Business Transformation at Scale
Sonus Networks Serves Fast-Changing Markets in a Whole New Way with Coveo

At a Glance

Company Description: Leading provider of SIP-based communication equipment with more than 100,000 customers and 900 customer support analysts

Industry: Telecommunications

Geography: North America

Products: Coveo for Salesforce Service and Community Cloud Editions

Solutions: Customer Support, Customer and Partner Self-Service

Benefits:

1. 20% improvement in self-service resolution rates expected

2. Increase in CSAT scores expected

3. On-demand knowledge for customer support teams facing 30% monthly growth in call and ticket volume

Systems Indexed:

- Atlassian Confluence
- MS SharePoint
- Salesforce Community Cloud
- Salesforce Knowledge
- Salesforce Service Cloud

Sonus Networks was facing a dramatic shift in its industry and business: Its solutions for real-time communications were shrinking in physical size and increasing in innovation, making them attractive to an entirely new and exponentially larger set of customers. This leading provider of SIP-based communication equipment was moving beyond its traditional, limited set of large telecom and wireless providers to capture this new opportunity at scale. With the tagline "cloud communications made smarter," Sonus had begun selling to enterprises worldwide via distributors and partners, gaining new types and greater numbers of customers and partners.

This new strategy created both challenges and opportunities to find new ways to work with and support new markets:

1. **Transform the business** – Continue to serve traditional, large customers while also selling indirectly to many more, smaller customers through distributors. In addition, Sonus would need to provide direct support to the entire customer community, at scale.

2. **Become "easy to do business with"** – especially for new distributor partners. If it weren't easy for large distributors to work with Sonus, regardless of product quality they would go and sell something else.

3. **Win the race for market share** – by expanding product offerings through acquisitions - and finding new, more agile ways to go to market faster with them.

4. **Turn a lean IT team into everyone's new best friend** – delivering new solutions fast to achieve cost-efficient scalability while maintaining and increasing already great customer satisfaction.

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According to Sonus CIO Bill Parks, "Our definition of 'customer' has evolved to include external customers, such as partners and distributors, indirect partners and all of their end customers. We needed the capability to understand all of them and to satisfy all of their varied needs."

The Sonus IT team knew that, in the emerging digital workplace, more consumer-like, relevant and immediate use of knowledge and information is the key to transformation. To best engage with this new world of broadly-defined customers and partners, Sonus needed to both glue together and liberate information for all — sales and support agents, partners and distributors, and customers too. With the right knowledge and information would come more scale, more customer engagement and satisfaction, more employee engagement and more overall profitability.

> "Coveo is so much more than search; it is a true business tool."
>
> – **Ed Quinn,** Salesforce Business Analyst, Sonus

Like most companies, Sonus relies on an ecosystem of tools which makes it difficult to impossible for people to find what they need across fragmented and fast-growing information stores (read, not easy to do business with). Millions of documents and records populate the Sonus IT ecosystem, which includes Salesforce Knowledge, Salesforce Service Cloud, Salesforce Community Cloud, Confluence Wikis, SharePoint and other systems. With support analysts "living" in Salesforce Service Cloud, and customers and partners engaging via its Community Cloud-powered Global Support Portal, Sonus needed to easily and quickly deliver the best information for each customer, partner and support analyst, regardless of where it was stored. Sonus needed to reach into all systems, unify the data and liberate it — and yet deliver only the information that matters, directly within those interfaces where people engage, based on each one's personal context.

Intelligent search became crucial to help employees, partners and customers to easily view exactly the information that mattered to them, every time, on the devices and in the systems where they work.

