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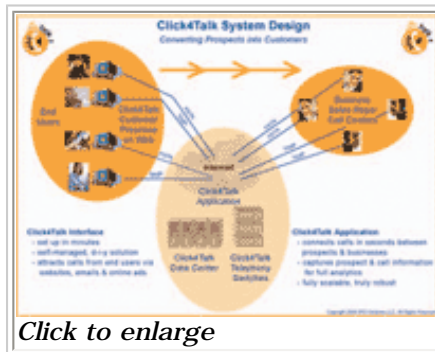
Click, Talk, Sell

Web CRM-Made-Easy Offers Simple Channel Sale

By *Khali Henderson*

Click4Talk this year rolled out a Web-based clickto- talk service designed to instantly connect online shoppers with customer service or sales representatives.

What's new about that? On the surface, it sounds pretty much like the same offer you've been hearing about for the last five years. But David Landa, Click4Talk's vice president of sales and marketing, says it's different in some key ways: One, it's easy to set up; it takes about five minutes. Two, it's completely hosted, so there's no hardware or software to buy, install or manage. And, three, it's cheap; retail price is as low as \$29.99 per month plus a nominal setup fee.



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This combines to make a particularly simple sale for agents, one of the company's distribution channels. The company also sells the service directly and through resellers under a two-tier white-label program. Licensing options for the software also are available.

Click4Talk embeds phone links within Web sites, e-mails, banners, search results and Internet ads. With one mouse click, PC users are greeted with a pop-up window that enables them to be connected live to representatives.

Initially it was available only as a phoneto- phone service, but in May, the company added a PC-to-phone version.

Click4Talk's phone-to-phone service is available under three pricing plans: 100 minutes for \$29.99 per month and a \$99 setup

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fee; 400 minutes for \$49.99 per month and a \$99 setup fee; and 800 minutes for \$99 and \$49 setup fee. Additional minutes are 12 cents each under the first two plans and 10 cents under the highest volume plan. The new Pc-to-phone also is available under three pricing plans, which cost about \$5 less per month. Additional minutes are 8 cents each under the low- and mid-volume plans and 5 cents under the highvolume plan. Subscribers can have both versions — phone-to-phone and PC-to-phone — under one plan at phone-to-phone rates (additional minutes are charged according to call type, however).

Agents earn 10 percent to 15 percent monthly recurring commissions. Eric Asquino, director of customer development for telecom broker ACS Inc., says even for his agency, which sells T1s and up, the extra commission can be significant percentage of a deal when the payout on T1s can be as low as \$50 with some carriers.

Asquino's company, which markets heavily on the Web, used the service to connect with its own customers and prospects for about three months before it decided to represent the product for sales into its midmarket and large enterprise customers. Asquino says the service can help get into the door because customers realize right away that it can help them sell their services.

In fact, says Landa, the failure of earlier click-talk systems to catch on falls in large measure to their use only for customer service inquiries rather than in sales acquisition. On its Web site, Click4talk cites statistics from NetIQ showing more than 17 percent of consumers who abandoned online shopping carts did so because they couldn't get product questions answered quickly.

Here's how the service works: Once a subscriber signs up, he receives a welcome e-mail from Click4Talk providing a username and password to log into Click4Talk Customer Web Interface. Once logged in, the subscriber creates a phone link, which is the HTML hyperlink code assigned to a receiving phone number and placed on Web sites, emails or banner ads. There is no limit on the number of phone links that can be created. A phone number assigned to a phone link can be changed in real time from the Click4Talk Customer Web Interface. Greet, Busy and Unavailable messages can be played when the receiving phone is busy or the representative is unavailable to receive calls. And, the phone link can be set up to receive voice messages via e-mail.

The Click4Talk pop-up window also can be customized from the control panel. Subscribers can upload their own graphics and text and view the result in real time.

When the prospect or customer types the phone number into the pop-up window and clicks the "Call on Phone" button, Click4Talk dials the representative's phone and the customer's phone and connects the call from Web to PSTN. If the visitor clicks "Call on PC" button, the service dials the representative's phone through PSTN and connects the visitor's PC through VoIP.

When the Web visitor requests a phone call using Click4Talk Service, the date and time of the call, call duration, calling number, IP address, phone link, and Web page URL are recorded.

Subscribers can view this information online in real time through the Click4Talk Customer Web Interface. Information can be search

and saved into an Excel spreadsheet.

The service is targeted for small and medium business-to-business and business-to-consumer companies, online retailers and businesses in industries such as real estate, hospitality and finance.

Click4Talk is recruiting agents, such as Web developers and telecom providers as well as Internet directories and pay-per-click advertising firms.

The company offers agents initial training and technical support, a secure sign-up page for their customers, a control panel for reporting and enduser billing.

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