



Dynamic Case Management For Customer Service

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Executive Summary

If you think case management is all about capturing customer notes and efficient call wrap-ups, think again. In today's complex and unpredictable world you cannot anticipate the type of case your knowledge worker will get. Therefore, you cannot design or "code" your applications for all possible scenarios. What you need is an efficient and dynamic system that adapts to the context of each customer and is flexible enough to accommodate any unforeseen scenarios that customer interactions present.

This paper discusses what case management is and what its components are. It discusses some of the current challenges in the customer service organizations and how a dynamic case management system is suited to meet those challenges.

What Is a Case?

A case can be defined as a series of interactions *initiated* by an occurrence of an event that needs investigation and response from an expert. The case is *completed* when proper response is delivered to the stakeholder in the case. It includes the interactions between the stakeholder and representatives from the organization, a collection of reasons and any supporting artifacts about the incident. The case can be a legal case, a billing dispute, a trouble ticket, a refund request, etc. Some cases need a lot of investigation and may run for months, like an immigration application, while others can be of the one-and-done type that can be resolved in a single call, like credit card activation.

A case is always initiated by an event. This event can be “fraud has occurred,” “customer received an incorrect billing statement,” “customer faced a service disruption,” “customer faxed an order,” etc. Whenever such an event occurs, a customer service interaction results and a case is initiated. When the issue is resolved or the desired service is delivered the case is completed and closed. There are a number of components of a case. These components include case workflow, case participants, case information, case rules, and case documents.

Industry	Examples of Cases
Communications	Billing disputes Trouble ticketing Phone activation
Health Care	Patient self-care Referrals requests
Financial Services	Credit card fraud reporting Bill inquiry
Retail	Merchandise returns Refund management

Let's review what these components are:

Case Workflow

This component describes the series of activities in a case. These activities can occur in a sequence or in parallel. There is a start activity, intermediate activities and end activities. For example, for opening a bank account you may go through activities like application, credit check, application review, approval and account setup. A series of such steps or activities is called the case workflow.

Case Participants

Any step in case workflow needs to be performed by a participant or the stakeholder in the case. This participant can be your agent, your customer, your partner, etc. Activities can also be performed automatically, referred to as system activities, in which the system acts as the user and completes a step in the workflow. For example, if your customer fills out an account opening application, the next step is a credit check, which is performed by the system calling an external application like Transunion, Experian or Equifax.

Case Information

Case information is all the data that is required to process a case, like information needed to open a bank account, for example. In this example we may ask for the customer's name, address, phone number, social security number, work information, and anything else needed to make a decision on the customer's account application.

Case Policies

Any business process is governed by a set of rules or policies. For example, if the applicant has a high net worth, the case priority is set to high and additional services, like a personal banker, free checking or overdraft protection, are offered. Or if an application is not completed within two days, it may be escalated to the express processing group. Or if the credit score is less than 480, the application is denied. These types of rules will determine the path that a case will follow through the workflow, the user experience that will be delivered to the agent and the customer and finally the result of the case.



Case Documents

Sometimes there is a need to attach documents to a case so they can be reviewed and made a part of the “case folder” (we will come back to the concept of the case folder later). For example, an applicant needs to attach a copy of their birth certificate, a pay stub and a current picture with an application for a new account. These documents will flow along with the case, along with any other data, and are used to make decisions on the case.

Metrics

Metrics are a key part of case definition. They allow us to measure the performance of the business. These metrics could be quite generic, like call handling times, case processing time and cost per interaction, or specific to the case management process, like up-sell revenue per interaction, etc.

What is Case Management?

Case management involves initiating a case, processing it and taking it to a meaningful closure. It involves the collaborative design of workflows to determine the sequence of activities. It involves dispatching the right activity to the right person at the right time. It involves providing the knowledge needed by the case owner to complete their task. It involves capturing the history of the case and producing audit reports on demand. It also involves capturing all events and data about the case and analyzing it to improve the customer service process.

