

Strong Customer Support, Affordable Prices and Solutions that Adjust to Industry Changes has positioned Castel Communications, LLC with their Castel Detect™ LIVE Product as a Market Leader in delivering Call Center Solutions to leading Financial Institutions, Collection Agencies and Telemarketing Organization across the Globe

**Business Services  
Call Center Management**

**Castel Communications, LLC**  
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**Rachid Cheaib**  
CEO

**BIO:**

Bringing over 25 years of leadership experience, with strong emphasis in the Information Technology space, Rachid was appointed to Chief Executive Officer in January 2010.

Prior to coming to Castel, Rachid spent 10 years with Sodexo Group, a leader in the catering and facility management industry. Rachid led the successful SAP ERP implementation

for Sodexo USA. With over 300 employees and \$50 million dollars of cost, the project was named the largest in SAP history for this industry. As Sodexo's Group Chief Application Officer, he was responsible for all business and technical applications, including strategy, design, architecture, development, delivery, and support worldwide, managing approximately 500 people in over 60 countries.

Prior to his tenure at Sodexo, Rachid spent 12 years with Ahold USA where he held multiple technology leadership positions, most notably, the Senior Director for Information technology system & network architecture and Planning, with strong concentration on Network and telecommunication topology designs, implementation, and support. Rachid led the architecture and implementation of the largest redundant telecommunication/PBX architecture for Ahold USA subsidiary Tops Markets in the Northeast.

**About Castel Communications, LLC**

Founded as Communicator Asystance Systems in 1982 by four technologists in Beverly, Massachusetts, the company's original goal was to offer business productivity solutions to the IBM midrange market (Systems 36 and 38). These solutions consisted of financial and distribution management packages as well as an early Customer Relationship Management (CRM) product which became the basis for a Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) product by the late 1980's. The company was well known in the

call center industry by the acronym CAS and the product known as Castel. Working closely with IBM and their new AS/400 product line, CAS became IBM's top CTI partner by installing many integrated solutions utilizing IBM's industry leading product known as Callpath. Partnering with IBM, CAS installed thousands of inbound and outbound seats with the NYNEX/Bell Atlantic market in New York and New England and used this great success to leverage many other sales throughout North America, Europe and the Pacific. By the late 1990's, CAS management decided to develop an entirely new hardware and software CTI solution and began internal development of a new product based on a CISCO host programmable switch (Summa/4) as well as an all new software product which would ultimately become Castel Connects. By 2001 it became clear that the company could expand using its own cash flow so CAS went to the capital markets and brought in outside investors for the first time. In 2002, the investment was used to rebrand the company as Castel, and the product as Castel Connects(R). In addition, the investment enabled the company to develop new products and launch a strong marketing campaign which helped Castel emerge as a major player in the call center market. Headquartered in Buffalo, N.Y., Castel Communications, LLC is a market leader in delivering cutting-edge call center solutions for leading financial institutions, collection agencies and telemarketing organizations across the globe. Castel Detect(TM) LIVE and post-call Voice and Speech

Analysis solution is gaining much attention in call center markets where script adherence, compliance and regulatory processes are key to business practices.

**Interview conducted by:  
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor  
CEO CFO Magazine**

**CEO CFO:** What is the focus at Castel?

**Mr. Cheaib:** Castel is really a unified method product solution company. We focus on providing customers with customizable solutions which grow with their business. Our solutions include automated dialing, 100% digital voice recording, agentless campaigning, and most recently voice and speech analysis.

**CEO CFO:** What does Castel know about call center management that others do not? What are you offering that is different and better?

**Mr. Cheaib:** Our automated dialer, Castel Connects®, patented customer interaction management system provides different modes of outbound dialing, inbound call distribution, and full call blending. Castel Connects contains the fastest, most accurate predictive dialer on the market. Unsurpassed in delivering fast call setup, disposition and tear down, Castel Connects' predictive dialer is proven to increase agent productivity by more than 20% compared to other predictive dialing systems. Castel Connects integrates easily with internal systems to provide incredible reporting as well. Our voice and speech analysis solution, Castel Detect™, provides our clients with the ability to monitor and detect emotions, words and phrases, on both the agent and customer sides of the call both during and after the call. Providing emotion, word and phrase analysis to the agent LIVE give the agent an opportunity to diffuse a situation before the call becomes escalated. Additionally, Castel Detect™ reminds the agent to state specific disclosures or closing statements most valuable to the business. Clients share that since implementing Castel Detect™, customer complaints

have declined and customer service levels have increased. Also, compliance and business risk event have declined as well. The solution includes 100% recording, or may be integrated into a business' existing recording solution. The post-call reporting matched with call audio provides management with incredible 'call profiles' allowing users to 'see' and 'hear' exactly what happened on a call.

