



**NUCLEUS
RESEARCH**

RESEARCH REPORT F26

ROI Evaluation Report WebEx Support Center

THE BOTTOM LINE

WebEx Support Center enables customer support centers and internal IT help desks to increase productivity, reduce costs, and increase customer and end user satisfaction and productivity by providing easy remote access to computers via a Web browser.

KEY RETURN AREAS

- Increased customer satisfaction
- Reduced call response and escalation cost
- Increased profits
- Increased user productivity
- Increased system availability
- Increased IT staff productivity
- Reduced administrative overhead
- Reduced consulting costs

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WebEx Support Center enables companies to manage and resolve remote support issues — whether they be external customer-driven or internal user-driven — through remote desktop sharing. Support personnel can initiate a session with a remote user by sending them an e-mail or providing a URL. Key features of the WebEx solution include:

- Two-way desktop and application control enable a help desk or support person to view or control a customer's desktop, transfer files to apply patches or updates, and perform administrative functions.
- Communication features such as integrated video, chat, call escalation, and transfer and conference enable support personnel to enhance support and rapidly bring in subject matter or other experts as needed.
- Management tools including system information collection, session and call center statistics, post session surveys, and session recording and editing support enable quality control and support for best practices.
- APIs support integration with a variety of CRM and help desk solutions. Support and other interaction records to be integrated into customer or user records and allow support personnel to launch a session directly from a customer file or trouble ticket.

WebEx Support Center supports Windows 98 and higher, Mac OSX10.2 and higher, Linux, and Solaris 8 and 9. Companies can license Support Center based on a per-minute usage fee, a set number of named users, or a set number of concurrent users.

In addition to Support Center, the WebEx SMARTtech solution enables IT help desks and technical support personnel to remotely manage and support multiple computers or devices remotely via a Web browser. WebEx also provides Meeting Center, Event Center, and Training Center technology to complement technical support with new product or application introductions and training.

MARKET OVERVIEW

As the complexity of software and the frequency of patches and updates grow, so does the average user's dependence on a personal computer to complete a productive work day. The growth in popularity of tools such as PC Anywhere showed the clear need for IT departments and help desks to be able to remotely access and manage issues on user's PCs. However, most applications were designed for remote management, not necessarily for remote support or interaction between a user and a support expert. Other solutions required installation of clients on all users' PCs, adding another layer of cost and complexity to the support picture.

Support Center is built on WebEx's MediaTone platform and delivered over the WebEx MediaTone network, a private global network for real-time IP communications. Deployed over the Web, WebEx Support Center works across all firewalls — a browser and

Internet connection is all that's needed. In addition to simple remote control, the WebEx support environment provides chat, application sharing, file transfer, session recording, and other features to support interactive problem resolution.

WebEx customers Nucleus analyzed had two key reasons for choosing WebEx Support Center over a competing solution:

- Ease of setup and use. Because it requires limited setup on the remote machine, Support Center can be used to rapidly connect with a remote user over the Web. Whether they planned to use Support Center for internal user support or communication with external customers or prospects, most customers didn't want to have to install software.
- Licensing model. The flexible licensing options and ability to change from one licensing plan to another as needs changed or grew gave customers the flexibility they needed to leverage the solution across geographies and user groups as needed.

KEY BENEFIT AREAS

Nucleus analysts identified a number of key areas where customers received benefits from their use of the WebEx Support Center: First, providing help desk and customer support personnel with the technology enabled improved IT management and remote support. Second, end users with the support of a help desk powered by the WebEx Support Center were able to work more productively because they could access applications and solve problems more rapidly. Third, companies could use the technology to reach out to and support customers and prospects.

Improved IT management and remote support

Remote desktop management enables IT and support personnel to rapidly identify issues, diagnose problems, and implement solutions for end users without on-site visits or step-by-step "blind" instructions.

Using WebEx Support Center, help desk representatives were able to rapidly diagnose user problems and walk users through the solution, accelerating the process and reducing user frustration.

One user said, "The time it takes us to talk a user through something has been drastically reduced. Our help desk people save an hour per day by spending less time on calls."

One customer found using WebEx Support Center also reduced stress for both the helper and the "helpee": "We have greater user satisfaction from the perspective that the agents can let someone else run through all the technical processes, rather than being told to 'type this or type that,' 'read that screen,' and so on. There has been satisfaction from the technology consultants' perspective as well — it's less stressful and makes their jobs easier."

User profile: Library software company

The company has 10,000 clients worldwide and has been using WebEx for the past three years, both for tech support and sales presentations and for internal meeting support. The company began its contract with WebEx using the pay-per-use model and now has an ongoing contract for 10 concurrent users.

In addition to direct savings in technical support personnel and travel costs, the company has found that it is able to support customers in a way that wouldn't be possible if the support required physical visits.

Key benefits:

- Travel costs avoided
- Reduced technical and sales support costs
- Reduced administrative overhead
- Increased customer satisfaction

ROI: 1199%**Payback period: 1 month**

Key returns from improved IT management and remote support include:

- Reduced time-to-resolution
- Increased IT staff productivity
- Increased help desk staff retention
- Reduced consulting costs
- Increased system availability
- Reduced call time
- Reduced call escalation costs
- Reduced training costs
- Reduced travel costs

Improved end user access

Rapid access to remote support enables technology users to rapidly get help when they have a problem and be walked through a solution so they can return to productive work. Using WebEx Support Center, a support representative can simply send a URL or e-mail invitation to a user and connect to that user's computer via the Web. If the problem requires additional expert advice, the support person can bring an expert into the session as well.

WebEx Support Center enables a user to rapidly "hand over" their screen to a help desk or technical support person and then follow along as the problem is resolved, shortening the time to resolution while increasing the probability that the user will be able to solve a similar problem alone in the future. The training and recording

capabilities can also help a user learn from the problem and avoid it in the future.

