Reaping the Benefits of SOA in Customer Service Organizations

KANA Experience Analytics Harnesses the Power of SOA to Transform the Customer Service Experience
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Introduction

Today’s difficult economy has created the perfect storm for customer service organizations. They must learn to do more with less — increase the quality of the customer experience, turn service centers into profit centers, ensure processes are fully compliant with government and corporate regulations, and do it all with fewer resources and tighter budgets.

In the past few years, technology has emerged that can help customer service executives meet these challenges. One of the most important breakthroughs has been the development of service-oriented architecture (SOA). SOA is a business-centric IT architectural approach that supports integrating a business through linked and repeatable business tasks, known as services. These services allow applications to be constructed from discrete building blocks that can be reconfigured in various ways to quickly address new business requirements.

KANA Experience Analytics enables organizations to harness the benefits of SOA in a solution that is specifically designed to meet the needs of customer service. KANA Experience Analytics embeds the market-leading SOA foundation into a transformational solution for rapidly developing and delivering service interactions that are perfect expressions of a company’s business goals for each customer touch point.

KANA Experience Analytics provides business-level control over the customer service experience through the ability to design, deploy and dynamically control the information, knowledge and process needed to successfully resolve a service interaction. At the same time, KANA Experience Analytics monitors and measures the interaction in real time to ensure that it meets the objectives established for the key performance indicators (KPIs) of cost, customer satisfaction, revenue and risk. The result is a solution that offers three key benefits for service organizations: the agility required to quickly adapt service processes to constant and rapid change; the ability to consistently differentiate the company during each interaction; and the ability to manage toward a balanced scorecard of key performance indicators.

This paper will provide you with insight into the value of SOA to your service organization and explains how KANA has built Experience Analytics to help you successfully deliver a consistently outstanding, cost-efficient customer service experience.
Customer Service and the Complex Business Landscape

The current business landscape presents a difficult challenge for customer service organizations that are faced with complex business issues. Those issues include how to adapt quickly to new products, processes, and customer demands; how to demonstrate the value of the company during customer interactions; and how to improve customer satisfaction and loyalty while reducing costs, increasing revenue and ensuring compliance. Agility, differentiation and a balanced scorecard are key performance indicators (KPIs) that have become paramount for companies and their customer service operations.

Agility is now regarded as one of the most crucial business objectives. In a recent IBM Global CEO Study, 98 percent of participating CEOs plan business model changes, and 83 percent expect substantial or very substantial change. For customer service organizations, agility requires a new means for change management – one that will provide the highest level of flexibility so that the organization can design and re-design the customer experience with extraordinary speed and efficiency.

Equally important is the continuing need to differentiate the value of the company. An Independent technology research firm states, the frequency and speed of process innovation need to be highest at the point of customer interaction because this is where the enterprise differentiates itself, delivers on brand promise, wins new customers and deepens the relationship to ensure continued profit growth. Consequently, as technology gets closer to the point of interaction, it must be tailored to the needs of each customer.

However, differentiation through the delivery of a great customer experience cannot take place at the expense of the company’s overall objectives. Service organizations must be able to achieve a balanced scorecard for all of their KPIs during each interaction, including cost and revenue per interaction, customer loyalty and risk reduction.

Unfortunately, current enterprise systems are not meeting the need for agility, differentiation and a balanced scorecard. Core enterprise applications, such as enterprise resource planning (ERP) and asset management systems, provide high value by reducing costs and ensuring process consistency, but they cannot easily support the service organization. This is because customer interactions are more unique and less repeatable— the opposite of the core strength of major enterprise business applications. Inflexible, difficult to integrate and costly to implement, these systems limit the service organization’s ability to quickly adjust service processes to reflect changing market conditions, customer and company requirements.
The Business Value of SOA

What is needed is a more flexible architecture that will enable service organizations to adapt more quickly, deliver more personalized customer experiences at the point of interaction and balance the sometimes competing interests of its KPIs. SOA is designed to help companies successfully compete in today’s fluid and complex business environment. SOA provides a set of structured, yet loosely coupled, Web-based information services that can be reused across processes and independently maintained. It establishes a foundation for the access and use of enterprise information through “composite” applications that can be rapidly assembled from Web services to meet specific business functions. An SOA environment— with its emphasis on reusability and flexibility — removes the traditional barriers to information sharing to improve the efficiency, responsiveness and control of key business processes. As a result, SOA offers multiple business values to the service organization, helping to:

• Drive agility into the organization with easily and efficiently designed and modified processes for quick response to business change
• Unlock data in enterprise systems to deliver richer, more satisfying and individual customer experiences at lower cost
• Enable customer interactions to be managed with consistent and compliant processes across channels

Enabling Outstanding Customer Service with SOA

As market leader in the development of emerging technologies and customer service solutions, KANA has made large investments to develop and support a transformational SOA-based customer service solution. This new solution is built on the SOA Foundation, which provides an integrated, open-standards-based set of software, best practices and patterns for SOA. The KANA SOA Foundation is designed to help companies extend the value of existing applications and business processes to create additional business value. It also provides extensive support for business and IT standards to facilitate greater interoperability and portability between applications.
KANA Services: Delivering the Ideal Service Experience

KANA has built a SOA-based set of specialized tools and Web services to address the core business needs of customer service organizations. KANA is delivering one of the first and richest examples of the benefits of SOA technology and composite applications, KANA Experience Analytics. It embeds SOA Foundation and leverages next-generation technology for business process management, knowledge management, Web 2.0 and predictive analytics. Because SOA capabilities are built into the application, IT organizations are not required to fully embrace SOA to reap the benefits of this technology. KANA Experience Analytics abstracts the complexities of the SOA infrastructure through a set of business-friendly tools.

