

ICMI 2018 Contact Center Expo and Conference Summary



CSF considers itself the leader in toll-free number provisioning and least-cost routing (LCR) with more than 100 carrier and RespOrg customers. RespOrg is a contraction for a Responsible Organization, a company that maintains the registration for toll-free telephone numbers in the Somos SMS/800 database. With its recent acquisition of Aerialink, a leading SaaS provider of mobile messaging and location services, CSF is further expanding its business by offering enhanced and new texting solutions. Marketing Manager Ashley Kaplan and JC Cunningham, Slaes Director, provided background.

What differentiates your solution from others available in the market?

CSF's leading SaaS platform simplifies and automates toll-free number provisioning and complex routing with increased automation and a simple administrative interface. With 8MS Cloud, you can reserve, update, and activate toll-free numbers in bulk in the Somos SMS/800 database and major carrier networks. Use 8MS Cloud to optimize the routing of toll-free numbers based on geography and least cost, and quickly re-route them during an emergency.

The platform also provides a turnkey solution for text enabling toll-free numbers from the same interface, without the need to establish separate relationships with texting providers.

How does your solution enable companies to leverage Least Cost Routing for toll-free calls?

As a RespOrg, a business is permitted to create complex multi-carrier routings based on cost and other important criteria. Our add-on routing services, 8MS Cloud LCRGen, helps simplify and automate this process so RespOrgs can achieve their carrier diversity, disaster recovery, and cost-saving objectives. One of the unique features of 8MS Cloud is the ability to easily and cost-effectively create, understand, and update these complex routing plans to meet a company's toll-free business objectives. 8MS Cloud LCRGen is an add-on service that creates least cost routing by minimizing external carrier costs and generating optimized toll-free routing.

CSF offers another standalone product, 8MS Cloud Carrier Express, which alleviates the time-consuming process of provisioning one's toll-free numbers through updating the Somos SMS/800 registry with routing information and activating a valid customer account with the carrier. The quick and efficient automation of 8MS Carrier Express automates this critical second step in the activation and provisioning process, a process that without Carrier Express must be performed manually via fax, email, or a separate online portal. This manual two-step process is time-consuming, complex, and susceptible to errors.

Carrier Express, as a standalone add-on cloud service, automates the network provisioning process across multiple major carriers including AT&T, Verizon, Level 3, Global Crossing, and Impact Telecom. When used in conjunction with 8MS Cloud Core, it also automates toll-free number provisioning in the Somos SMS/800 registry in the same process.

How has the acquisition of Aerialink added to your product offerings?

CSF acquired Aerialink to enhance its toll-free texting capabilities while adding text enablement for non-toll-free landline numbers as well as the support of short codes and MMS picture messaging. The combined offering will now be able to deliver RespOrgs and carriers a more robust solution to meet their enterprise customer needs. Aerialink's innovative real-time mobile messaging platform is robust, flexible, easy-to-use, and supports a range of SMS, MMS, and location services via APIs and applications.

Can you talk about some of the messaging trends in the ecosystem?

Businesses are faced with the challenge of selecting and supporting multiple customer engagement channels with an ever-increasing number of channel options, platforms, and apps. Varying customer demographics, markets, and languages compounds complexities. Leading businesses are already addressing this challenge by focusing on 'direct messaging'.

There are many direct messaging applications-- some of the most commonly used include Facebook Messenger, Snapchat, WhatsApp, Apple Messages, Hangout, Twitter DMs, GroupMe, HipChat, Skype, and even Instagram supports direct messaging. App messaging is beneficial due to its support of rich media and features, and since most messaging is delivered over IP, it typically is not transaction-based, and therefore low cost, if any cost to the users. However, app messaging requires users on both sides of the conversation to download a mobile app. That's exactly the reason why it is often referred to as app-to-app messaging. In addition, app messaging requires a strong data connection, or wi-fi, as well as a smartphone. By far, the most popular direct messaging channel is still texting (aka SMS & MMS). With texting, a mobile end user simply uses their native messaging app on to text to a businesses' landline number (toll-free number or standard number). The business receives the text in a messaging application.

As businesses continue to broaden the use of text messaging services for their employees and customers, robust messaging platforms and applications that support toll-free and non-toll-free texting across the entire mobile ecosystem are adopted rapidly. Businesses are looking for solutions that enable them to quickly deliver new products and services based on the ever-changing mobile industry and evolving customer needs.