2019 Enterprise Connect Inference

Inference Solutions

Inference provides an Intelligent Virtual Agent platform that helps businesses automate many routine and repetitive conversations, freeing live agents to handle more complex customer interactions.

It was specifically designed to be packaged and resold by telecommunications carriers and cloud contact center software providers. Service providers can easily configure self-service offerings for resale to specific verticals or at desired price points. Inference is resold by over 35 carriers around the world, including AT&T, Telstra, Vonage, Nextiva, Masergy, Momentum and Cincinnati Bell, to power Conversational AI applications for a wide range of vertical markets including government, retail, travel, enterprise and SMB.

It is also resold by CCaaS and UCaaS providers like Cisco.

Inference's Virtual Agents offer capabilities that are similar to human service and support agents -- they just never rest or take a vacation -- and they're substantially cheaper.

- **Virtual Agents Have Skills** - For example, they can understand human speech in over 120 languages and can respond using text-to-speech that is almost indistinguishable from a human agent.
- **Virtual Agents Can Do Things** - They can perform all kinds of tasks to care for customers. They can authenticate callers with voice biometrics, process PCI-compliant payments, look up orders, survey customers and answer all kinds of questions -- over the phone, web or SMS.
- **Virtual Agents Are Employed Like Human Agents** - Just like an outsourced call center, businesses purchase Virtual Agents and pay for them for as long as they need them, on a monthly basis.

Inference Studio offers an easy-to-use, drag-and-drop development tool that makes it easy for non-technical users to build and deploy self-service applications. It features a comprehensive task library with pre-built applications that organizations can use or extend.

According to CEO, Callan Schebella, Inference is typically used in call center environments to power self-service applications for things like booking hotel reservations, scheduling appointments at doctors' offices and collecting PCI-compliant payments. It's also used for non-contact center solutions like routing calls to local stores or departments and serving as virtual hotel concierges. When asked about some of the more unique use cases, Schebella told us that they've worked with marketing agencies that are doing all sorts of creative things with virtual agents. For example, one company sold Christmas gift cards that included a phone number. When a child called the phone number, they were able to tell the virtual agent what they wanted for Christmas. The virtual agent then notified the person that purchased the card the details of what the child asked for.

Inference used Enterprise Connect to announce the general availability of Studio 6.0, which integrates the most advanced natural language processing (NLP) and Conversational AI technologies from Google and IBM, helping businesses eliminate complex IVR menus and elevate the customer experience beyond simple speech-enabled, directed dialog systems.

At the event, Schebella spoke on a panel that covered AI in the contact center along with Google's Adam Champy. Inference also demonstrated their Intelligent Virtual Agents using Google Cloud Speech-to-Text, Wavenet Speech-to-Text and Dialogflow for NLP.

Businesses served by Inference's partners can now deploy self-service applications using Google Dialogflow to streamline the automated support process by dramatically simplifying the customer interaction. Inference Studio 6.0 also helps businesses reduce costs by increasing the percentage of live agent tasks that can be automated.

Inference Solutions CEO Callan Schebella noted, "Customers no longer want to play a game of '20 questions' when speaking with a virtual agent. Studio 6.0 makes it possible to field open-ended prompts such as 'How can I help you today?' or 'Please tell me the reason for your call.' This more sophisticated interaction greatly reduces the time and frustration associated with traditional automated support, enabling businesses to resolve customer inquiries more efficiently than ever before."

During the event, one of Inference's partners, Masergy, a leading provider of secure SD-WAN, cloud communications and managed security solutions, announced that they would package and resell Inference's latest release as a value-added service to their customers. Inference's Intelligent Virtual Agents power virtual assistant and chatbot features for Masergy Global UCaaS solutions and serve as the queue callback service for Masergy Cloud Contact Center.