



How Johnson Controls is exceeding expectations every day with Astea Alliance.



Industry:

Automobiles, HVAC, Instrument Controls

The Challenge:

Upgrade call centers and 15-year-old customer support infrastructure. Improve the quality and cost controls of customer relationship management.

The Solution:

Phase-in the Astea Alliance Suite to integrate and automate every aspect of the customer service lifecycle.

Business Areas:

Number of Users:

*The Johnson Controls corporate tagline is 'Exceeding Expectations' and Astea Alliance is helping us to achieve this goal in a variety of mission-critical environments every day.*

*– James Bohm, Director of Integrated Customer Solutions*

Johnson Controls, Inc. is a global market leader in automotive systems, building control systems and services, energy management and integrated facility management for non-residential facilities. The Controls Group manages more than one billion square feet of building space. Five thousand field personnel from 24 offices throughout the United States and Canada have access to field solutions through a Field Support Team using Astea Alliance. Customer Success Centers in Milwaukee and Toronto together field more than 70,000 calls a month.

With 115 years of experience in the controls industry, tens of thousands of commercial, institutional and government facility managers and owners around the world, turn to Johnson Controls to improve the quality of their buildings' indoor environments and save on energy costs. The company manufactures and installs systems that monitor and control heating, ventilation, air conditioning, lighting and fire safety equipment, helping facility managers make better decisions quickly.

### *Working To Exceed Customers' Increasing Expectations, Johnson Controls Uncovers Hidden Benefits*



For many companies, one glitch in a facility's critical system can mean disaster. For example, in the pharmaceutical industry the failure of a building's equipment to maintain the proper laboratory conditions could mean the loss of years of new drug research and development. In a bank's data center, the failure of cooling equipment could shut down computer systems, delaying millions of dollars in transactions every minute. In these mission-critical situations, providing unmatched technical expertise and customer service is imperative.

The critical nature of Johnson Controls products and services demands efficient and expert customer service. The company's call center must be staffed with highly qualified service providers that have the ability to deploy technicians around the globe at a moment's notice. The Johnson Controls Customer Success Center (CSC), otherwise known as the "nerve center" for the North American Systems and Services business, has approximately 100 service providers at two locations in Milwaukee and Toronto fielding more than 70,000 service calls each month. Calls range from issues such as technical support, parts ordering and inquiries to remote building monitoring and after-hours support.

In the past, many Johnson Controls field service agents communicated with the company's service bureau via phone, voice-mail or pager to receive updates about customers' technical problems.

"Some customers did not have access to the call center," said Rich Mortimer, manager of service support for the Controls business at Johnson Controls. "They simply called in to find out where service was needed and a local dispatcher entered all the pertinent information into a database. Field connectivity grew increasingly important to us and we began exploring ways to use wireless and Internet technology."

The company needed to upgrade a 15-year-old computer system that it had been using at its call centers. One of the largest problems was retrieving customer information among call centers and service representatives. Frequently, customers were asked to repeat information, which was then entered more than once. Redundant data was causing inefficiencies for operators. "We historically dispatched our mechanics and technicians using a wide variety of in-house tools," says James Bohn, director of integrated customer solutions for Johnson Controls. "We needed a change."

*[Astea's] DISPATCH-1 strengthened capabilities to conduct effective customer support in the field and improved productivity.*

## ASTEIA Customers in Action: Johnson Controls, Inc.

*In 1994*, Johnson Controls evaluated more than 90 call center packages and ultimately chose Astea's DISPATCH-1™, a flagship field service automation product, which had already been deployed at the company's regional office in Baltimore. DISPATCH-1 strengthened capabilities to conduct effective customer support in the field and improved productivity by empowering the call center staff with an array of support tools. As Johnson Controls moved to integrate DISPATCH-1 throughout the enterprise, Astea was in the process of developing its new Astea Alliance product. Johnson Controls began using Astea Alliance to implement an "after hours" call capability and handle calls to its hotline for customer complaints. The company deployed Astea Alliance with the beta copy, and has since been upgrading to new versions of production releases as they become available.

