

# ICMI 2019 Authority



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Lou Mandic, President and CEO is one of the founders of the 21-year old cloud-based quality recording/PCI compliance specialist, which started out as a contact center consulting company. “We used to tell people we’ll build it if you need it or fix it if it’s broken,” recalls Mandic. “That applied to anything from people-related problems to policies and procedures, technology---which was my background—site location and much more.”

After a 17-year career at Citicorp, Mandic moved into the contact center space with a company called Precision Response, a pioneer in the service bureau field. He later put his expertise to work in building tools in areas such as scripting and data storage. Taking on a life of their own, the company began to set aside a portion of its consulting revenues for R&D for tools. The tools initially made their consulting services more attractive and as they got better and better, the company simply gave the software they developed to their clients as part of the service.

While listening to a telephony vendor deliver a class to a mutual consulting client, Lou Mandic stated that he realized, while they did a great job delivering the next call to the best agent, there was still a gap. “Our software was oriented toward making agents more productive at the desktop and I immediately saw the correlation. We began to integrate our software to that telephony platform and incorporated features such as permanent storage of audio files and creating QA forms, for example. We then decided to move our focus away from consulting and more into the SaaS area and have never looked back.”

The consultancy roots did have a carryover effect. “Some of the best features of our software did come from listening to what customers had to say,” noted Mandic. “We have a patent on PCI redaction, but it morphed into the capability to redact any field necessary. For example, in HIPAA environment, we can remove names, addresses and other personal information. It’s not an audio listen for numbers and strip them out scenario, it simply notes what is in a redact field. Whether a client is using audio only or using our Quality Management module which also includes video, we will slice out that segment of the conversation, whether it’s credit card or social security numbers. When it’s presented to a supervisor or QA person, it is clean and in a pristine state.”

Mandic believes that one key differentiative feature is that Authority owns its own code and has developed all their own software using its own tools. It also deploys rapidly. “We call it Same Day QA,” he said. “We’re in the software business but what we created in Designer is a tool that allows a business to easily build database tables, build the fields and change their characteristics and use drag-and-drop to piece together different elements of forms. We also have templated QA forms available right out of the box. What we have created in Designer allows us to develop approximately 8x faster than from scratch.”

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The company is developing their own WFM system and have close to all the data and details they need to do forecasting stored for their long-term clients. It will be ready to deploy in three weeks or less, with start-up costs to the user a fraction of what traditional WFM solutions charge. "It launches quickly and with very little training needed," he said. "Unlike many solutions, there will be no need to leave the platform, manipulate the data in Excel and then go back in. We want our users to be able to do everything they need to do with a couple of clicks." He provided additional details in answers to our questions.

*How does your Quality Manager solution enable businesses to improve their decision making and simplify monitoring agent performance?*

Authority QRM is a full-featured platform that includes configurable QA Forms tailored to any client's specific needs. It also features patented PCI redaction technology, integrated video screen capture and dashboard reporting on call traffic at the macro level and QA results as scored against agent behavior. The dashboards allow for immediate interrogation of massive amounts of data to isolate patterns that determine if there is a common issue (many agents with a common element that has a low score) or an agent specific problem that needs to be addressed (one item that an individual agent consistently gets a low score on). Decision making is enhanced further by the ability to flag QA questions as requiring training to eliminate knowledge gaps or coaching on a specific area that needs to be addressed. When these flags are set a queue is created where they can be reviewed for further action.

We have simplified the monitoring process by making the system highly intuitive and easy to use. Finding records via our configurable search criteria is a simple to learn process and its incredibly efficient on inquiries against the SQL Server database. Audio files are stitched together so a single click will play a full audio file rather than each segment requiring access one at a time. Metadata and audio files are delivered real time to Authority, making them immediately accessible to the QA staff. Authority's interface to the IBM Watson engine allows users to leverage speech to text technology in the selection of recordings that a human being will monitor. Calls can be scored for basic elements in advance using our automated process, and those with lower scores can be pulled for review by an individual.

*Why is it important for businesses to have the capability to redact protected audio that includes sensitive information before storing it in recordings?*

Many of our customers are subject to regulations such as HIPAA and PCI. For those customers, redacting protected audio isn't just important, it is critical for purposes of regulatory compliance. A data breach is costly not just because of the fines to which you may be subjected, but also because of the loss of trust in the relationship. We are often approached by people that are hypersensitive to what a security breach would do to their organization and are looking to take the extra steps needed to safeguard their customer's data. We consider it mission-critical to protect sensitive audio and are now including it with all of our QRM deployments at no additional cost.

*What is the value of having a single Relationship Record that creates a consistent experience for agents?*

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It is incredibly valuable to have a mass amount of data on a customer, but it is exponentially more impactful to have all of that data inside a comprehensive, easy to use, interface. The presence of a single Relationship Record is valuable across the board in an enterprise, beyond the native benefit on the call center agent desktop. From that same agent desktop perspective, less can often be more at the agent station.

Delivering a streamlined view of all the interactions with a customer in an effective manner provides the agent with numerous insights available on that particular customer. Do they call often? Are their calls always dispositioned in a similar way? Is there a ranking or lifetime value of this client that would impact the offers available to them?

*What verticals do you serve and can you cite specific examples of how your solutions benefit them?*

Authority's products and services cater to contact centers across all verticals, and I would venture to say that we have crossed virtually every industry by now. That said, while we are agnostic to verticals, the flexibility of our rapid development tools and methodology has allowed us to create unique vertical applications for our clients. A great example is our fundraising CRM application, which was created under the guidance of a subject matter expert in the field of fundraising and is now used across all of our fundraising customers. The application streamlines donor data, passes records to the dialer for specific fundraising campaigns, handles the pledge inside our database via a branched logic script, stores the audio file for future reference and to provide proof that the pledges were made of free will. Tying this back to the Relationship Record concept – the branched logic script has the history of all other pledges made by any specific donor at the agents' fingertips.