Providing end users with access to WebEx Support Center when they have a technical problem can increase employee productivity while improving job satisfaction: Employees spend less time waiting for a solution to a technical problem, they don't have to walk through a tedious set of instructions to try to resolve it, and they can more rapidly return to work because a skilled support representative can quickly diagnose and solve the problem through remote control.

User profile: Financial services company

The company selected WebEx in early 2004, and the solution is used for its help desk operations team, which supports approximately 5000 field sales agents. Before WebEx, help desk consultants would verbally walk agents through troubleshooting steps to solve problems on their laptop computers. Today, consultants can take control of the agent's computer and resolve the problem, accelerating the resolution process and reducing stress both for the agent and for the consultant.

Key benefits:

- Increased help desk productivity
- Increased end user productivity
- Accelerated call resolution

ROI: 262%

Payback: 5 months

Key returns from increased end user access to technology include:

- Increased productivity
- Reduced administrative overhead
- Increased employee satisfaction

Increased customer satisfaction

Using remote access technology can enable companies to provide more consistent ongoing communication to customers and more rapidly respond to their questions and problems.

Companies were able to improve customer support both in terms of their ability to rapidly diagnose and resolve customer problems and in terms of their ability to show the customer they were attentive and responsive to their support needs. One customer said, *"We can more quickly address client issues and concerns; it eliminates the need for clients to clearly articulate their problem because we can see their problem. Before, the client would say, "it's broken." Well,*

what's broken? Today, we can click on the link and go into a meeting so I can see it."

Using Support Center enabled companies to respond to their customers' issues and resolve problems more rapidly, increasing both customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Key returns from increased customer satisfaction include:

- Increased customer retention
- Reduced customer retention costs
- Increased profits

KEY COST AREAS

Key cost areas for a WebEx investment include software licenses, consulting, and training. The Web-based hosted solution doesn't require an ongoing hardware investment or personnel support.

Software licenses

Since WebEx Support Center is a Web-based solution and no hardware or personnel support are needed, software license costs make up the largest portion of a Support Center investment. The solution is licensed either on a per-minute usage base, for a set number of concurrent users, or for a set number of named users. A number of customers started using the solution on a per-use basis and then moved to a concurrent license because it was more cost effective.

Consulting

The consulting and set-up costs associated with a WebEx Support Center investment are minimal; most customers Nucleus interviewed didn't have any services costs associated with their use of the technology.

Ongoing technical support from WebEx is included in the license contract fee and provides customers with 24 by 7 by 365 technical support.

Training

WebEx provides free training for its Support Center solution so the only training costs companies should incur is the cost of internal personnel time to learn the solution. Users can access either online or self-paced training provided by WebEx.

Using WebEx Support Center is relatively intuitive; most customers didn't require any formal training for help desk or support personnel. Planning for an hour or so of training on how to use the features of the solution is likely sufficient.

DEPLOYMENT STRATEGIES

Nucleus found that most WebEx Support Center customers used the technology to support internal users, external customers, or both. Although the use cases are very similar, they have different

deployment strategies and you'll want to consider slightly different ROI drivers when evaluating the business case for an investment.

Internal IT help desk

Using WebEx Support Center to support internal help desks can help companies to increase productivity and improve system availability while reducing support costs. Key factors to consider when evaluating returns from these areas include:

- By rapidly initiating remote sessions, can you reduce the average call resolution time? Key ROI factors will include the number of calls received and the average length of a call.
- Using remote control, can you accelerate the PC upgrading and patching process? Key ROI factors will include the number of PCs and frequency of updates, as well as the time required for physical updates — and how that down time impacts general employee productivity.
- By inviting experts to join complex situations, can you increase “first call” resolution rates? Key ROI factors will include the number of calls that require escalation and the average length of a call — as well as the wait time between the first and second call.

As part of its internal IT help desk offering, WebEx also provides SMARTtech “person to machine” access to enable technical support personnel to work on a computer without actual physical access, Meeting Center and Support Center access to provide employees with information about new applications and upgrades, and Training Center access to easily train employees on new systems and solutions without actual physical access.

External customer support

Using WebEx Support Center to support external customers can help companies reduce costs and increase productivity while improving customer satisfaction and retention. Key factors to consider when evaluating returns from these areas include:

- By rapidly initiating remote sessions, can you reduce the need for on-site visits for support or sales? Key ROI factors include travel costs as well as lost time per visit, and number of visits.
- Can you reduce the average call resolution time? Key ROI factors will include the number of calls received and the average length of a call.
- Can you improve support for upgrades and new products by easily accessing customers’ computers to troubleshoot and resolve issues? Key ROI factors will include the number of upgrades and new products released per year, the number of calls received per product, and the profits associated with adoption.
- By inviting experts to join complex situations, can you increase “first call” resolution rates? Key ROI factors will include the number of calls that require escalation and the average length of a call.
- Can your ability to rapidly understand and fix a customer’s problem increase loyalty and ongoing business?

WebEx also provides SMARTtech “person to machine” access to enable technical support personnel to work on a computer without actual physical access, Meeting Center and Support Center access to provide customers and prospects with information about new applications and upgrades, and Training Center access to provide training sessions for customers and prospects on new solutions without actual physical access.

CONCLUSION

Using WebEx Support Center to improve customer service and end user support can deliver positive ROI both through direct cost savings – such as travel and on-site staff cost avoidance – and other benefits including increased productivity, increased system availability, and increased customer satisfaction. Companies that implement Support Center for external customer or internal employee support will likely achieve a positive ROI both by reducing the time and cost to resolve problems and by reducing the need for travel.

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