

## Verastream Host Integrator Helps AT&T Dial Up Fast Legacy System Access



Communications giant AT&T used Attachmate® Verastream® Host Integrator to expedite billing, inquiry, and service calls from the hundreds of thousands of AT&T customers who have toll-free numbers. Before Verastream, one of AT&T's 1,100 contact center agents might take as long as a quarter-hour to retrieve information from more than a million records. The cost of training the agents, the time it was taking to respond, and the less-than optimal customer service all begged for an effective solution.

### Scoping the Project

Working with Attachmate, Chris Byler, rapid applications development manager at AT&T Global Customer Care in Kansas City, Missouri, outlined a solution that would be innovative as well as practical. The ambitious goal was to slash caller wait times to a range of 5 to 30 seconds. The heart of the solution would be a simple web interface that would enable contact center agents to retrieve records based on a caller's phone number.

At AT&T, contact center agents routinely had to access three mainframe applications that housed billing information, carrier information (in an industry database), and a routing database. Part of the challenge involved the interface with the industry database, which AT&T could not touch or change.

"We had the ability in-house to write the legacy applications with no problem, but time was another challenge we were facing," Byler explained. "We also needed to multitask, which meant we had to fire up multiple copies of the software, and that's pretty hard on the machines."

### Speed, Openness, and Flexibility

Byler quickly saw that the Verastream process was much more advanced than traditional screen scraping. "By going with Verastream Host Integrator, the host application ran much faster, and we were able to integrate it with Java for multi-threading, which was good for our machines," he said. "We didn't have to load up dozens of copies of the application."

### QUICK VIEW

#### Problem

Needed to simplify data access for contact center agents so callers could be served faster.

#### Solution

Used Verastream Host Integrator to present a unified web front end for applications running on IBM MVS mainframes.

#### Results

- Typical response time: previously 7 to 10 minutes; now 30 seconds or less.
- Savings of \$750,000 per year in the cost of serving customers.
- Dramatic increase in contact center agent productivity and caller satisfaction.

Verastream Host Integrator encapsulates mainframe data and logic via the screen interface. It transforms the full range of legacy applications into SOA assets by exposing business processes as web services, J2EE objects, or .NET components that can be reused in customer-facing applications.

With Verastream Host Integrator, AT&T contact center agents no longer have to navigate three different mainframe systems. They now get a single, Windows-like front end to needed applications.

### Answers in Seconds, Not Minutes

Much of the underlying AT&T data resides in applications running on IBM MVS mainframes using 3270 terminal emulation. The new approach builds on the value of AT&T's considerable legacy investment.

With the new system, the cryptic legacy application codes have been replaced by clear, plain-English descriptions and an agent-friendly interface. The new interface uses the existing system's data-naming semantics to ease the transition from the old method of retrieving information.

Thanks to the streamlined Verastream solution (which includes multiple prelogged connections to the industry database), the typical information-gathering and response

“We have seen a dramatic increase in my reps’ productivity, because now they don’t spend so much time looking through green screens.”

– Chris Byler  
Rapid Applications  
Development Manager  
AT&T Global Customer  
Care

cycle is now well under 30 seconds—a considerable improvement over the 7 to 10 minutes it used to take.

Those aren’t the only benefits. With contact center agent turnover running around 15 percent a year, the tab for training can be high. But the Verastream solution cut about a week out of the 12-week agent training time, saving at least \$250,000 per year in training costs. Another \$500,000 per year was saved in the overall cost of serving customers.

### The Attachmate Verastream Advantage

“We have seen a dramatic increase in my agents’ productivity, because now they don’t spend so much time looking through

green screens,” Byler said. “They enter the phone number, and 10 to 15 seconds later, here come the results.”

The new efficiency allows contact center agents to focus elsewhere. “They can talk to customers, solve billing issues, things like that, that you can’t ever automate,” Byler added.

Verastream delivers rapid results because you can use existing development skills, familiar IT tools, and proven mainframe investments. No changes to valuable mainframe-application code or associated business processes are required. At AT&T, Verastream Host Integrator paid for itself in about six weeks, and continues to generate substantial savings.

“Attachmate has really gone above and beyond what I expect for typical service, to help us ensure that this project succeeded in every way that I laid out,” Byler said. “They’ve been phenomenal to work with and I consider Attachmate a valuable business partner to me and my team.”

### About Verastream Integration Solutions

The Attachmate Verastream product line accelerates the reuse of legacy applications in service-oriented architectures. This suite of solutions provides a complete range of mainframe, web, and desktop modernization tools—from basic rejuvenation to customized presentation and sophisticated high-performance integration.

Verastream-generated services can be mixed, matched, and reused selectively to extend legacy functionality to new users or new composite applications. No code changes to legacy applications are required, so you can avoid risk while speeding up application integration, application development, and workflow enhancement.

### About Attachmate

Attachmate helps businesses extend, manage, and secure their IT investments. We offer a broad range of solutions—from terminal emulation, legacy integration, and PC lifecycle management products to innovative systems and security management tools. With our technology, more than 65,000 businesses worldwide are putting their IT assets to work in new and meaningful ways. Learn more at [www.attachmate.com](http://www.attachmate.com).



**Corporate Headquarters**  
1500 Dexter Avenue North  
Seattle, Washington 98109  
TEL 206 217 7500  
800 872 2829  
FAX 206 217 7515

**EMEA Headquarters**  
The Netherlands  
TEL +31 71 368 1100  
FAX +31 71 368 1181

**Asia Pacific Headquarters**  
Australia  
TEL +61 3 9825 2300  
FAX +61 3 9825 2399

**Latin America Headquarters**  
Mexico  
TEL +52 55 9178 4970  
FAX +52 55 5540 4886

WEB [attachmate.com](http://attachmate.com)  
E-MAIL [info@attachmate.com](mailto:info@attachmate.com)

For regional office information, visit [www.attachmate.com](http://www.attachmate.com).