

Cisco WebAttendant

CISCO WEBATTENDANT IS AN APPLICATION THAT SUPPORTS THE TRADITIONAL ROLE OF A MANUAL ATTENDANT CONSOLE. ASSOCIATED WITH AN IP PHONE, THE CISCO WEBATTENDANT APPLICATION ALLOWS THE ATTENDANT TO QUICKLY ACCEPT AND DISPATCH CALLS TO ENTERPRISE USERS. AN INTEGRATED DIRECTORY SERVICE PROVIDES TRADITIONAL BUSY LAMP FIELD (BLF) AND DIRECT STATION SELECT (DSS) FUNCTIONS FOR ANY LINE IN THE SYSTEM. THE APPLICATION IS WEB ENABLED AND, THEREFORE, PORTABLE TO WINDOWS 98, NT, AND 2000 PLATFORMS. THE CISCO WEBATTENDANT IS THE FIRST OF MANY NEW IP TELEPHONY APPLICATIONS THAT INTEGRATE OLD WORLD TELEPHONY FUNCTIONS WITH NEW WORLD APPLICATIONS AND SERVICES SUCH AS LIGHTWEIGHT DIRECTORY ACCESS PROTOCOL (LDAP) DIRECTORY AND HTML SERVICES. A PRIMARY BENEFIT OF CISCO WEBATTENDANT OVER TRADITIONAL ATTENDANT CONSOLE SYSTEMS IS ITS ABILITY TO MONITOR THE STATE OF EVERY LINE IN THE SYSTEM AND TO EFFICIENTLY DISPATCH CALLS. THE ABSENCE OF A HARDWARE-BASED LINE MONITOR DEVICE OFFERS A MUCH MORE AFFORDABLE AND DISTRIBUTABLE MANUAL ATTENDANT SOLUTION THAN TRADITIONAL CONSOLES.

Key Features and Benefits

Enterprises today may choose to route inbound telephone calls through a number of methods. These methods are either completely automated, manually directed, or some hybrid of automated and manual operation. A separate product, the Cisco Automated Attendant application, can accept inbound calls, query the caller for destination information, and rapidly dispatch the call without operator intervention. Automation of inbound call dispatch is efficient and affordable. Alternatively, many businesses see the benefit of handling each inbound caller through a specially trained and equipped operator. This operator assesses the caller's purpose and intended destination and uses tools to dispatch the call reliably and efficiently. The benefit of such a function is a heightened sense of customer satisfaction and, in many cases, a more reliably dispatched call. The manual attendant console has served as the primary tool for such a function for many years. Old World manual attendant consoles are typically telephone sets with expensive hardware line extender devices on which are located a large number of buttons and lamps. These lamps serve to monitor and indicate the state of assigned telephone extensions (lines).

The buttons allow inbound calls destined for those lines to be rapidly selected by the attendant operator and the call dispatched to that line. Administrative and capital cost of such a hardware-based extender device is high. The attendant was also required to know which lines had been statically assigned to the device, an administrative task normally fraught with error.

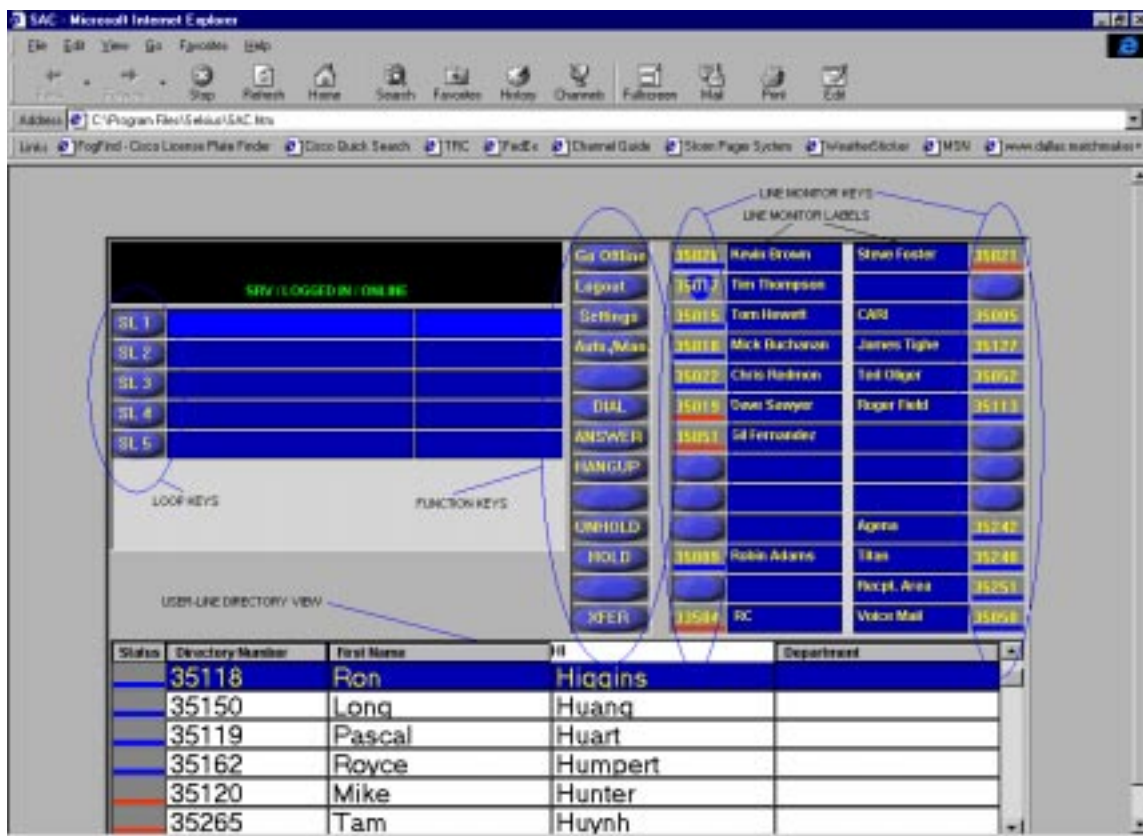
The Cisco WebAttendant is designed to more efficiently automate both the user operations and the administrative operations of a manual attendant function. The WebAttendant uses a Web-based graphical user interface as the primary means of call handling and line-state monitoring. The software nature of the WebAttendant allows assignment of line-state monitors without the need of physically relabeling extender boxes with each line monitor change. The WebAttendant user interface is shown in Figure 1. The lower half of the display is used as a directory of all users in the system. The line state of each user's primary line appearance is presented with each user record entry. The benefit over Old World consoles and line extenders is that each user's line is monitored, as opposed to monitoring only a select few in an Old World system.