**CEO CFO:** Can you explain to me or give me an example of how that would work?

**Mr. Cheaib:** Let us say, during this conversation, I am the agent and you are the customer. My goal is to provide customer service to you. You are already angry and stressed and though you may not be shouting, I can already see your emotion levels are nearing unacceptable thresholds set by my business. My job includes addressing your emotional queues, as

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well as the matter which is causing your emotional reactions. Additionally, I am monitoring my own emotions in response to yours. I am also ensuring certain words and phrases important to our business are shared with you during the course of our conversation. For example, at the close of our conversation I may state, “Did I address all of your concerns today?” As soon as Castel Detect™ captures that phrase, I will receive a confirmation that the phrase has been detected. All of this activity is seen through a small interface situated right on my monitor screen.

**CEO CFO:** How do call centers integrate your service without agents feeling threatened?

**Mr. Cheaib:** Like a speedometer telling a driver how fast one is driving, call centers look to Castel Detect™ to ensure their business staying within safe and acceptable ranges while interacting with others. As agents are

trained, they may experience some hesitation in using the tool. Through continued use, they become familiar with its benefits and utilize LIVE monitoring to make their jobs easier. Best in class customer service is a main goal for call centers. Castel Detect™ makes this goal more easily attained and consistent. Again, we have client feedback stating correlation between our solution and increased customer service levels for their business.

**CEO CFO:** How is Castel able to create a program that is able to understand the nuances in speech, such as accents and colloquial terms?

**Mr. Cheaib:** With regard to emotions, Castel Detect™ hasn't any language barriers. Regardless of one's nationality, our solution detects successfully emotions like anger and stress instantaneously. Words and phrases are detected based upon models created by actual examples of words and

phrases for those particular populations. For example, there are great differences in the English accents display within the Northern and Southern regions of the US. Using recorded conversations between agents and

customers, Castel Detect™ may learn the nuances of the way particular phrases are stated. For example the phrase, “Don't call my house” sounds differently when a New Jersey customer says it versus a customer from Kentucky. Nonetheless, as Castel Detect™ has been “trained” to detect the phrases, the phrases will be detected when spoken with those accents. We've seen examples where the agent and the customer are having difficulty understanding one another due to accents. Castel Detect™ is successful in detecting the emotions associated with the conversation, as well as words and phrases set for monitoring.

**CEO CFO:** How do you reach potential customers?

**Mr. Cheaib:** Our customer recommendations are key to our business. New customers looking at employing our solutions typically enjoy a site visit to an existing Castel customer. We

attend industry conferences, customer roundtables and speaking events help us grow our brand and product awareness. We also look at strategic partnerships with other companies. Just within the past eighteen months our global exposure has increased tremendously.

**CEOCFO:** Do you find that in the current economic scenario your clients are looking for an improved understanding of good customer service as a means of revenue more than they have in the past?

**Mr. Cheaib:** Our understanding from our clients is the customer's perception of call center treatment is the primary focus. For example, regardless of whether a customer contacts an agent for assistance, or the agent has reached out to the customer regarding a business matter, customer treatment is the utmost concern. Our clients are selecting LIVE emotion for their agents and monitoring teams to ensure the customer's feelings are

objectively monitored and analyzed while the call is in progress. Providing an agent with the ability to 'see' customer emotion levels provides them with the ability to better manage the call to a successful conclusion. The agent can self-monitor their own performance and modify their behavior to better sell a product or service or address a customer's issue or experience. After all, call center agents are the LIVE impression of a business, providing a business perception to one's customers day after day.

**CEOCFO:** How is business these days?

**Mr. Cheaib:** Business is great! We are pleased with business growth in our existing client base, as well as new clients we've welcomed this year. I believe our ability to think big and work as a close-knit agile group of professionals has contributed to our growth. Our clients appreciate our quick response time to support issues, their customization requests, and de-

livering solutions are equipped to adjust with the changes in their industries, all at an affordable price. For example, within the receivables management industry, compliance and regulation is a primary focus for them, and so then it is for us as well. Our clients recognize us as a partner for their business, not simply a vendor.

**CEOCFO:** What is ahead for Castel?

**Mr. Cheaib:** We remain committed to our clients' needs. We will launch our Castel Compass™ Real-Time Business Intelligence Dashboard providing call centers with the ability to view analytics specific to their business. Castel Detect™ will present opportunities for a business to 'batch' analyze their recorded calls. We will also launch an updated version of our Castel Connects® Dialer. Again, the updates are directly related to clients' requests for innovative, customizable solutions that grow with their business.



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