

# TECH CHOICES



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## RightNow Technologies Leads In Interaction-Centric Customer Service Management Software

The Forrester Wave™ Vendor Summary, Q2 2007

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

With a strong suite of tightly integrated tools spanning contact channels, RightNow Technologies presents a robust offering for customer service, especially for consumer-facing organizations. Phone, email, chat, and forum activity are all integrated into the customer records, and information presented during any interaction is available when transitioning to another medium. Cross-sell and up-sell opportunities are addressed within the tools, helping to maximize the value of each interaction.

### TARGET AUDIENCE

Business process and applications professional

### RIGHTNOW IS BEST SUITED FOR SaaS CUSTOMERS WITH MULTIPLE CHANNELS

RightNow Technologies has more than 1,800 customers spanning both B2C and B2B industries, as well as a heavy presence in industries such as government, retail, consumer-packaged goods (CPG), high-tech, and finance. Referenced customers lauded RightNow's ability to deliver a sound solution in a hosted environment as well as its extensive knowledgebase features.

Forrester evaluated RightNow's current offering and strategy for interaction-centric customer service management needs against approximately 150 criteria (see Figure 1). RightNow is investing heavily in solving customer-facing challenges and improving its artificial intelligence and advanced technology capabilities. Overall, the vendor provides strong customer service analytics, comprehensive self-service tools, and a strong knowledgebase — at some of the lowest prices in the market. It is an especially good fit for buyers that:

- **Employ and value several customer communication channels.** Buyers that employ several lines of customer communication will value RightNow's ability to integrate channel activity into customer records. Whether information such as chat logs or phone conversations are recorded, the solution provides a foundation for managing customer information so that users/agents can view and access customer information quickly and efficiently.
- **Have a strong content focus.** RightNow's strength lies in the delivery of information to customers — through customized FAQs, directed marketing campaigns, speech-to-text and text-to-speech

capabilities, and a unified knowledge platform that spans contact channels. The product boasts an integrated content authoring and maintenance tool that supports multilingual content.

- **Are looking for a software-as-a-service (SaaS) offering.** While RightNow's platform is available for both hosted and on-premise deployment, the preferred deployment model is definitely hosted. Acceptance of this model allows for faster deployment and lower overall costs. Reference customers were uniformly pleased with the performance and availability of the hosted system.

To see how RightNow stacks up against seven other competitors, see the Forrester Wave™ evaluation of the interaction-centric customer service management software market.<sup>1</sup>

**Figure 1** RightNow Evaluation Overview

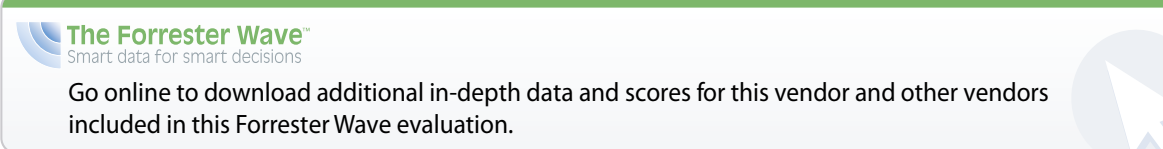
CURRENT OFFERING	
Customer service	With a strong suite of tightly integrated tools spanning contact channels, RightNow presents a robust offering for customer service, especially for consumer-facing organizations. Phone, email, chat, and forum activity are all integrated into the customer records, and information presented during any interaction is available when transitioning to another medium.
Internationalization	RightNow is multibyte- and Unicode-enabled and supports 20 languages.
Industry business process support	RightNow serves customers across a variety of industries, with a high concentration of customers in the public sector, financial services, retail/CPG, high-tech, telecommunications, and services. RightNow has a high concentration of B2C customers and a growing presence in B2B. The vendor does not sell industry-specific editions.
Architecture and platform	RightNow manages architecture for its software-as-a-service (SaaS) customers and also offers an on-premise version of the same software for customers that prefer that deployment option. The vendor supports customization primarily through a point-and-click interface, which means easier customization but less flexibility. On-premise customers have the additional flexibility of being able to modify the code. The product integrates through Web services and has a library of prebuilt connectors to solutions such as KANA, PeopleSoft, SAP, and Siebel. The vendor has built-in workflow but not true business process management (BPM).
Usability	RightNow has an intuitive user interface and will further improve usability with the early 2007 release of RightNow 8, which provides a familiar, Outlook-like user experience that reduces training time and improves productivity. RightNow has strong, built-in help, including context-sensitive help.
Cost	RightNow pricing varies based on modules, number of users, and number of interactions.
STRATEGY	
Time to value	On average, RightNow customers are in production within 45 to 60 days of purchase. RightNow delivers its solutions for Day1 Advantage on the concept of "start with results, build on success." The vendor uses a phased implementation plan designed to deliver immediate high-impact results and then builds incrementally on that initial success.
Product strategy	RightNow is investing heavily in solving customer-facing challenges and improving its artificial intelligence and advanced technology capabilities.
Corporate strategy	RightNow targets a range of industries but has had the most success in areas such as the public sector, financial services, retail/CPG, high-tech, telecommunications, and services. The vendor has several strategic partnerships with complementary technology providers as well as with SIs like Deloitte and Capgemini.

