Open Source in the Contact Center Environment

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Main Factors

• Licensing Fees
• Implementation Costs
• Ease of Customization
• Avoiding End-Of-Life
Licensing Fees

For contact center applications, most proprietary choices are based on a licensing fee model

- Number of agents
- Number of lines
- Number of managers
- Recording
- Voicemail
- IVRs
- Line technology
Open Source Licensing

• Most open source software comes with little or no licensing fees.
• Open source software that does require licensing fees tends to have competing open source software projects without the licensing fees.
Closed Source Implementation Costs

Three different quotes for a 200 seat outbound contact center from closed source providers

– Cost for servers, software and phones: $500,000 - $1,000,000
– Maintenance and Service contracts $120,000 - $200,000/year
Open Source Implementation

Costs

200 seat outbound contact center using open source software

– Cost for servers, software, and phones: $40,000 - $60,000

– Maintenance and Service can be handled in house by IT staff

– Multiple different consultants available if necessary
Ease of Customization

A common request on large installations is customization.

– Integration with internal software systems
– Changing the color scheme to match the company's marketing material
– Changing terminology to match other software applications
– Tweaking features to better fit the company's business process
Closed Source Customizations

• Most of the time you are at the mercy of the solution provider
• Customization charges can range from $150 to $400 per hour
• The process must go through a quotation process with tight requirement specifications
• Changes to the requirements require new a new quote
Open Source Customization

• Source code is freely available

• Customizations can be done in house
  – Changes to the requirements can be rapidly addressed

• There are generally multiple consultants available to perform customizations if need be
End-Of-Life

Proprietary solutions run the risk of being marked as End-Of-Life by the manufacturer. When this happens you loose:

– Support
– Software updates
– Customization possibilities

Only option from the manufacturer is to purchase their latest solution. (See Closed Source Implementation Costs)
Open Source and End-Of-Life

Open source software cannot be marked as End-Of-Life.

– If there is an active community with the necessary development talent there will always be:
  • Software updates to fix bugs and compatibility issues.
  • The ability to hire someone to support the software and make customizations.

– You can get the source code for the software and maintain it in house.