



Value Index

Agent Performance Management 2010

Executive Summary



Aligning Business and IT To Improve Performance

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Ventana Research performed this research and analysis independently to determine the Value Index for Agent Performance Management and to evaluate vendors and products in accordance with the Ventana Research Agent Performance Management blueprint and specific operational and performance activities and processes. We charged no fees for this research and invited all vendors to participate who are delivering applications to enable agent performance management. This report includes vendors and products generally available as of January 2010.

Our purpose in conducting this research was to evaluate the maturity of software vendors and products and their appropriateness for the methodology and process of Agent Performance Management. This research and report are not intended to imply that one vendor or product is the right choice for any particular organization. Rather, they provide a baseline of knowledge that organizations can use to evaluate vendors and products to manage and improve agent performance by aligning business and IT. Unlike IT analyst firm reports that use subjective influences to score vendors, our research is based on the thorough analysis of customer assurance and product categories that best represent how an organization should evaluate its technology supplier.

We certify that Ventana Research performed the research to the best of our ability; that the analysis is a faithful representation of our knowledge of vendors and products; and that the analysis and scoring are our own.

Ventana Research

Agent Performance Management

Managing agent performance is a key activity for any organization that interacts with customers. But the processes and systems that enable systematic agent performance management, from interaction routing to agent compensation, are young and not yet well-established. Nonetheless, Ventana Research's benchmark research confirms that an investment in agent performance management, wisely done, is a strategic step toward improving an organization's performance.

Ventana Research defines agent performance management as the effective management of all the business activities associated with handling customer interactions to ensure an optimal customer experience and alignment to a common set of customer and revenue goals and objectives. In our view, agent performance management includes specific technologies to accomplish this including analytics, call recording, call routing, agent compensation, quality monitoring, training and coaching and workforce management. This definition extends beyond what is traditionally termed workforce optimization, as we believe routing interactions to the best possible person to handle that interaction is the first step to improve interaction-handling performance, agent performance should be closely tied to the outcomes of the interactions they handle, and agent-focused analytics are required to underpin the performance of all employees handling interactions. We have conducted benchmark research that examined strategic directions in agent performance management, evaluated the maturity of agent performance management deployments, identified best practices and explored where organizations need education to improve their processes and systems.

Our benchmark research included an analysis of the maturity of companies' agent performance processes, people, information and technology. This showed that companies are least mature in their use of technology, with only call recording and quality monitoring achieving high degrees of market penetration. While companies are more mature with respect to information, using numbers of metrics to judge the performance of interaction handling, the majority of these are basic efficiency metrics such as queue lengths, average handling times and number of transfers. Fewer than one in 10 are at the highest Innovative level of maturity when it comes to the role of information, using effectiveness (or outcome) metrics such as which agents are achieving the highest levels of customer satisfaction, first call resolution rates and additional sales made. Our findings strongly suggest that the majority of companies have yet to see the full value of agent performance management.

Our benchmark research confirms that an investment in agent performance management, wisely done, is a strategic step toward improving an organization's performance.

Relying on this research and our years of benchmarking, we have developed a blueprint that will enable organizations to embrace agent performance management. Using this approach enables companies to more effectively link the many activities and processes connected with handling customer interactions.

To accomplish the required linkage and alignment, however, requires applications that will support the full range of agent performance management – applications that can make it possible for an organization to manage operations and performance to the degree required. It is to enable companies to evaluate these applications' suitability for use as elements of this approach that we have developed and regularly update this Value Index, which assesses technology supplier fit with this approach and support for this category of activities and processes.

The Value Index for Agent Performance Management uses a Ventana Research methodology that includes a seven-category evaluation framework we have

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established for our Value Indexes. It evaluates application vendors and their products across seven categories of requirements. Five are product-related, evaluating usability, manageability, reliability, capability and adaptability, while two quantify the vendor/customer assurance issues of vendor validation and TCO/ROI.

This Value Index report evaluates the following vendors that offer products that address key elements of agent performance management as we define it: Aspect, Enkata, Envision, Genesys, inContact, InVision, KnoahSoft, LiveOps, Merced Systems, NICE Systems, OnviSource, Verint, VPI.

