

An aerial view of a city with a semi-transparent globe overlay in the center. The globe is dark blue with a grid pattern. The city below is a mix of green and grey, representing buildings and parks.

ENSURING TOP PERFORMANCE OF UNIFIED CONTACT CENTER ENTERPRISE WITH THE OPTANIX PLATFORM

FOR MANY BUSINESSES, CONTACT CENTERS ARE CRITICAL FOR GENERATING REVENUE AND PROVIDING THE OUTSTANDING SERVICE REQUIRED TO MAINTAIN SATISFIED CUSTOMERS.

Today's customers are accustomed to accessing customer service through multiple channels, such as IVR, human voice and chat. But when such technologies stand in the way of important communication with customers, such as order taking, telemarketing and customer support, there can be a severe impact on the business as competitors are typically only a click or phone call away – not to mention that dissatisfied customers commonly write scathing reviews of companies that disappoint them. It simply isn't worth the risk to allow call center technology issues to negatively impact customer interactions.

Cisco Unified Contact Center Enterprise (UCCE) relies on many different technology components to deliver the UCCE service. These include physical and virtual networks, various application servers, IVR and other applications, end-systems, and more, all working together as a system. If any piece of the system suffers, it can impact the call center operations in some capacity, whether it degrades performance, causes an outage or simply reduces resiliency.

Whichever way the system is impacted, it is critical to fix the offending issues quickly and efficiently, and even better to avoid them in the first place. But with the disparate toolsets commonly used to manage various components, it is difficult and time consuming to troubleshoot issues and nearly impossible to predict them. And with IT issues being listed at the #2 cause of problems for call centers in a 2018 callcenterhelper.com survey, the need for better service assurance is obvious. A single platform managing end to end and top to bottom in the contact center is the first step to reducing the long mean time to repair (MTTR) associated with these disparate tools and the finger pointing that typically ensues when they are used.

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OPTANIX SERVICE ASSURANCE PLATFORM

The Optanix Platform provides predictive and proactive business service assurance across hybrid infrastructures, with actionable intelligence for prioritizing and addressing problems before they impact critical business services to protect revenue, improve customer experience and reduce IT costs. It manages UCCE environments end to end and top to bottom, including the supporting infrastructure.

IT costs. The Optanix Platform manages UCCE environments end to end and top to bottom, including the supporting infrastructure. Modeling UCCE as a business service, it can provide true root cause analysis, predict impending problems and prioritize them based on the impact to the business. In addition, it provides specific UCCE management functionality to help find and solve problems that can be hard to track down and often go unnoticed with other tools.

MANAGEMENT AND TROUBLESHOOTING CHALLENGES

The value of proactive service assurance – in other words, ensuring the operations team knows about an issue before users report it – is more important than it may seem. The fact is, oftentimes issues are never reported by users – or, if they are, it is because they are persistent. Typically, when degradations or outages occur, users will stop what they are doing and then try again, or simply give up and use a different medium as they assume the operations team already knows about the problem. In addition, they'll typically complain to their co-workers about the technology or the IT department, which only wastes more time.

Common UCCE Issues	Possible Causes
Dropped calls	Commonly caused by network firewall or routing problems, WAN degradation, network configuration issues, call server configuration issues, and SBC configuration issues, failures or performance.
Poor voice or video quality	Commonly caused by network problems or misconfigurations, call server misconfigurations, SBC misconfigurations, and endpoint device problems, misconfigurations or location. Voice or video codec selection issues with a conference bridge also cause poor quality.
Misrouted calls	Commonly caused by ICM script problems from recent changes. Often changes are not made by traditional IT team responsible for operations, so they need a way to see what changed, and who changed it.

THE OPTANIX PLATFORM

The Optanix service assurance platform provides full-stack monitoring with end-to-end, top-to-bottom management for the Cisco Unified Contact Center infrastructure. Advanced analytics and root cause analysis predictively and proactively detect new and impending problems and quickly analyze them from multiple angles to find the true cause and provide actionable intelligence. With business service monitoring and prioritization, these root cause problems are prioritized based on the criticality of the impacted business services to ensure the most important problems to the business are addressed quickly. Streamlined remediation and management workflows reduce MTTR through

automation. Secure, multi-tenant remote access further reduces MTTR by enabling experts to rapidly solve problems.

To address UCCE specifically, the platform provides detailed UCCE analysis and visibility to monitor and manage these systems with functionality typically only found in point tools. Further, these UCCE-specific management features are seamlessly integrated into the Optanix Platform, allowing for all the platform's core features – such as Root Cause Analysis (RCA), Business Impact Monitoring (BIM), Smart Analytics and the Service Management Infrastructure Layer (SIML) – to be applied to UCCE systems. And by combining all these features in a single platform, Optanix

WHAT DOES THE OPTANIX PLATFORM DO?

By extending predictive and proactive business service assurance to UCCE implementations, the Optanix Platform provides actionable intelligence for prioritizing and addressing incidents and identifying problems, thereby improving customer experience and reducing IT costs.

eliminates the noise common in management deployments relying on multiple point tools, thus providing a best-of-breed solution.