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.

**Figure 1** RightNow Evaluation Overview (Cont.)

MARKET PRESENCE	
Customer base	RightNow has more than 1,800 customers. It has approximately 400 enterprise-class customers, comprising 45,000 users.
Employees	RightNow has more than 650 employees.
Financial performance	RightNow has a strong track record of growth and profitability.

Source: Forrester Research, Inc.



**The Forrester Wave™**  
Smart data for smart decisions

Go online to download additional in-depth data and scores for this vendor and other vendors included in this Forrester Wave evaluation.

**SUPPLEMENTAL MATERIAL**

**Online Resource**

The underlying spreadsheet for Figure 1 is available online. The spreadsheet includes more detailed data and scores for this vendor.

This detailed data and scores for this vendor are also available online through an Excel-based vendor comparison tool that provides detailed product evaluations and customizable rankings.

**The Forrester Wave Methodology**

We conduct primary research to develop a list of vendors that meet our criteria to be evaluated in this market. From that initial pool of vendors, we then narrow our final list. We choose these vendors based on: 1) product fit; 2) customer success; and 3) Forrester client demand. We eliminate vendors that have limited customer references and products that don't fit the scope of our evaluation.

After examining past research, user need assessments, and vendor and expert interviews, we develop the initial evaluation criteria. To evaluate the vendors and their products against our set of criteria, we gather details of product qualifications through a combination of lab evaluations, questionnaires, demos, and/or discussions with client references. We send evaluations to the vendors for their review, and we adjust the evaluations to provide the most accurate view of vendor offerings and strategies.

We set default weightings to reflect our analysis of the needs of large user companies — and/or other scenarios as outlined in the Forrester Wave document — and then score the vendors based on a

clearly defined scale. These default weightings are intended only as a starting point, and readers are encouraged to adapt the weightings to fit their individual needs through the Excel-based tool. The final scores generate the graphical depiction of the market based on current offering, strategy, and market presence. Forrester intends to update vendor evaluations regularly as product capabilities and vendor strategies evolve.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> Forrester evaluated leading customer service management software vendors across approximately 180 criteria and found that Entellium, Microsoft, Oracle Siebel CRM, Oracle Siebel CRM On Demand, salesforce.com, and SAP are Leaders for customer record-centric products; eGain, KANA Software, RightNow Technologies, and Talisma are Leaders for customer interaction-centric products; and Graham Technology, and Pegasystems are Leaders for business process-centric products. Within the customer record-centric category, Infor, Maximizer Software, NetSuite, Oracle E-Business Suite, Oracle Peoplesoft Enterprise CRM, SageCRM, Sage SalesLogix, and SugarCRM are Strong Performers. Among interaction-centric products, ATG, FrontRange Solutions, KNOVA, and Numara Software are Strong Performers. Amdocs and Chordiant are Strong Performers within the process-centric category. Differing requirements within an individual company necessitate a careful evaluation of the specific capabilities and individual strengths of each product and probably require the use of more than one tool to solve the full range of customer service management needs. See the May 24, 2007, Tech Choices [“The Forrester Wave™: Customer Service Software Management, Q2 2007.”](#)