Challenges in Customer Service

In the global world economy, more often than not our customers, partners and colleagues are geographically distributed. In order to process a customer request we need to access dozens of systems, like CRM, ERP, Billing, Shipping, etc. The processes are running across system, functional and enterprise boundaries. One part of a process may be handled by business outsourcing partners while another part is handled by dealers. In this heterogeneous ecosystem, how can we make sure that we are process driven and deliver consistent customer service? And since these legacy systems are not connected by a single end-to-end process, they are integrated unnaturally, creating application and process silos in the organization. To work on a case, agents may need to log into dozens of systems or have a desktop littered with numerous applications and Alt-Tab between them.

This presents some serious visibility challenges. Since there is no end-to-end definition of the case process, there is no common understanding of it. Moreover, there is no unified view into the case that can provide real-time information about the case or the CSR team performance. Agents and managers only come to know about a service failure after it has happened. An even worse situation is when a customer reports a problem and you had no idea the issue even existed. Visibility into the processes is the key to improving them and taking actions at the right moment so that service disasters can be avoided.

Because customers these days expect to be able to reach you via multiple channels – phone, web, email, etc. – consistent service is also a big issue. Consistency in service – not only across channels but also across multiple agents in the same channel – is required but quite hard to deliver.

Customers have also come to expect instant or near real-time resolution of their cases. This may be via self-service, phone or email. Competition today is tougher than ever, and the barrier to switching services or products is getting lower and lower. This is true across all industries including communications, retail, healthcare or financial services. Customers can change service providers in minutes.

The business environment is dynamic. There are continuous changes in political, economic, social and technological factors that ask of you to adapt and adapt quickly. Failure to do so may cause a missed market opportunity or hefty fines from a regulatory agency. The ability to react faster than your competitors provides you with a competitive advantage. You should be able to continuously improve your processes without having to revamp and rebuild the contact centers every 2-3 years. The infrastructure needs to be agile and extensible.

Over the past few years many customer service responses have become automated or have moved to self-service, which effectively means that only the hardest cases are coming to call centers. Now agents are expected to have much deeper knowledge and cases need more investigation, resulting in increased call handling times. Agent training costs are going up and so is agent turnover. Agents are dissatisfied because they do not have the right tools to serve customers effectively. Agent dissatisfaction is also causing high attrition rates in support centers.

Delivering quality customer service is only one dimension of the challenge. Service managers are under increasing pressure to reduce costs and be effective in cross selling and up selling additional services. They must maintain a tight balance between business and the demands of customers.

This situation has created the perfect storm for customer service managers who are trying to balance both customer and business objectives.

Technical Challenges

Ubiquitous CRM systems are not designed for interacting with customers. They are a system of record –to store data. That's what they are designed for - data in and data out. Secondly, they are also not well integrated with all internal and external customer information sources, so information remains fragmented in various systems like CRM, ERP, Accounting, Billing, Shipping, etc. This makes it very difficult to describe and understand an exact situation in customer service groups. The processes are locked in silos and information is presented without the context of the overall process.

Fragmented data makes it a challenge to perform real-time and meaningful analytics. When you capture customer data over various interactions, you want to be able to learn from that information and improve the process for future interactions. But very few systems today provide experience feedback that amounts to a round trip optimization of customer service processes.

Most customer service systems are designed with agents and the phone in mind. They are not well suited for self service, email response, or more leading edge channels like SMS, chat, iPhone applications, etc. But you cannot afford to have separate systems for each of these channels or to inadvertently deliver inconsistent service through disparate channels.

Case management needs collaboration. Agents need to consult each other to resolve a case. But the technology today does not support this to the fullest. When collaboration does occur, it happens outside the customer service system, resulting in a broken audit trail on how an agent reached a particular resolution. The organization is unable to benefit from the knowledge of how an agent may have solved a peculiar case. That information is not made part of enterprise knowledge management but instead remains as tribal knowledge.

None of these issues can be solved by classic CRM systems or other trouble ticketing systems out there. They were not designed to manage the global, distributed, flexible and dynamic nature of today's business.

How Dynamic Case Management Meets Challenges in Customer Service?

What Makes the Case Management Dynamic?

