

Centralized Decisioning & the Operational Platform

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Abstract

Utilization of Centralized Decisioning has become an “essential tool” to increase ROI for competitive IT and Business organizations. Keystone to success of any Centralized Decisioning application is the flexibility to quickly adapt to change. NeoFusion’ Operational Platform (OP™) allows dynamic organizations with that flexibility. NeoFusion OP™ provides the ability to monitor and manage key business parameters, optimize offer presentation, analyze and report on KPI’s, and effectively control the organization’s business processes.

Problem

Perceiving customer need, delivering appropriate offers and relevant content to those customers, anticipating customer questions and enabling employees with “right answers” are just a few examples of the Intelligent Customer Interactions. In many organizations, these Intelligent Customer Interactions not only drive value but may also be absolutely essential to their success.

For today’s larger organizations, delivering Centralized (Real-time) Decisioning can be a monumental task that could potentially span across multiple customer touch points, countless back-end systems and a large percentage of the business processes.

Delivering Centralized Decisioning in Real-Time at the enterprise level can be a monumental task. A single Intelligent Customer Interaction may require multiple customer touch points, data from countless back-end systems and numerous

business processes. Large enterprises may require thousands of Intelligent Customer Interactions on a daily basis. As a result, countless executives tend to view CD more as science fiction rather than as a viable option to effectively run their businesses.

Understanding Centralized Decisioning

C.D. essentially functions as the “brain” of the organization when using it effectively. A fundamental building block for success in utilization of C.D. is the creation of a centralized repository of “business intelligence” data. Access to this repository is granted to enterprise resources whenever needed. Ultimately, this aids in the “optimization” of the organization’s decision processes and assists in delivering those desired Intelligent Customer Interactions.

Centralized Decisioning exists on two planes; Real-Time Decisioning, and Offline Decisioning.

All enterprise decisions prioritized as immediate and urgent to the organization or its customers are included in the Real-Time dimension. These are the decisions which are required to be resolved in a real-time environment to provide usefulness and value to the organization.

Examples of Real-time Decisioning:

- Dynamic Offers
- Incoming Customer Routing
- Dynamic Questioning & Servicing

The second dimension addressed in C.D. is known as Offline Decisioning. All critical organizational decisions requiring the use of a centralized

repository of business intelligence and NOT requiring immediate resolution or response should be included in the Offline Decisioning dimension.

Examples of Offline Decisioning:

- Optimizing Business Processes & Workflows
- Managing Queues
- Optimizing Outbound Marketing

Within the two dimensions of Centralized Decisioning, four basic components are needed to deliver a robust Centralized Decisioning Solution:

Technology - Currently, industry standard Java based solutions such as J2EE and Service Oriented Architectures are the best suited as they provide a means to communicate with any back-end system as well as any application, regardless of channel.

Rules -The organization must always have the ability to explicitly dictate how and why decisions are made. Rules are logical, easy to understand, maintain a straightforward implementation process and are highly effective at controlling sophisticated business strategies.

Content - Once the decision is made content must be delivered. This content can come from the decision, a repository, or a dynamic collaboration of both.

Predictive Statistical Models - Predictive Statistical algorithms must be owned and scored DURING the customer interaction. The majority of the relevancy from the prediction will come from Real-time customer inputs in addition to historical data. Therefore, the models must have the ability to consider these real-time inputs during the execution and scoring of the statistical algorithms.

Solution; NeoFusion' Operational Platform

NeoFusion Operational Platform is a critical enabler of Centralized Decisioning because the business needs more than the ability to just make a decision. Once a decision has been made there are a variety of activities that take place e.g. fulfillment, database updating, outbound communication, etc. Centralized Decisioning gives the business the raw tools to create intelligent interactions but the business needs a Platform from which to administer these tools.

The Operational Platform consists of a set of tools that act as a conduit of control into the Centralized Decisioning Hub as well as those systems the Hub affects. The following components makeup the Operational Platform;

- ✓ **Real-time Dashboards**
Designed to monitor data that is occurring in Real-time within customer interactions, this Dashboard can be configured to display a variety of information. Typically, the data view on this dashboard would be the enterprise Key Performance Metrics compared against respective goals. Further, these KPI's can be viewed in conjunction with customer segments, offer types, geographic location and most importantly champion/challenger scenarios. The critical function of this dashboard is to report the data involved in Real-time customer interactions.
- ✓ **Offer Management**
A central repository for the enterprises offers is managed through this guided user interface. The user can create, edit and deploy offers into production in Real-time.

✓ **Reporting & Analytics**

Data resulting from the Real-time Dashboards, back-office operations, enterprise financial goals, and historical customer behavior are leveraged here to answer a variety of questions to help refine the business strategies. The blend of reporting and analytics is incredibly valuable with regard to running test scenarios. Meaning, a user can draw an insight from analysis and then apply it in simulation to determine if the new strategy should be introduced into a champion/challenger scenario.

✓ **Business Process Management Console**

As the enterprises Central Decisioning Hub interacts with its customers inevitably a Business Process will get involved. This business processes can be anything from sending out a follow-up mail piece to a new account opening. With any process the business needs to have control of how, when and why the Decisioning Hub interacts with it. Therefore, the console is designed to allow the user to manipulate the workflows, queues and offline activities that are influence by the Decisioning Hub.

✓ **Real-time Control Parameters**

Real-time Control Parameters are metrics and or data attributes that directly influence decisions. For example, a customer’s credit score may be an eligibility factor for a product offering. The business may want to change this criteria on a regular basis in response to market changes. This function allows the business to define and maintain these parameters in real-time. Once a user changes a control parameter the Decisioning Hub can distribute the change enterprise wide instantaneously.

✓ **Administration Console**

The Administration Console is designed to manage the users that have access to the Operational

Platform. This functionality includes the definition and maintenance of Users, Groups, Roles and Security. This functionality is critical to the enterprise as the Operational Platform is a tool that can have many users with a wide variety of responsibilities and privileges.



Conclusion

NeoFusion understands the potential value that a Centralized Decisioning Hub represents to an organization seeking to deliver intelligent customer interactions that drive value across the business.

NeoFusion has designed the Operational Platform, and the tools associated with it, through our experience with previous client engagements and implementations. The NeoFusion team has a rare and extremely valuable combination of dynamic marketing expertise that allows us to creatively blend technologies and business strategies to deliver industry leading Centralized Decisioning solutions.

NeoFusion has delivered a multi-channel, multi-application Centralized Decisioning Hub and we have made it possible via the Operational Platform.

Centralized Decisioning is a design time concept. The Operational Platform is a living mechanism that enables the business to react and change on a daily basis.

Your comments and questions are valued and encouraged. Contact the author at:

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