USING THE OPTANIX PLATFORM TO SOLVE UCCE ISSUES

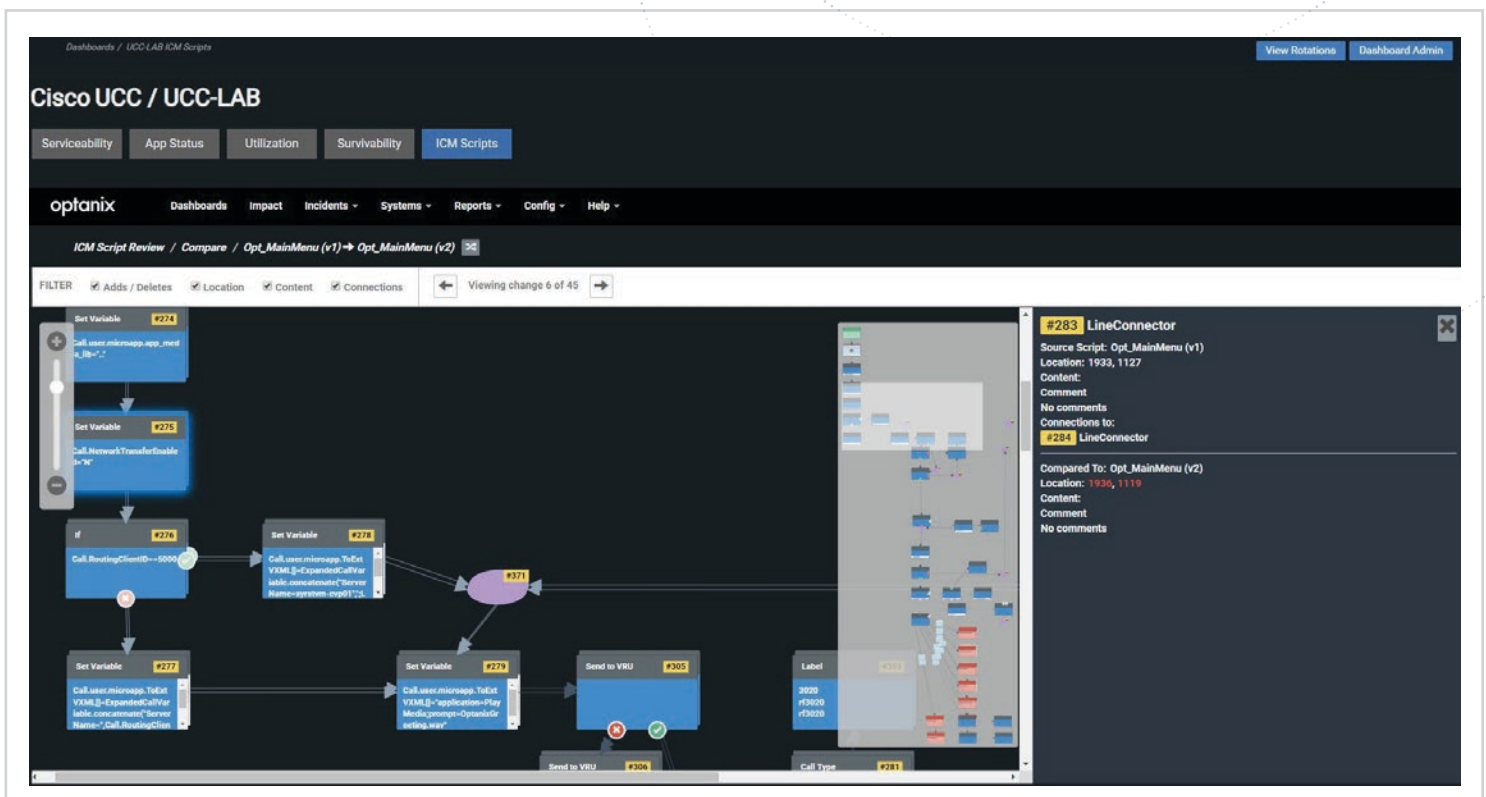
With end-to-end, top-to-bottom management of the entire system and specifically focused UCCE management functionality, the Optanix Platform provides the intelligence required to keep the contact center running at peak performance. It detects, pinpoints and alerts the operations team to both new and impending issues that impact UCCE, whether the issues are UCCE specific or they stem from the underlying IT infrastructure.

A sample of those issues and the features that solve them are outlined here.

ICM Script Errors

ICM script errors cause problems in call routing within a call center but are often hard to track down. Optanix provides an ICM script review tool that makes it easy to see misconfigurations in scripts by mapping and presenting a graphical representation of call flows. This tool provides a single view of all scripts in a single location so that engineers are not required to log into multiple devices to try to understand and map call flow manually.

Often, ICM script changes are not made by the traditional IT team responsible for operations, thus leaving operations teams in the dark. The ICM script review tool identifies changes that are made and who they were made by, along with a timestamp for when they were made, allowing operations to quickly troubleshoot, talk to the person who made the change to understand its intent, and work out a solution to any problems caused by the change.