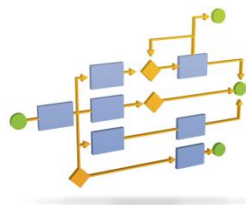
As seen in the above challenges that the business and customer service environment is quite unpredictable. The business environment is changing continuously. As service providers offer multiple services and products the customer support calls are getting more complex. Customers are calling into support centers with multiple requests. While CSR is with a customer finishing a case, customer changes the context of the call and brings up unrelated issue e.g. while inquiring about a bill a customer wants to add additional service to phone.

Many a times the service process gets so complex that it is virtually impossible to write it down or design it using traditional tools. We may not even know the sequence of steps in resolving the case as steps will be determined by the information or evidence collected till that point in time.

The traditional case management or the CRM solutions fail to address these issues. We need a Dynamic case management system. With Dynamic Case Management organizations get unprecedented agility and adaptability to manage dynamic service processes. *Adaptability* refers to the ability of the process to change as the context of the case changes. This change may be change in process steps, user interfaces or rules etc. *Agility* on the other hand refers to the ability to change the process designs quickly and deploying newer versions of processes allowing for continuous process improvement and quick time to solution.

A Dynamic Case Management System provides:

Task Distribution & Processing



Task management means delivering a given task to an agent who has the right skill set at the right time so that the case can be processed within the service level agreements (SLA) promised to the customer. There are a number of factors that make this possible. If an agent happens to be on vacation, we need to make sure delegation of the task is possible. If a task is in jeopardy of missing an SLA, system escalation of the task might be required. Change in the agent organization may require reassignment and redistribution of tasks. Case management allows you to manage the distribution of all these tasks and makes processing efficient.

As cases are getting more complex, agents often need to collaborate with each other in order to process them. This is quite common in managed health cases or

legal processes. Dynamic case management ensures that the provision of collaboration is provided within the system and all collaboration is recorded and available for audit.

Next Best Action Scripts



To make sure all your agents are your best agents and that their training costs are kept to a minimum, you need script management. Scripts prompt agents to ask the right questions and provide suitable responses to your customers. Depending on customers' responses, it further prompts agents to ask the next question until a solution is reached. This eliminates the need for thick binders with operating procedures for agents to refer to while interacting with a customer. The use of scripts also reduces call handling times and provides consistent service, no matter which agent takes the call.

Knowledge Management



Since case processing is all about knowledgeable workers resolving customer cases, knowledge is an important component of case management. Knowledge management integrates the organization's knowledge with the process so that the right information is available to the agent at the right step in the process, allowing him or her to be effective. It brings knowledge from multiple resources to the agents' finger tips. Integrating knowledge with the customer service process is more than just the ability to search; it is contextual to the customer interaction and adapts depending on the interaction or according to any change in information provided by the customer during the interaction.

Customer 360-Degree View



Knowing your customers is critical in solving their problems as well as identifying up-sell and cross sell opportunities. When a customer gets in touch with you, your agents need to know the customer value, churn propensity and all the issues reported or orders placed by the customer. With this information at hand, an agent can deliver the appropriate level of service to the customer and save you from losing a high value customer. We all know that acquiring a new customer is much more expensive than retaining an existing customer. Your existing customers are much more profitable than newer customers. Case management brings all the information about the customer onto a single user interface, right in front of the agent as soon as the interaction starts.

Auditability and Interaction History



At any point in time you should be able to discern how a particular case was processed. This might even be a regulatory requirement, especially in financial services or health care. Case history can include all status changes to a case, who did which task at what time and discussion threads or collaborations that occurred while processing the case. By retrieving all this information with the click of a button, you save a tremendous amount of time and cost on audits.

Multi-Channel Interaction Support



Customers today expect to be able to reach you via multiple channels at their convenience. Customer service centers need to support phone, email, chat, fax and internet as channels for support. The challenge here is providing customers with consistent service no matter which channel they use. A customer can initiate an interaction or a case from one channel but choose to continue it using another. For example, someone might report a billing dispute via email or the web, but then call your support center to find out the status. In such a situation, their experience needs to be seamless. Dynamic Case management provides interfaces to all such channels while still keeping the underlying process for case resolution the same. You do not have to design different processes for different channels.

Integration with Legacy Systems



As we discussed above, many challenges today are due to very heterogeneous systems. By integrating all the systems into an end-to-end process, case management eliminates the need for agents to log into dozens of systems or Alt-Tab between them to resolve cases. The right information is retrieved and delivered to the right system from a single user interface, allowing agents to focus on helping each customer from a single point of entry.

