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Emerging tech allows call centres to right-size, upskill

*By **Lauren Kate Rawlins** - 25 Jan 2019*

FatPipe Network, which runs large contact centres in the US and India, found that introducing new technologies that potentially 'replace' human agents has not led the company to having to fire any of its staff.

Late last year, FatPipe Network implemented Avaya IX Mobility technology to accelerate the digital transformation of its contact centres, enhance smartphone interactions, reduce costs and deliver better customer experiences.

ITWeb interviewed FatPipe at Avaya's annual Engage user conference in Austin, Texas this week.

The main announcement from Engage was that Avaya would rename its architecture in its solutions portfolio, moving away from conceptual names and simplifying branding so that names reflect what the product does, and include new products.

The new overarching name for Avaya's portfolio of solutions is Avaya Intelligent Xperiences, or Avaya IX. Within Avaya IX, product families will include: Avaya IX Digital Workplace, Avaya IX Digital Contact Centre and Avaya IX Mobility.

FatPipe is one of the first companies to implement the Avaya IX Mobility offering, which allows call centres to identify if calls are coming from smartphones and give call centre agents the ability to deflect callers to a chat bot on the caller's mobile screen, among other features.

FatPipe says it pioneered SD-WAN, a technology that provides automatic and dynamic load balancing and failover for VOIP, video and data traffic without dropping sessions, 18 years ago. It provides 24-hour support to its customers through its call centres in Utah in the US and India.

Ragula Bhaskar, FatPipe Network CEO and president, says its call centres are inundated with people asking simple questions, such as: When is my support due? Can I get an invoice for my new support? When does my license expire?

"We did an analysis and about 70% of the questions can be answered without human intervention. And those are the questions where you are taking a very senior person and you are getting him to answer a trivial question," says Bhaskar

Avaya IX Mobility allows for a pop-up to come on the caller's screen asking if they are going to ask any of these simple questions and giving them the answer they are looking for without ever having to speak to a call centre agent.

Bhaskar says since the implementation of the technology, the company has not had to fire any of its agents and is, in fact, planning to hire more people.

Matt Gwyther, FatPipe Network technical marketing director, says this type of technology allows contact centres to 'right-size' not downsize.

"In essence, it allows you to be efficient and agents are able to do

work in a specialised manner without having to handle the screeners. It's helping us to handle growth better."

Bhaskar says: "At the moment, I don't see any call centre having to reduce people, because right now there is such a shortage of people, call centres have a hard time hiring people.

"Around the country, call centres have a high turnover, and it is the hardest job to hire for. So, if you can help those people stay longer, you are actually adding value to the company and to the person. We are helping them stay longer by upskilling them and not having them answer the simpler questions."

FatPipe Network is an example of a company combining the skills of machines and humans to use both resources to their full advantage.

"Contact centre operations can be key drivers of an organisation's digital transformation strategy, while helping to improve the efficiency, quality and cost-effectiveness of the enterprise," says Laurent Philonenko, Avaya senior vice-president of innovation.

"We're excited to enable customers through Avaya IX Mobility to help provide their contact centres with flexibility, agility and simplicity to improve customer responsiveness under changing business requirements. We look forward to further customer success as we make the solution more widely available in the coming weeks."