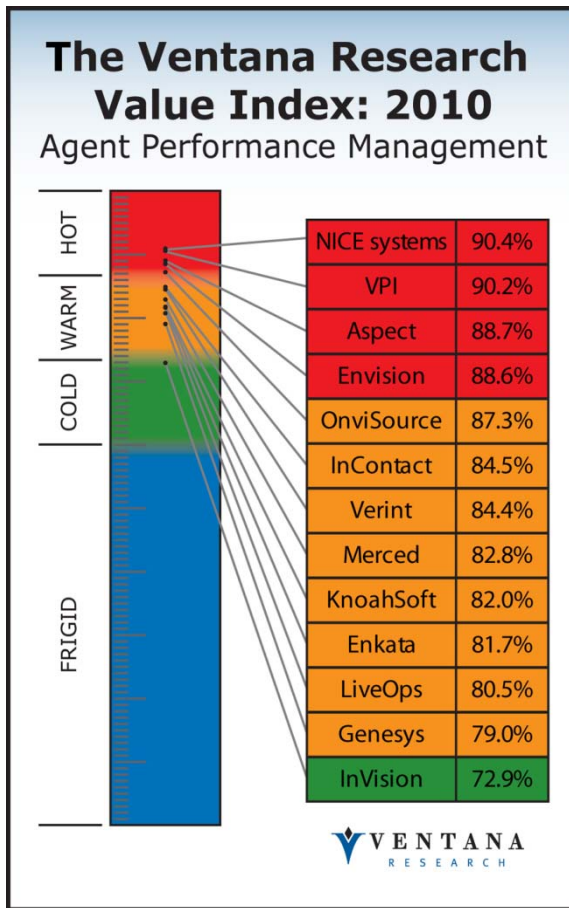
We urge organizations to do a thorough job of evaluating agent performance management systems and tools across these seven

categories by using our Value Index methodology. The in-depth analysis that the Value Index provides can be used to evaluate existing suppliers and also provides build evaluation criteria for new projects; applying it thus can shorten the RFP cycle time. Unlike many IT analyst firms that rank vendors from an IT-only perspective, the Value Index provides a balanced perspective of vendor and products that is rooted in an understanding of business drivers and needs. This approach not only reduces cost and time but also minimizes the risk of making a decision that is bad for the business. Using the Value Index will enable your organization to achieve the levels of efficiency and effectiveness needed to optimize the performance of agents interacting with your customers.

Value Index Overview

The *Ventana Research Value Index: Agent Performance Management in 2010* is the distillation of a year of market and product research efforts by Ventana Research, the premier benchmark research and advisory services firm. Built on a foundation of 10 years of business and technology research, this unbiased fact-based index is the first such industry undertaking to assess the value of software designed specifically for enabling Agent Performance Management.

This Ventana Research Value Index is an analytic representation of our assessment



of how well vendors' offerings meet buyers' requirements for software that enables and supports Agent Performance Management. The Index evaluates the software in seven key categories. Five are product-related: adaptability, manageability, reliability, usability and functionality. In addition, we considered two customer assurance categories: total cost of ownership and return on investment, and validation. To assess functionality we applied the Ventana Research agent performance management methodology and blueprint, which links the business process of managing agent performance to an organization's information technology.