Intelligent Search @Work

The Sonus team chose Coveo for Salesforce — Service and Community Cloud Editions to unify and deliver the best information for every customer interaction, every time. Coveo would help Sonus fluidly engage with their new and existing customers and partners and help the company scale cost effectively without compromising quality or service. After evaluating other tools, the Sonus team felt that Coveo Intelligent Search apps would:

- ▶ easily connect with and unify data sources
- ▶ quickly configure engaging interfaces, right in Salesforce Service and Community Clouds, making the experience seamless and engaging in both applications
- ▶ proactively suggest the best content for each support analyst, customer and partner
- ▶ provide extraordinary contextual relevance
- ▶ include rigorous security around permissions, data sources and cloud hosting

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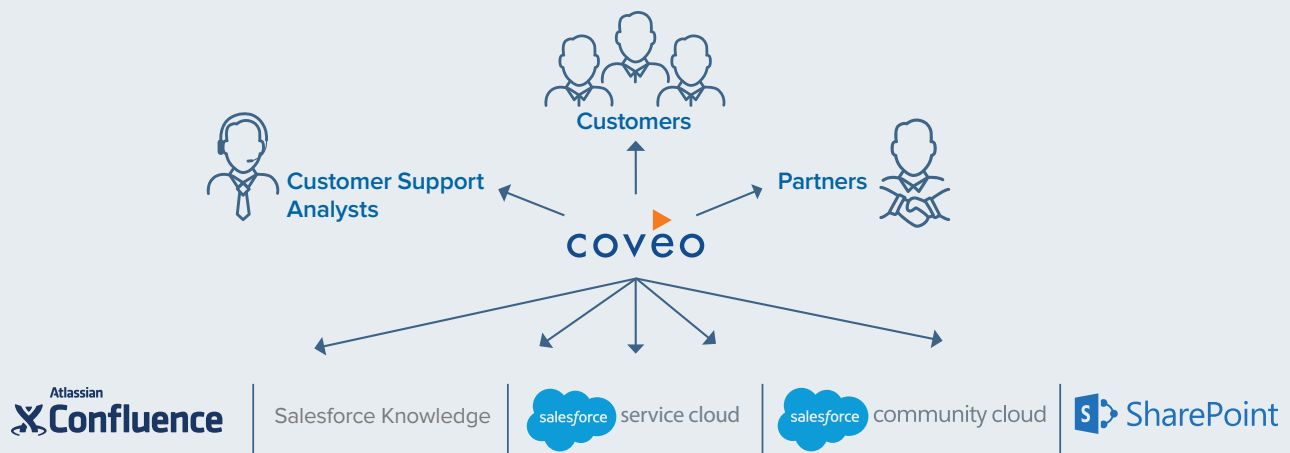Schiphol-Rijk, Netherlands
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Sonus Networks: Business Transformation at Scale

Liberating information also frees locked-up silos, according to Ed Quinn, Salesforce Business Analyst at Sonus at the time. "Before having intelligent search, no glue existed between organizational siloed systems – and hence the organizations themselves," he said. "Coveo is so much more than search; it has become the glue between solutions and silos, and a true business tool."

With Coveo, Salesforce and a whole new mandate, the Sonus IT and Customer Support teams partnered together to capitalize on new opportunities and solve new challenges.

Coveo: The 'Glue' Between Siloed Systems and Solutions

Customers

Customer Support Analysts

Partners

coveo

Atlassian **Confluence** | Salesforce Knowledge | salesforce service cloud | salesforce community cloud | SharePoint

I. Transform the business by engaging the entire customer community, at scale

In order to support its new, smaller customers at scale while still serving large customers with white glove treatment, Sonus deployed Coveo on its Global Support Portal for successful self-service and within Salesforce Service Cloud to enable better employee engagement with knowledge. The need was clear: Distinguished Engineer from the Customer Experience Team (CXT) Andrea Strathmeyer noted that Sonus was facing "...thirty percent growth each month in the number of calls and tickets in our support centers. It seemed to be growing exponentially. We needed to design and implement easy access to knowledge on-demand for employees, customers and partners to answer their questions and help them learn."

Both editions of Coveo for Salesforce rely on a single, unified index, with UIs configured for specific roles, which serve up proactive knowledge based on the context of the individual.

The Sonus Global Support Portal does double duty: Coveo gives partners and customers the relevant product documentation, urgent bulletins and knowledge base articles, while the Coveo Case Deflection Workflow proactively

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recommends solutions to partners and customers as they enter information to open a new support case.