Adaptability & Agility



Dynamic Case management by its definition needs to be able to manage unstructured processes because situations can change at any point in the process. These situations cannot be coded or predicted during the design time beforehand either, because they are unpredictable. Even if you could somehow determine all possibilities, the process design itself would become very incomprehensible and rigid.

Dynamic Case management makes a provision for agents to determine the path of the process as the interaction progresses. The agent desktop is also adaptive and morphs as the interaction changes or the customer context changes.

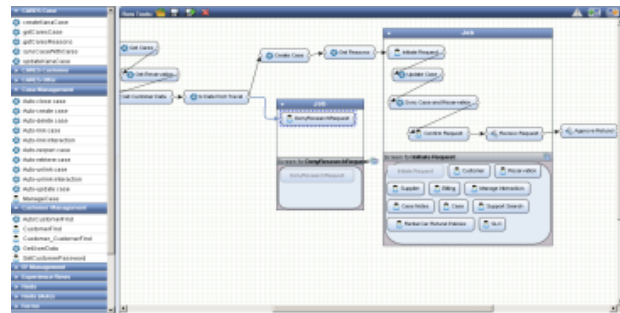
How KANA Service Experience Management (SEM) Helps

KANA SEM provides comprehensive dynamic case management functionality that you need for your customer service applications. KANA SEM is a platform for developing and deploying agile customer service applications. It allows service managers to design the right experience for their customers and their business, orchestrate the experience across their people and technology, and listen to the outcomes so that they can continuously make the experience better. KANA's SEM platform allows us to build case management solutions that solve specific pain points in the customer service space.

Some of the key features of the SEM platform include:

Model Driven Case Definition

Easy to use model driven case definition allows business managers and analysts to define the customer experience flow in the terminology that is meant for customer service managers. A rich, out-of-the-box set of flows and information objects allows for quick modeling. The web based tool allows for collaboration between business and IT and provides reusable components that enable solutions to be developed faster than traditional development utilities.



Efficient Task Management

KANA SEM helps you to design and manage efficient task distribution per your specific business needs. There is support for delegation, reassignment, etc., so that the right task is delivered to the agents with the right skills at the right time.

Created	Priority	Subject	Price	Channel	Status	Assigned
5/11/2018 8:03 AM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Initial Request	Assigned	
5/13/2018 11:46 AM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Priority Status	Assigned	
5/13/2018 9:07 AM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Custom Request	Assigned	
5/13/2018 8:06 AM	0	Administrator initiated operation	---	Approval Decision	Assigned	
5/17/2018 11:06 AM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Initial Request	Assigned	
5/17/2018 12:06 PM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Approval Decision	Other	
5/17/2018 12:06 PM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Research Request	Assigned	
5/17/2018 1:04 PM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Initial Request	Assigned	
5/17/2018 1:08 PM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Initial Request	Assigned	
5/17/2018 1:10 PM	0	Rental car refund request	---	Initial Request	Assigned	

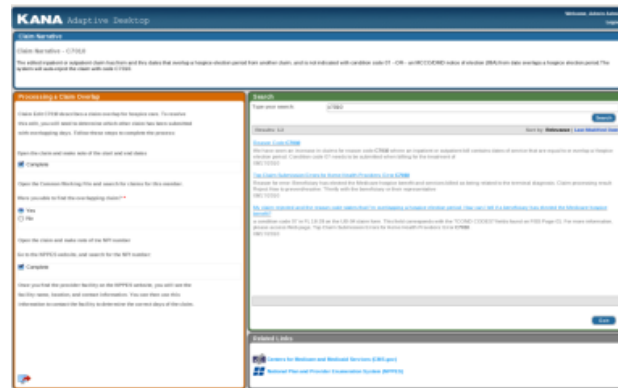
Adaptive Desktop

Service Experience Management (SEM) delivers the solution with the Adaptive Desktop. The Adaptive Desktop dynamically responds to the needs of your agents during each service interaction. Channel-agnostic and context-driven, the Adaptive Desktop provides access to all of the contextual knowledge, applications, and tools needed to resolve an inquiry. It delivers an interactive experience that leads agents and customers to satisfactory resolution by providing the right blend of process, data, and knowledge at the right moment.