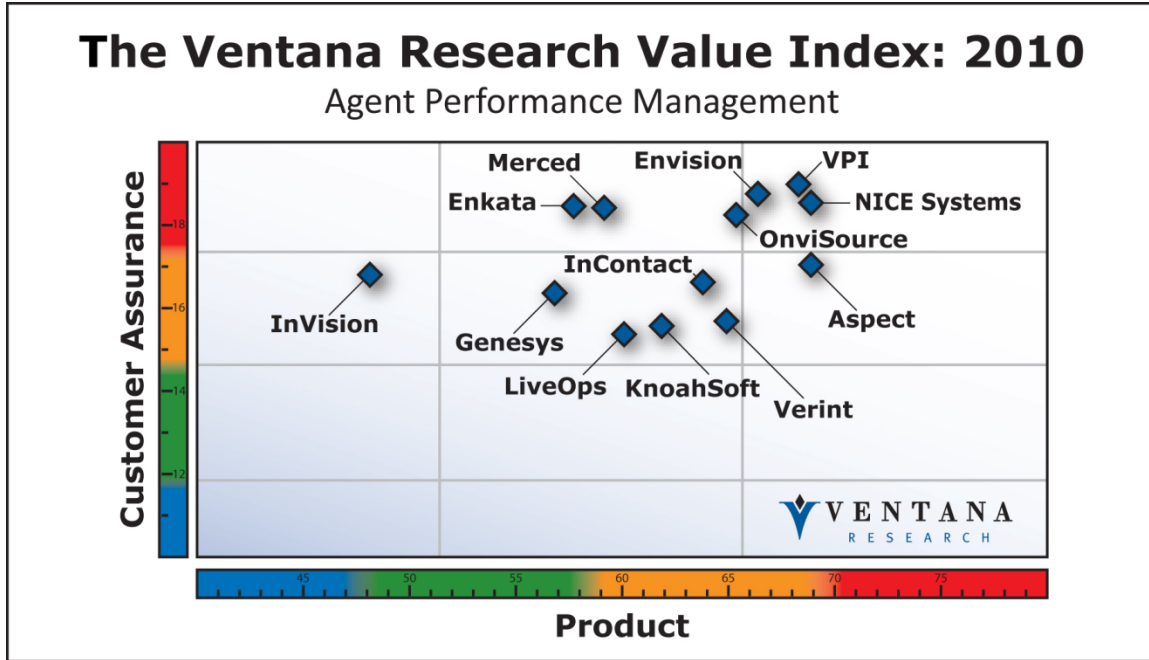
We use our research-based analytics and methodology to generate the Value Index percentages. We then build them into a set of indicators that are the graphic representation of the Ventana Research Value Index. In these indicators the colors reflect our assessment of the value to you, the potential buyer, on a scale from minimally valuable, or Frigid (blue) to

very valuable, or Hot (red). The Value Index thus is both an analytic and a graphic representation of the value of a specific vendor's offering based on an evaluation of what it can deliver that is relevant to your Agent Performance Management needs.

The Value Index for Agent Performance Management in 2010 shows that currently the top supplier, based on the weighted factoring of the five product and two customer assurance categories, is NICE Systems, which qualifies as a Hot vendor, followed closely by three other Hot vendors - VPI, Envision and Aspect.

The Value Index is not an abstraction; Ventana Research used a carefully crafted best practices-based methodology to represent how organizations actually will assess vendors. We believe it is important to take this approach, since making the wrong decisions can raise the total cost of ownership (TCO), lower the return on investment (ROI), and hamper your organization's ability to reach its performance potential. In

addition, this approach can reduce the project development and deployment time and eliminate the risk of placing on your short list vendors who are wrong for your organization.



Agent performance management is an area that has drawn relatively little attention from analysts, who typically focus on workforce optimization, CRM and call center operations. They also largely focus on IT and not on interaction-handling processes and supporting technology. We have thus found little substantive research that focuses on how to apply information technology to the business and technology requirements of agent performance management. As a result, many purchasing decisions in this area are not supported by unbiased advice and information, allowing them to be influenced unduly by a company's purchasing history, personal connections and vendor biases. We offer this research as an impartial and authoritative source of information, and recommend companies use the Value Index, and the research on which it is based, as a key part of its evaluation process.

The profile of user needs for which the Value Index was developed is derived from Ventana Research's experience in working with organizations, contact centers and agents and our benchmark research on agent performance management. For this report, the research was conducted from November 2009 to March 2010 and the various vendor products submitted for evaluation had to be generally available at the start of January 2010.

To ensure the accuracy of the information we collected, we required participating vendors to provide evaluation data across seven categories as in a RFP. Ventana Research then validated the information independently through our database of product information and extensive Web-based research, and then in consultation with the vendors. The majority of selected vendors participated in one-on-one consultative sessions, after which they were requested to provide additional documentation to support any new inputs. For those that chose not to participate in these additional consultative sessions – Genesys, InVision, LiveOps and Verint – our assessment is based entirely on our analysts' knowledge or information readily

available on the vendor's web-site. This full report, which expands on the products' and companies' scoring and can serve as a buying guide, is available from Ventana Research.

As agent performance management encompasses a number of business activities, we identify in the table below which of those categories of activities each vendor addresses.

