantha's call to the specialist. Rather than having to repeat the details of the conversation she just had with the call centre agent, Samantha is able to continue the discussion where she left off because the mortgage specialist has seamless access to her interaction at the call centre.

Strategy 10: Boost the Productivity of Your Agents through Interaction Blending

Banks benefit from optimising their agents’ time as much as possible. Call blending allows agents to handle both inbound service calls and outbound sales calls as call volume and skills permit, whilst task blending allows agents to offer their assistance at different interaction channels.

For example, tellers and loan officers at the branch may step in to handle service calls at the call centre or to make sales calls when branch activity is low. Or, contact centre agents can be switched to answering e-mails or engaging in text chats with customers. Not only does this maximise agent productivity, but interaction blending also breaks up the potential monotony of the position.
The Genesys Dynamic Contact Centre

The Genesys Dynamic Contact Centre is designed to transform customer service by automatically optimising customer traffic, internal resources and business outcomes. Whilst contact centres can manually adjust to changing patterns, an advanced — or ‘dynamic’ — contact centre has the know-how and technology to make automatic adjustments in real time. As contact centres become increasingly important retail banking channels, banks can convert themselves to dynamic contact centres to automatically optimise the customer experience, foster cross-sell and up-sell opportunities and increase agent productivity and satisfaction.

The Genesys Dynamic Contact Centre provides integrated and orchestrated customer service capabilities to fulfil these objectives:

- **Customer-Centric Routing** puts an end to customer frustration by ensuring each interaction is routed to the ideal resource with the right information — no matter where that resource is located in your organisation. This helps you increase first-call resolution rates, meet variable call volumes with limited resources, increase cross-sell and up-sell rates and improve agent satisfaction.

- **Business Process Routing** integrates phone, e-mail and fax with back-office business processes to improve agent productivity and customer service. Through this integration, contact centre resources can be leveraged as part of workflow processes, such as processing a claim, fax, work order or other interaction. Ultimately, contact centre and back-office processes are streamlined, and agent utilisation is improved.
• **Workforce Management and Optimisation** is central to managing and optimising contact centre resources. It gives you control over your operations by allowing you to forecast and schedule agents dynamically based on traffic volumes and resource availability — across a multi-site, multi-channel environment.

• **Proactive Contact Management** provides a personalised customer interaction experience by allowing you to send relevant outbound notifications at any time. It also enables you to create, modify, run and report on voice and multimedia outbound campaigns for proactive customer contact and sustained communications.

• **Integrated Self-Service** provides a holistic caller experience whilst reducing handling times and service delivery costs. These capabilities provide touch-tone or speech-enabled access for conversational exchange to identify and resolve routine customer requests and transfer more complex calls to the best skilled agent.

• **Internet and Multimedia Integration** capabilities allow customers to interact with you the way they want to, when they want to — through voice, e-mail, Web chat, Instant Messaging and even video calls.

• **Branch, Remote and Expert Integration** allow you to extend your contact centre to manage interactions based on business strategies and objectives. For example, higher-valued clients might be sent to a highly-skilled resource located within a branch office, rather than being sent to the general call centre.

• **The Virtual Contact Centre**, enabled by voice over IP (VoIP) technology, allows geographically dispersed contact centre agents to operate as a single, winning team. Regardless of where the contact centre agents are located, they can be called upon, as available, to ensure appropriate response levels and provide access to needed expertise.

• **Real-Time Offer Management** helps you capitalise on cross-sell and up-sell opportunities by enabling you to recommend an offer to an agent in real time, based on a customer's background, history and interaction type.

• **Reporting and Analytics** allow you to assess your contact centre and customer service activity by providing real-time and historical views on the performance metrics of contact centre objectives and how these metrics change over time.
Genesys in Retail Banking

In the Global 2000, seven out of ten of the world’s largest retail banks use Genesys. Below are some examples of how banks across Europe are benefiting from their Genesys solution.

**CARTASI** — the leading credit card issuer in Italy — enabled next generation technology across the enterprise with Genesys, including voice self-service, multimedia and IP. ROI was achieved in two years, and its contact centres met service quality targets whilst the company simultaneously achieved a €400,000 annual savings on telecommunications costs.

**FINANSBANK**

Russia’s FINANSBANK uses Genesys to reduce the operational workload at its branches, allowing branch personnel the opportunity to spend more time getting to know their customers, understanding their needs and providing customised and effective solutions.

**FIDITALIA**

FIDITALIA, one of Italy's largest credit companies, successfully deployed Genesys for proactive cross-sell efforts with segmentation, complete integration between inbound and outbound calls and improved overall agent productivity.