Knowledge Infused Processes

KANA SEM delivers the right blend of knowledge and process at each step needed to lead CSRs and customers through an interaction. It dynamically modifies the experience to account for unexpected responses and your or your customers' changing requirements. With rich intelligent search and enterprise knowledge at their finger tips, all your agents become your best agent. It takes the guess work out of the equation and helps your agents to resolve cases efficiently and consistently.



Unstructured Processes

KANA SEM allows agents to eliminate ad-hoc processes "from the main process. Agents can also go back and forth in a process without leaving process breadcrumbs



that allow them to move unstructured in a process. This helps agents to work with the customer as the interaction is moving rather than force the customer interaction to move as the rigid process forces them.

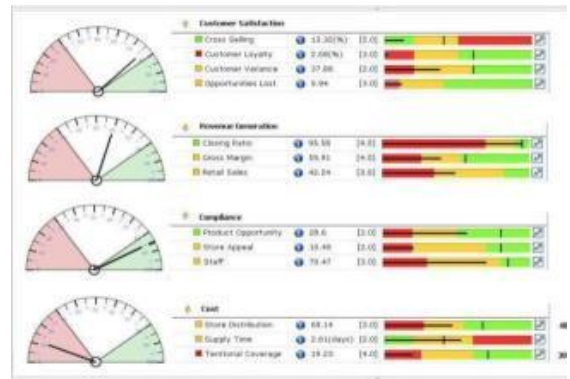
Audit Trail

The ability to audit is the key to ensuring that the case is meeting all regulatory and compliance needs. It helps organizations keep their compliance costs low and avoid unnecessary penalties. KANA SEM logs all case interactions which can be retrieved at any time with the click of a button.



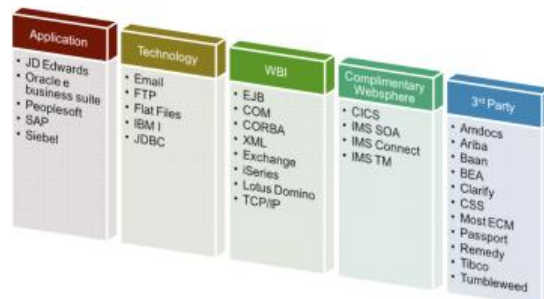
Case Analytics

KANA SEM provides a very flexible information store to capture the data and events of customer service processes. This information store is then used to create real-time dash-boards or reports to monitor the performance of customer service centers. You can monitor the performance of support teams or service delivery to a particular customer. Managers can determine the SLA or the metrics that are important to their customers and the business and monitor those. If the metrics are not achieving their targets, then managers can take corrective action to adjust or change the process design to meet those objectives.



Integration

Integrating the legacy system is a key requirement of any case management system. This integration ensures that tasks are delivered to the systems that they are best at performing. Integration also ensures that customers have access to multiple channels for



interaction and receive consistent service no matter which channel they choose. KANA SEM provides a very rich integration framework to integrate your customer service case management processes to legacy systems like CRM, SRP, Billing, Ordering, etc. The SEM process orchestrates activities at the business level and makes sure that the underlying systems are getting updated or providing the required data to complete the case.

More Information

KANA helps the world's best known brands master the service experience.

As the leader in Service Experience Management, KANA provides solutions that deliver a customer-focused service experience that successfully balances customer interests with business goals. Service Experience Management uniquely unifies business process, case and knowledge management for customer service organizations. It leverages KANA's expertise in delivering consistent service across all communication channels, including email, chat, call centers, and Web self-service. KANA's Service Experience Management solutions allow companies to control every step within each customer interaction to deliver the ideal service experience. KANA's clients report double-digit increases in customer satisfaction, increased revenue growth while reducing contact center costs by an average of 20 percent. KANA's award-winning solutions are proven in more than 600 companies worldwide, including approximately half of the world's largest 100 companies.

To learn more about how the KANA suite of multi-channel solutions can help you create customers for life, call **1-800-737-8738** or visit our website at www.kana.com.

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