With the best information at their fingertips, support agents became able to "upskill" as they worked. Sonus has found that more highly skilled agents (spread among five global call centers) more quickly solve complex challenges sometimes faced by larger customers. More engaged customers are able to self-serve, and Sonus is on track to realize a 20% improvement in self-service resolution rates within the first six months of activation.

> " Coveo has allowed us to transform our digital knowledge management strategy in one 'digital' fell swoop."
>
> – Bill Parks, CIO, Sonus

"What Coveo has done," said Parks, "has allowed us to transform our digital knowledge management strategy for customer-facing employees, customers and partners in one, 'digital' fell swoop."

2. Become "easy to do business with"

Along with the use of Coveo, Sonus began conducting post-service surveys and expects to see an increase in CSAT scores thanks to the improved search experience. "It's about improving our customers' and partners' technical acumen by empowering them to find information and solve issues themselves," Parks said.

A customized Coveo search capability will be deployed to the Global Support Portal to allow customers and partners to conduct searches against Sonus Warnings, Bulletins, and Alerts (WBAs). When a user logs into the Support Portal, Coveo will know their licensed products and services and proactively provide them with WBAs that are most applicable to them.

3. Win the race for market share

Rapidly changing industries provide great opportunities and great risks. In the case of Sonus, capitalizing on the opportunity of new markets meant quickly integrating three newly acquired companies. Each acquired company had legacy silos of information, making it complex and time consuming to migrate information and bring people up to speed on the new offerings.

Parks noted that traditional integrations and data migrations would have taken nine to 12 months, but its industry was moving too fast to wait. By virtually unifying knowledge with Coveo, Sonus was able to bring people up to speed in real-time, eliminate the need for integrations and data migrations, and go to market first to capture market share. With Coveo virtually unifying distributed knowledge and presenting what matters to each user right in Salesforce, employees from Sonus and the new companies could easily understand and sell new and expanded product offerings and more effectively support new customers.

According to Parks, "Following M&A, the ability to assimilate data from multiple sources is critical to get to market faster. Integrations and moving data would take nearly 12 months but our world moves too fast to wait. Coveo enables us to unify our knowledge virtually."

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4. Turn a lean IT team into everyone's new best friend

In the digital workplace, lean IT both pushes capabilities to the business and relies on those partners to help manage IT investments, while the business seeks to deliver value from IT investments faster than ever. The best partnerships result when both sides have the same goals, as they do at Sonus.

Movement to the cloud, consumer-like user experiences and easy admin tools are part of the digital workplace transformation and importantly, each helps business users become more self-sufficient. For example with Coveo, business users can easily understand user behavior via analytics, and optimize relevance, which would have required IT specialists in the past. They can also easily create new interfaces, and index new cloud content sources with a single click – which would have taken days if not weeks of IT time in the past.

Time to value is the name of the game. According to Ed Quinn, Coveo helps them wow their new partners across the business. He cites how they were able to use Coveo to unify information quickly: "In about 12 business days we went from nothing to having a cloud solution in place with single sign on and guided search across five sources so we could demo to our sales team; they were amazed."

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> – Bill Parks, CIO, Sonus

As word spreads about the new capabilities, more business areas want to partner with IT. At Sonus, while Coveo started out in the support organization, it has quickly been pulled into other organizations. The sales team found that it would help their pre-sales experts to reduce the time to response for RFPs and RFQs, and felt that Coveo would help them to better learn from and reuse knowledge from past bids and proposals, rank the likelihood of closing deals and more.

More change ahead

According to Parks, employee proficiency and customer engagement are important areas of focus for Sonus. Having the knowledge that matters at their fingertips, exactly when they need it, helps employees to "upskill" as they work, and helps customers become more savvy about Sonus and its products. Better, more relevant information, leading to faster and more accurate decision making helps the entire organization to become more agile. More agile companies can go to market faster, in entirely new ways.

"Our industry is still in a period of transition," said Parks, "and having Coveo helps extensively with our ability to move as quickly as possible, and getting there before anyone else."

Sonus seems well positioned to gain the dominant edge in its evolving marketplace.

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