With KANA Experience Analytics, service organizations can completely control the service experience by determining and delivering precisely the right experience as each service interaction takes place. The result is the ideal service experience, with the agility, differentiation and best balance of KPIs that service organizations require. Uniquely, KANA Experience Analytics blends knowledge, transactions and process into resolving customer interactions by combining:

- Interaction/Interface Management – the ability to manage and control what and how the user sees
- Process Management – the capacity to manage and control the unfolding work process
- Knowledge Management – the capacity to manage and control the delivery of information within the interaction

These capabilities go far beyond traditional business process management and case management applications. While KANA Experience Analytics provides tools to define service business processes, by incorporating interaction and knowledge management into the process, KANA Experience Analytics also makes it possible to define the information needed to make the right decision as well as specify the objective for each KPI to be met during each interaction. In addition, because these activities occur in real time, KANA Experience Analytics can dynamically adjust a process to account for variables in the customer conversation.

Business-Focused Technology

Unified interaction, process and knowledge management is achieved through technology for designing and delivering service experiences that are fundamentally different from the time-consuming, IT-oriented approach of many applications.
KANA Experience Analytics leverages technology so that the business organization can control and create the service experience. KANA Experience Analytics uses four unique technologies to meet the key requirements of agility, differentiation and a balanced scorecard — the Service Experience Modeler, Adaptive Desktop, Service Experience Orchestrator and Service Experience Optimizer.

**Agility and the Service Experience Modeler**

The Service Experience Modeler offers business-level control of the process, user interface and knowledge delivery by combining workflow creation, user interface builder and business-logic construction, and legacy data integration into a business-oriented modeling tool.

Because business owners can easily design their vision of a service experience using a familiar visual flowchart interface, the Modeler provides a “no waiting” solution to changing business conditions and requirements. Collaborating with IT resources, service organizations can implement new and modified service experiences in just a few minutes instead of the traditional months of waiting for technical resources. This makes it easy to immediately adjust service process for new products and promotions, quickly assimilate new procedures and rules, and make sure customer service is complying with changing regulations.
Differentiation and the Adaptive Desktop

Based on the parameters of the experience designed, the Experience Modeler automatically generates the Adaptive Desktop for the appropriate role, such as a customer service representative (CSR) or self-service customer.

The Adaptive Desktop combines with the Service Experience Orchestrator to differentiate at the point of interaction, enabling service organizations to deliver a more personalized experience. This is particularly important in the contact center, where the varying levels of CSR knowledge and skills can produce inconsistent and non-compliant interactions. The Service Experience Orchestrator marshals the resources needed to lead CSRs and customers through an interaction by delivering the right blend of data, knowledge and process needed at each step to successfully reach resolution. It dynamically modifies the experience as the interaction unfolds to account for unexpected responses and changing requirements of both the customer and the business.

The result is a tailored and personalized experience that helps companies more successfully differentiate their value during service interactions. At the same time, it helps to resolve the problem of inconsistency or non-compliance by delivering the right process and information at each step, regardless of the experience level of the user.

A Balanced Scorecard and the Service Experience Optimizer

The Service Experience Optimizer monitors and manages the unfolding experience to optimize each customer interaction in real time. The Optimizer uses the objective defined for each KPI – cost, customer satisfaction, risk and revenue – and applies these during the interaction.
With the ability to dynamically optimize each customer interaction, service organizations can successfully achieve a balanced scorecard that maximizes the profit potential of the interaction while promoting long-term customer loyalty and compliance.

**Conclusion**

The message for service organizations is clear — they need to more closely align service interactions with company goals and compliance requirements, respond more quickly to changing business needs, and more successfully leverage enterprise information to deliver a higher-quality customer experience.

KANA Experience Analytics is delivering one of the first and richest examples of the benefits of an SOA-built service application. With the introduction of KANA Experience Analytics, KANA continues to capitalize on its leadership in customer service and infrastructure technology to deliver a unique solution designed to meet the challenges for delivering exceptional customer service across all channels.

To learn more about how the KANA suite of omni-channel solutions can help you create customers for life, call **1-800-737-8738**.
About KANA®, A Verint® Company

KANA®, a Verint® Company, is a leading provider of cloud and on-premises customer service solutions. KANA helps global organizations—including many of the Fortune 500, mid-market businesses and public sector agencies—optimize their engagements with consistent and contextual customer journeys across agent, web, social and mobile experiences. Using KANA solutions, organizations can reduce operational costs, increase resolution rates and improve brand loyalty.

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