Vendor	Call Routing	Call Recording	Quality Monitoring	Workforce Management	Training & Coaching	Compensation Management	Analytics
Aspect	x	x	x	x	x		x
Enkata			x		x		x
Envision		x	x	x	x		x
Genesys	x			x			x
inContact	x		x	x	o		x
InVision				x			x
Knoahsoft		x	x		x		x
LiveOps	x	x	x	x			x
Merced Systems					x	x	x
NICE	o	x	x	x	x		x
OnviSource	x	x	x	x			x
Verint	o	x	x	x	x		x
VPI		x	x	x	x		x

x - supported o - partially supported

About Ventana Research

Ventana Research is the leading benchmark research and business technology advisory services firm. We provide insight and expert guidance on trends and mainstream and disruptive technologies. Our unparalleled insights and best practices guidance are based on our rigorous research-based benchmarking of people, processes, information and technology across business and IT functions worldwide. The combination we offer of benchmark research, market coverage and in-depth knowledge of hundreds of technology providers means we can deliver business and technology education and expertise to our clients where and when needed to reduce the time requirements, cost and risk of technology investments. The Ventana Research Indexes – the Value Index and the Benchmark Index family – have redefined the research industry by providing accessible, easy-to-use research-based business and technology guidance to businesses. Ventana Research provides the most comprehensive analyst and research coverage in the industry; the many business and IT professionals worldwide who are members of our community benefit from Ventana Research's insights, as do highly regarded media and association partners around the globe. Our views and analyses are distributed daily through blogs and social media channels including [Twitter](#), [Facebook](#), [LinkedIn](#), and [Business Week's Business Exchange](#). Ventana Research was ranked the #1 analyst firm you can trust in enterprise software for 2009 for its relevance to the industry. To learn how Ventana Research advances the maturity of organizations use of information and technology through benchmark research, education and advisory services, visit www.ventanaresearch.com.

We offer a variety of customizable services to meet your specific needs including workshops, assessments and advisory services. Our [education](#) service, led by analysts with more than 20 years of experience, provides a great starting point to learn about important business and technology topics from compliance to business intelligence to building a strategy and driving adoption of best practices. We also offer tailored [Value Index Assessment Services](#) to help you define your strategy, build a business case and connect the business and technology phases of your project. And we can provide Ventana On-Demand access to our analysts on an as-needed basis to help you keep up with market trends, technologies and best practices.

Everything at Ventana Research begins with our focused [research](#), of which this examination of BI and Performance Management is a part. We work with thousands of organizations worldwide, conducting research and analyzing market trends, best practices and technologies to help our clients improve the efficiency and effectiveness of their organizations.

Through the Ventana Research [community](#) we also provide opportunities for professionals to share challenges, best practices and methodologies. Sign up for Individual membership at www.ventanaresearch.com to gain access to our weekly insights and learn about upcoming educational and collaboration events – webinars, conferences and opportunities for social collaboration on the Internet. We offer the following membership levels:

Individual membership: For business and IT professionals* interested in full access to our Web site and analyst team for themselves. The membership includes

access to our library of hundreds of white papers and research notes, briefings and telephone/e-mail consulting sessions to provide input and feedback.

Team membership: For business and IT professionals* interested in full access to our Web site and analysts for a five-member team. The membership includes access to our library of hundreds of white papers and research notes, briefings, telephone/e-mail consulting sessions to provide input and feedback and the use of Ventana Research materials for business purposes.

Business membership: For business and IT professionals* interested in full access to our Web site and analyst team for their larger team or small business unit. The membership includes access to our library of hundreds of white papers and research notes, briefings, telephone/e-mail consulting sessions to provide input and feedback, use of Ventana Research materials for business purposes and additional analyst availability.

Business Plus membership: For business and IT professionals* interested in full access to our Web site and analyst team for larger numbers of company employees. The membership includes access to our library of hundreds of white papers and research notes, briefings, telephone/e-mail consulting sessions to provide input and feedback, quotes and validation for media, use of Ventana Research materials for business purposes, additional analyst availability and access to our team for scheduled strategy consulting sessions.

To learn more about Ventana Research services – including workshops, assessments and advice – please contact clientservices@ventanaresearch.com.

* [Additional services](#) are available for solution providers, software vendors, consultants and systems integrators.

This Executive Summary is drawn from the full Ventana Research Value Index: 2010 Agent Performance Management report, which lays out in detail the analysis underlying the Value Index, lists the products evaluated, and suggests a methodology for preparing for an Agent Performance Management-related RFP. For more information about the full Value Index report or assessment of your organization using the Value Index, please contact us at clientservices@ventanaresearch.com or (925) 474.0060.