

# B/OSS™

B I L L I N G & O S S W O R L D

September 2011

## CRM's Second Act

Much maligned  
and malingered,  
CRM is making a comeback

Convergys Comes Out of the Wings	6
CSG Gets a TV Spot	18
GreatCall Makes Great Call on Care	22

# MAPPING THE PATH to Customer Experience Management

---

CEM looks a little different from the network side of the house.

---

By Tim McElligott

**T**he funny thing about customer experience management (CEM)—an operations and IT initiative with actual budgets behind it—is that although IT and operations see it differently, they share the same ultimate goal.

Whereas a billing or other business support system engineer may see CEM and customer relationship management (CRM) as pretty much the same, network engineers see CEM and service quality management (SQM) as pretty much the same. They can't both be right. Or can they?

If being able to associate, or map, service quality to particular customers and put that information in the hands of sales and support people who can use it to ensure continued quality experience levels, then yes they can. Here's how Marc Hayden, executive vice president of client services at CHR Solutions and an engineer's engineer, sees CEM:

“The ‘customer experience’ piece is the use experience of the client on their device irrespective of the device or content or service. The ‘management’ piece is how to translate that experience into something meaningful and intelligent from a network engineering perspective that lets you either manage or control that experience.”

Translated into something actionable, Hayden said that if he could see through analytics that a particular client with a certain bandwidth package was a heavy video teleconference user in a small business and performance indicators showed that user

---

#### IN THIS ISSUE

[Convergys p. 6](#) ■ [Speaking Microsoft p. 15](#) ■ [Table of Contents p. 2](#)

having a quality issue, he could reach out proactively with a package that would guarantee a higher quality experience.

“It’s about knowing what to offer based on how you know they are using and experiencing the service,” he said.

That’s easier said than done. However, it is getting easier all the time. CHR Solutions is using a three-tiered go-to-market model for many of its offerings. In the area of CEM it can resell partner solutions, present a software-as-a-service offering where CHR hosts and administers a solution that is run on a daily basis by the client, or it can provide fully-managed NOC services. In this sense, it is both a customer and a partner of Monolith Software, a company whose solution is as much CEM as it is traditional service assurance.

The companies are working on a mapping solution that ties performance and experience directly to customers by integrating the client database and Monolith management software. They will use this resulting intelligence to provide analytics and correlation to the operator’s engineering staff so they can remediate issues faster and make them aware of who is being affected and what options they might have to offer them something.

Monolith’s Unified IT Infrastructure Management Software approach is a unified platform for fault, availability,

---

“The ‘**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE**’ piece is the use experience of the client on their device irrespective of the device or content or service. The ‘**MANAGEMENT**’ piece is how to translate that experience into something meaningful and intelligent from a network engineering perspective that lets you either manage or control that experience.”

—CHR Solutions’ Marc Hayden

---

performance, SLA management and real-time dashboarding. However, Jeff Parker, president at Monolith Software, said his 6-year-old company has hit upon an approach that makes it uniquely qualified to solve issues on the network side of CEM.

Launching a tech startup in 2005 was a pretty bold move considering the lead companies such as Micromuse and Concord had and the size of the companies their products now belong to (IBM and CA.) In fact, maybe it was a little crazy. But doing so and chasing the market leaders forced Monolith to come up with something different. Given the convergence taking place at the time and continuing to take place, the company steered itself toward developing a unified approach to both data collection and presentation—both of which are now at the heart of CEM.

“We started to realize that a unified presentation is only easily achievable if you have unified access to data,” Parker said.

---

#### IN THIS ISSUE

[Convergys p. 6](#) ■ [Speaking Microsoft p. 15](#) ■ [Table of Contents p. 2](#)

Monolith then developed what it calls a Unified Assurance Warehouse to act as a single database for all people within an enterprise to access CEM-related data. Parker admits that the current market is the Wild, Wild West when it comes to CEM, but in the end, big CEM deployments are no more desirable than big CRM deployments. Those days are gone.

“Traditional CEM involves buying portal software, middleware and using an army of consultants (sounds more like CRM all the time). I can name carriers who have invested at least two years in projects only to have sales and marketing say they aren’t bringing it to market,” Parker said.

Sales and marketing, by the way, have become the new decision makers for CEM solutions.

The new requirement for CEM is to get up and running in a month, something Parker says Monolith can do. That is due partly to a simplification of the metrics and reduction of the messages coming into the NOC.

“Everybody is instrumenting everything. I can present 1,000 different KPIs and metrics and [potential] problems, but service providers really need to get their heads out of the weeds and say what are the top five or 10 key things that can discern if a service they are delivering is really bad,” Parker said.

Contributing to KPI overload is the surprising lack of standards for a part of

the business that is core and as old as the network itself. Parker said service providers have not pushed network equipment manufacturers to create any industry standards, forcing solutions providers to continually provide one-off solutions. “It really is ridiculous what is going on in the industry right now and that vendors continue to get away with delivering proprietary solutions. I can’t fathom how that is acceptable. They need to get together and push the NEMs to standardize,” Parker said.

A significant amount of engineering and configuration goes into developing a true picture of customer experience, Hayden said. One has to know the baseline performance of the network elements, what the key performance indicators are and what to correlate them to. “Most carriers don’t have the time or resources to do it themselves. But we understand the engineering and we understand the services. And the beauty of Monolith is they already have these correlations configured,” he said.

So although CHR offers CEM or SQM solutions in whatever way the service provider wants, it is becoming apparent through their activities with managed services and others’ activities, that when it comes to a full CEM solution that correlates the network and customer-facing aspects of service delivery, managed services will get a very strong look. **B/OSS**

#### IN THIS ISSUE

[Convergys p. 6](#) ■ [Speaking Microsoft p. 15](#) ■ [Table of Contents p. 2](#)