The ICM script review tool provides a graphical representation of call center scripts with change tracking and comparison of current script to previous script

System Process and Sub-Process Issues

UCCE environments can be complicated by the fact that their processes run independently on a server but provide contact center services as a group, similar to micro applications that run on a single server but are all interdependent on one another. The Optanix Platform's Contact Center Serviceability Portal can be used to proactively detect problems in this complicated environment and to access additional troubleshooting information after detection.

With this portal, it is easy to see where some sub-processes have recently restarted, thus indicating an underlying issue. Further, instead of always logging every detail – which could result in information overload – the portal allows trace levels to be quickly configured to gather additional information for engineers researching problems. Through this functionality, the level of logging needed to troubleshoot will be collected the next time the process cycles.

Additionally, under normal conditions, users would have to set logging levels manually, requiring them to log into multiple devices and services to make configuration changes one at a time. When done in the portal, logging levels are set with a single action and the logs generated will be attached to a case for simple troubleshooting. This feature collapses troubleshooting time significantly to help reduce MTTR when issues arise.

UCCE Performance

The Optanix Platform gathers performance metrics including calls in progress, calls in queue, calls per second, concurrent agents logged in and many others available across UCCE. These metrics are aggregated across multiple instances of contact center in distributed environments, as well as from endpoints, and baselines are created based on day of week, time of day and other time periods to detect and alert on abnormalities. In addition, the metrics are available in the platform's performance metrics dashboard for additional troubleshooting and capacity planning.

UCCE Survivability Issues

When routing errors, configuration problems and other issues cause a dropped call in UCCE, the call is automatically rerouted to the default agent pool so the customer is not hung up on. Although the call is not dropped, it does create a disjointed experience for the customer as the information they have already entered is lost, requiring them to provide it again and making these problems important to solve.

Optanix's survivability dashboard processes CDP information and presents it to operations staff for troubleshooting. The dashboard's intuitive interface enables users to view call status and drill in to look at all related logs to help troubleshoot the issue. Additionally, since the Optanix Platform collects and stores these logs, it allows for troubleshooting in large environments where troubleshooting might not otherwise be possible as the logs are overwritten quickly on the application servers due to limited memory. And

by having logs from all servers in a single location, troubleshooting is more streamlined and can be done more quickly, providing a reduced MTTR.

Historical Problems

With the resilient architectures in contact centers, there are many issues that don't seem critical when they happen and hence are not addressed. However, oftentimes, the presence of many combined issues typically indicates a larger underlying problem.

The Optanix Platform's contact center event statistics dashboard enables ITIL problem management practices to find and correct underlying problems. For example, if the dashboard shows that rtrProcess is the most common event in the contact center, they can use the traces in the contact center serviceability portal to study these events then engineer a solution to eliminate them and introduce more stability.

THE OPTANIX PLATFORM IMPROVES UCCE

The Optanix Platform provides predictive and proactive business service assurance across hybrid infrastructures, with actionable intelligence for prioritizing and addressing problems before they impact critical business services to protect revenue, improve customer experience and reduce IT costs. Following are real-world examples of the Optanix helping customers who were previously struggling with UCCE issues.

- The Optanix Platform helped increase contact center availability when one of America's largest healthcare companies was experiencing issues with its catalog sales contact center – its main source of revenue. Before Optanix got involved, this contact center was operating at just 99.75% availability and was rife with version control issues and process problems – all of which combined to cause millions of dollars in lost sales plus untold other damage to the company. Upon implementation of the Optanix Platform and associated services, availability rose to 99.97% for a period of five years and the company's sales from this important revenue stream increased significantly.
- When a Fortune 500, multi-state healthcare organization became an Optanix customer, the Optanix Platform quickly uncovered the fact that they were dropping 25,000 calls per day due to a CVP Survivability misconfiguration. They had been unaware of the dropped calls and this discovery enabled them to fix the issue to ensure all their customers could receive the support they need.
- After a major utility company received a sizeable fine from a public utilities commission for not having enough properly monitored and managed contact center agency capacity on their main service line during a power outage, they were forced to implement a large system capacity upgrade. Following that upgrade, the company deployed the Optanix Platform to provide proper visibility into their environment to ensure their UCCE system could support their call center agents – and thus that they avoided any more penalties and “black eyes” for their business. They also contracted Optanix for managed services to ensure they had access to skilled UCCE coverage around the clock.
- The Optanix Platform immediately found 2,800 preexisting exceptions that previous monitoring products did not detect upon implementation at a large financial institution. Many of these exceptions were not causing current outages or performance problems but rather were ticking time bombs for the UCCE services since they had left critical devices in non-redundant states with failed fans, failed redundant power supplies, hard drive failures and more. The company also used the Optanix Platform to find over 1,000 devices with recurring events, enabling them to address this issue and eliminate thousands of incidents in the process.

As these real-world examples indicate, the Optanix Platform is vital to successful UCCE management as it ensures business-critical call center services achieve the availability and performance levels needed to maintain customer satisfaction and revenue.

About Optanix

Optanix is the leader in intelligent business service assurance. The Optanix Platform delivers predictive and proactive performance and availability management across hybrid infrastructures, with a focus on real-time communications use-cases. It is available as a standalone solution or as the engine behind Optanix's managed service offerings.

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