Advanced drag-and-drop capabilities and access to corporate LDAP directories combine to offer key advantages over Old World manual attendant stations. In a system with hundreds or thousands of users, the WebAttendant operator can accept calls and perform directory lookup by selecting the field title in the directory section and typing in the first few characters of the user's extension, last name, first name, or department. A directory search that matches the query is returned. The operator may view the status of the user's line (busy, available) and advise the caller of the line state. The operator may then transfer the call to the user either by initiating a traditional transfer sequence through the transfer function key or by dragging and dropping the call from the selected loop to the desired user's record. The primary benefit of this user interface is quicker transaction time and subsequent customer satisfaction improvement.

Cisco WebAttendant is scalable. Call distribution groups may be assigned to any pilot number, which may in turn be assigned to one or more WebAttendant loops. These loops represent answerable lines in a multiple attendant system. Calls are queued to one or more online attendants' loops, thereby allowing scale and distribution among multiple operators. Multiple WebAttendants may be configured to monitor the same lines, affording scale to multiple operators when conditions require. Equivalent functionality on an Old World system would require the purchase and administration of a line extender device for each operator.

Access to New World directory services and content extends the manual attendant's toolbox for providing efficient, courteous service well beyond the capabilities of equivalent, Old World manual attendant functions.

Figure 1 Cisco WebAttendant



Specifications

User Features

- Loop keys (simultaneous management of up to eight calls)
 - Line monitor keys—26
 - Line states—busy, available, and unknown
 - User label per line monitor key for easy reference to user
- Configurable function keys
 - Log on, log off
 - Make attendant busy/available
 - System supplementary features—hold, resume, transfer, conference, call waiting, interposition call transfer
 - Answer/Release
- Directory view
 - Line state—one record for every line appearance in the Cisco CallManager cluster
 - Query—searchable by last name, first name, extension, department
- Per-call drag-and-drop transfer, hold—drag call from loop key to line monitor key or directory record for transfer
- Headset capabilities of Cisco IP Phones
- Keyboard shortcuts for alternative to mouse operation

Administrative Features

- Remote system/device installation and configuration through Web browser
- Simultaneous line monitor by multiple operators—Any operator can view line state of any line from his or her console user interface
- Call distribution from single pilot number to multiple directory numbers or user-line pairs
- Simultaneous monitoring of inbound calls from multiple operator positions
- Creation of up to 16 pilot numbers/distribution groups

System Capabilities

- Scalability
 - 32 hunt groups (pilot numbers) per Cisco CallManager cluster
 - 16 hunt group members per hunt group
 - 8 call loops per WebAttendant—any loop may be assignable as a hunt group member
 - 96 Cisco WebAttendants per cluster
 - Maximum of $16 \times 32 = 512$ simultaneous calls on as many as 96 configured WebAttendants
- Availability—provision for multiple operators on same loop/pilot and monitoring same line; operator station fails or is off line, calls distributed to all other operators with same loops
- Manageability—system device configuration and operation through Web interface; no operator applications to install at each operator's PC
- Affordability—no line extender hardware devices

Ordering Information

Cisco WebAttendant is shipped with each Cisco CallManager application. Cisco WebAttendant is not separately orderable. The client and server applications are installed as plug-ins from Cisco CallManager Administration screens.

Service and Support

Cisco AVVID (Architecture for Voice, Video and Integrated Data) Service and Support ensures customer success with a complete range of life cycle-enhancing services required for the creation and ongoing health and performance of integrated networks. Cisco AVVID also provides support for an array of customer-contact applications with an open platform model. The Cisco AVVID Application Support services integrate Cisco, partner, and customer competencies to create collaborative support solutions. Together, these offerings improve your clients' customer-contact management through accelerated, converged network application deployment and enhanced network availability.



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