**RABOBANK** — one of the largest banks in the Netherlands and Europe's largest Internet bank — successfully integrated self-service banking with the contact centre and realised improved service levels with greater efficiency. Since installing Genesys, well over 90% of calls are answered within 15 seconds, and the average wait time is four seconds.

**FINECOBANK**

Italy's top online bank, now manages 60% of all customer calls — 90,000 every month — in self-service mode with GenesysVoice Platform for a considerable cost savings. Using IP technology, FinecoBank transparently connects bank experts with customers to support their goal of “experts anywhere.”
**Case Study**

IntesaBci is Italy’s largest bank, with a network of over 3,200 branches and more than 75,000 employees. Since 1995, IntesaBci has operated a central contact centre to deliver its telephone-based direct banking services. In 1998 it added Internet banking — including video and Voice over IP — to the operation.

With more players, more channels to market and a more discerning customer base, the challenge facing IntesaBci was how to meet its customers’ need for fast, easy, multimedia banking, with a high degree of customer relationship management. Improving the quality of its direct banking service would also allow it to gain a competitive advantage and maintain or increase market share.

According to Gian Piero Rachetti, Multimedia Contact Centre Manager with IntesaBci, the competitive arena is clear: “The competition is not only fighting on costs, but also on quality — and this is our priority too. We have to get a better quality of service for our customers, as well as improve our knowledge base by merging traditional banking with Internet banking.” Rachetti wanted to find a way to bring personal contact into remote transactions, using technology to enhance services and customer relationships.

IntesaBci selected Genesys to enable their agents to co-browse with customers, or use voice over the Internet to help guide customers through the bank’s Web services.

The Genesys IP Contact Centre solution includes intelligent routing, which means interactions are automatically directed to the most appropriate available agent. Whatever medium the customer uses — telephone or Web — IntesaBci can now handle it in one ‘universal queue,’ allowing interactions to be passed between agents.

“A universal queue and intelligent routing is very important to us,” adds Rachetti. “Whatever the media, it is important for us to drive the customer contacts so that we do the best for all our customers. We are using Genesys for the functionality it gives us on interaction management, and also because it offers an open platform.”
The result is that Internet banking ‘premium’ customers who contact the contact centre now see a small image in the top corner of their screen with a live video link to the agent, meaning they can talk face-to-face with agents. “At first they were surprised and amused to see the agent,” says Racchetti. “If the customer, too, has a Webcam linked to their PC, the agent can see the customer. With the contact centre, we create the same bank environment as customers experience in the branches: a confidential place to talk, and where the agent and customer can see each other.”

Since the implementation of the new Genesys technology, the volume of call traffic through the Milan contact centre has increased from approximately 20,000 to 60,000 contacts a day. That would signal success in its own right, but Racchetti has another way of judging: “I know the Genesys solution is a success. How do I know? I don’t have people coming to me with problems, saying it doesn’t work, that’s how I know!”

Conclusion

As this paper has detailed, the retail banking industry in Europe faces its own unique set of contact centre challenges. Increasing competition is forcing banks into undesirable price competition, whilst the lack of multi-channel integration makes it difficult to reach out to the most profitable customers who would be most likely to respond to cross-sell and up-sell offers.

Clearly, a bank’s contact centre is becoming an increasingly important channel to not only help agents manage complex product and service offers and to customise product configurations and product bundles for individual customer needs, but also to optimise customers’ experiences, deepen customer relationships and help the bank increase wallet share and beat the competition.

To meet these contact centre challenges, banks must transform their operations into dynamic contact centres that integrate and orchestrate key customer service capabilities to provide a seamless customer experience across channels, engage in proactive customer contact to increase customer loyalty, implement cross-sell and up-sell strategies based on strong customer relationships and promote agent productivity and satisfaction.

As our customers’ success can attest, Genesys is helping retail banks meet today’s unique challenges head on. Find how Genesys can help you. Visit our Web site www.genesyslab.com
Additional Information

**Genesys Worldwide**
Genesys, an Alcatel-Lucent company, is the world’s leading provider of contact center and customer service management software – with more than 4,000 customers in 80 countries. Genesys software directs more than 100 million interactions every day, dynamically connecting customers with the right resources – self-service or assisted-service – to fulfill customer requests, optimize customer care goals and efficiently use agent resources. Genesys helps organizations drive contact center efficiency, stop customer frustration and accelerate business innovation.

For more information: visit us on the Web: [www.genesyslab.com](http://www.genesyslab.com), or call +1 888 GENESYS (1-650-466-1100).

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