



eOn's eQueueTM Brings Legendary B&H Service to the Web

BH Photo-Video Pro-Audio, Inc., is the world leader in retail distribution of photo, video, digital and pro-audio production gear. Known as "The Professional's Source", B&H has been in business for more than 25 years and relocated three years ago to their present mid-Manhattan location which includes a state-of-the-art 35,000+ square foot SuperStore.

As Sam Goldstein, CEO for B&H explains, "Our way of treating customers, our focus, our experienced professional staff — that's what keeps our customers coming back." In 1999 B&H launched its e-commerce site as another way to reach out to its worldwide customer base and to give customers 24-hour access to B&H's extensive resources. "One of our main concerns was to offer online customers the same quality experience offered to store and phone shoppers," Mr. Goldstein reports.

"Mail order was how B&H initially broke into a national market," Gary Eisenberger,

B&H's Director of E-commerce Operations explained. "Our web site features more than 160,000 items, and we try to have as much information as possible online. Our customer base ranges from professional photographers to start-up students to people looking to buy a very special item for that special imaging problem." He further explained that B&H needed an immediate solution, and implemented a hosted system soon after launching the e-commerce site. Unfortunately, the initial environment was fraught with problems, including unexpected disconnections and other customer-unfriendly problems.

"It was a nightmare," Moses Blum, IT Director, reported. "I never want this to materialize for any B&H customer ever again. We launched the chat to serve as a tool to give a personal touch to our customers, not to alienate or offend them."

That's why Blum requires a customer contact solution with Web chat functions that don't suddenly fail. That's why he chose eOn.

As Blum states plainly: "It works!"



Customer Story

eOn Customer Success Story:

B&H Photo-Video-Pro Audio

The Challenge

"In a store environment or on the phone, a service consultant has the chance to talk, listen and interpret a buyer's needs before frustration ever sets in," Blum explains. "People want the convenience of the Web, but they still want as much of the feel of direct person-to-person service as possible. Abrupt interruptions, garbled text, incomplete messages, unavailable servers — all these issues lower the quality of the interaction and raise the risk that we lose sales and customers."

The B&H customer contact center houses more than 150 service consultants who handle about 20,000 calls a day. Though web chat currently represents a small percentage of daily volume, Blum understands that as the wired world expands this segment will quickly grow to become a vital sales channel. Today's technology must serve as the foundation for tomorrow's requirements.

"Even now," he says, "we receive hundreds of Web chats daily and that number keeps growing."

The Solution

Blum turned to eOn Communications, the company that has provided B&H with customer contact solutions for the last seven years. eOn's eQueue system already automated call distribution for the B&H contact center, and Blum believed this existing technology infrastructure would serve as the best platform for Web chat capabilities. Like B&H, eOn has a history of focusing on its core competency — designing, developing and deploying customer contact solutions.



"We understand that handling multi-media contact—voice, e-mail and Web chat—is the key to effective customer service in the Internet age," says Troy Lynch, eOn's Chief Operating Officer. "New communications technologies must support this type of interaction or they threaten the

very mission of service organizations like B&H."

eOn's eQueue Chat software is browser-based, which means service agents can access the capabilities from

any workstation in the contact center. And because it's part of the eQueue system, connections are stable, text is always complete and there is no downtime. Furthermore, eOn's eQueue Chat software is fully configurable, so that Blum and his development team can add and customize features to fit today's Internet traffic and accommodate tomorrow's growth.

"The greatest advantage of the eQueue as a platform is the fact that all contact media are integrated into one system," Lynch elaborates. "The same service consultants who handle voice calls can handle Web chat or e-mail, depending on the flow and requirements of the contact center."

"Our technology bridges businesses from the voice-centric environment of the traditional call center into the integrated, multi-media realm of a true contact center," he adds.

For Blum, the difference in working with eOn went beyond engineering. "eOn interviewed our

service people, learned what users need and incorporated suggestions into the system. It works so well because they not only understand contact technology, but because they understand the business of customer contact," he says.

In early 2001, eOn and Blum implemented the eOn eQueue Chat software with a small group of agents at B&H's contact center. The new solution worked so much better than the other product—word spread quickly.

"The rest of the service people threatened to strike if I didn't give them access to the new eOn eQueue Chat too," Blum jokes. After some preliminary testing, Blum concedes he "was quickly convinced" and enabled the entire contact center with eOn's eQueue Chat software. Since then, Blum reports no system failures and credits eOn with improving overall efficiency and helping elevate customer satisfaction. B&H is adding integrated e-mail capabilities, with future enhancements to include a knowledge database of detailed product information that service reps can incorporate into Web and e-mail messages.

"We will continue to adopt new channels and technologies to reach new customers across the country and around the world," says Blum, whose vision is to make interacting with B&H via the Internet as close as possible to the experience of standing in the company's Manhattan store.



The B&H Contact Center Solution

eOn eQueue Multi-Media Contact Center Solution

Unified Routing for Customer Interaction Management: Single queue for all media types—voice, e-mail and web communications—improves customer service and loyalty, increases agent productivity, and lowers total cost of ownership.

Comprehensive Applications including E-mail and Web Chat: Applications include, e-mail, Web chat and Web collaboration with comprehensive knowledge database, integrated voice response, voice mail with unified messaging, fax messaging, quality assurance recording, complete telephony capability and a complete range of desktop devices and applications.

Proven and Reliable Platform: Bridging the gap from traditional call centers to new web-enabled contact centers by applying years of experience in designing robust solutions for the demanding requirements of multi-media contact centers.

Open Solution: Linux™-based system provides a completely open architecture, ensuring customers have more choices with consistent and personalized service delivery, as well as consolidated tracking and reporting of all customer contacts.

The B&H Story

B&H Photo-Video Pro Audio Inc. is a privately-owned company specializing in retail, Internet, and mail-order sales of professional and consumer products for photography, video, pro audio and digital imaging technology.

Founded in 1973, B&H is located in New York City at 429 9th Avenue between 33rd and 34th Streets. B&H customers conveniently shop in person at the 35,000 square foot superstore, by phone and on the web. B&H serves thousands of customers per day.

B&H employs over 300 people, all of whom are dedicated to serving customers before, during and after the sale.

B&H stocks the complete product lines of over 1,600 brands. Its warehouse maintains over 130,000 products for immediate availability to its customers.

Contact B&H by calling (212) 44-6600, call toll free at (800) 947-9950, send a fax to (212) 239-7770, or visit the Web at <http://www.bhphotovideo.com>





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