*Customer service, enhanced.* Meanwhile, Astea integrated Citrix Systems' thin-client/server software to support Astea Alliance, a move that enables Astea Alliance customers to use their existing wide-area networks (WANs) and other network connections for remote access to important customer data at any time. "The Citrix architecture is the only way we've found that enables us to centralize the management of our customer information and provide our remote customer service representatives with universal access to our data," said Mortimer. "We've enhanced our customer service capabilities without having to upgrade each individual PC."

*Through Astea Alliance* and thin-client computing, Johnson Controls' field service agents can resolve customer service issues from anywhere. "We can set up our service agents remotely and have them tie into our system over our dial-up WAN," says Mortimer. Although a service call can originate from anywhere, Johnson Controls can handle the call from any number of locations. Agents can see the caller's information and share it across the system. "A call may be connected to New York but they can talk to someone in Dallas. It's completely transparent, as if all agents work in the local office," explains Mortimer.

***Once a person learns how to use Astea Alliance, they can easily transfer their skills to other departments. Anyone in the company can use it.***



*Astea's solutions were seen in every aspect of business.*

Because of the size of its operations and historical dependence on legacy systems for information management throughout the enterprise, Johnson Controls elected to phase-in Astea Alliance and revamp its support systems infrastructure without disrupting existing levels of service. As of this writing, Johnson Controls is using Astea Alliance in four different departments. "Every detail of our service business will be in Astea Alliance," predicts Bohn.

With Astea Alliance, Johnson Controls consolidates information into one database, accessible to all 5,000 field service and 100 call center representatives. "One of Astea Alliance's greatest benefits is its ability to eliminate service and systems redundancies," said Bohn. "Previously, we had different non-interfacing systems. Astea Alliance uses one common language across the board, which eliminates duplication within multiple, redundant support systems, customer databases and duplications within those databases."

### *Johnson Controls is refining the quality of its service delivery to a diverse customer base.*

Customer calls coming into the CSC are picked up within 11 seconds. If the call has to be transferred to another service representative, information on the customer moves with the call. "Customers want to tell their story only once," observes Bohn. "We don't have to ask callers to repeat themselves when they're transferred since the software keeps their information with the call." Problems that can be resolved over the phone are usually handled within 15 minutes.

Johnson Controls continues to improve its customer support infrastructure by harnessing the power of the Internet. The company is also exploring wireless Internet access to Astea Alliance to further improve service delivery, control service costs and attract the highest caliber field service agents. According to Bohn, having a common-language solution allows calls to be taken at home or in offices anywhere, which means that a preferred hire who may not want to relocate can still join Johnson Controls.

While positioning to preserve and enhance its reputation for service, Johnson Controls is uncovering internal benefits of higher productivity, better cost controls, employee job satisfaction and recruiting incentives that can only strengthen its use of service for competitive advantage long-term.

*Our customers are challenged with discerning how to maintain their equipment and look to us for help," says Mortimer. By automating its customer service management and integrating it with back-office functions, help is now more immediate than ever.*

### **The Challenge:**

- Existing legacy system processes were not integrated. Mechanics and technicians were dispatched using a variety of in-house tools, most of which were written in COBOL.
- Multiple call center functions used different systems, requiring information to be re-keyed at every stop along the customer contact chain.

### **The Solution:**

- With Astea Alliance, Johnson Controls has eliminated redundant customer databases and consolidated information into one system, accessible to all 5,000 field service and 100 call center representatives.
- To increase productivity further, Johnson Controls is using Astea Alliance to integrate customer support and parts sales with accounting, factory ordering and MRP package.

### **Staffing Flexibility:**

- Employees are able to pursue a wider array of career opportunities within the CSC, and affording Johnson Controls greater flexibility in allocating staff.
- With the utilization of wireless technology, a preferred hire who does not wish to relocate can still join the Johnson Controls team.
- The software eliminates the need to train employees on multiple platforms.

### **Cost Efficiency:**

- Improved accuracy of invoices and lowered cost of inventory
- Universal access to one common database – across call centers & technicians saves technicians time and increases their productivity.
- Streamlined parts ordering – integrated parts sales, support, accounting & factory ordering.

*InformationWeek and CGE&Y named JCI to the Innovation 100 list, recognizing the top 100 companies for successful use of information technology to serve customers.*



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