Empowering Faster Collections Through A Customer-Focused Open Receivables Management Environment

By: Martin Germanis
CEO, CR Software

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Introduction

Let's face it: In today's environment, collection agencies or in-house accounts receivables organizations (primary credit issuers) can no longer remain satisfied with the status quo. Today's customers demand faster results, faster reporting, and better return on investment. Moreover, internally, you must protect your profit margins by reducing costs as you increase productivity and achieve higher workforce retention rates.

Fact: When collections systems were originally designed, the big picture was primarily focused on your internal IT operations. Customers only cared about the bottom line. Another fact: Accounting and technology have merged into a sophisticated management practice that is driving your customer's competitive business advantage. They no longer accept the notion that you might be doing a great job for them. They want to see it, in real-time, on their terms, and even be able to plug in new compliance application in a single click of the mouse, from the office to a remote location. This requirement to become customer-focused is driving an entire new approach to what an information technology solution should do for your agency. Simply, to stay competitive and survive, the optimal system has to be designed from the ground up to respond to the customer first and foremost.

The collections arms of organizations or agencies of the future will be required to not only boost recovery rates and help to strengthen cash flow, but also to:

- work within an optimized process that best services client needs while reducing overall costs;

- provide visibility and access to statistical data and status of accounts 24x7, 365 days of the year;

- provide innovative, customized services on the fly;

- help reduce, manage and mitigate risks associated with regulatory compliance and reduce legal costs;

- ensure an unprecedented level of security of account data.

Several factors contribute to evolving customer expectations including: the need to convert account receivables into bank deposits faster than ever before in order to offset the rising costs of doing business; the necessity to provide accurate financial forecasts; the imperative to safeguard account information from Internet fraud and theft (and other security breaches); changing market forces; and new regulations.

These are central preoccupations of C-level stakeholders today. When they think about the true value of collections and accounts receivables arms, the expectation is for nothing short of full accountability in providing the enterprise-valid answers and sound business processes. Receivables are recognized as amongst the most valuable assets of an organization, and efficient management of receivables and the ability to collect are becoming an increasingly important business function.

Today's Challenge

Proprietary Systems Work But Are Not Customer-Focused

New demands on today's enterprises mean new requirements for collections agencies and accounts receivables departments to provide a higher level of **efficiency**, **adaptability** and **control**. To survive, these organizations must now become more customer-centric and maneuver with great agility to respond to evolving needs. The problem: There is frequently a serious gap between today's business requirements in collections and customer relationship management and the technology platforms and processes relied upon to deliver the goods.

The large majority of organizations have built their entire receivables operations around the types of legacy collections technologies that are most commonly used by agencies and in-house departments today. The most widely-used applications have been successful at delivering features and functionality that help to increase the efficiency of the call center. The very nature of these older applications, however, means that integration, changes in processes, or customization places users at the mercy of costly, time-consuming technical support and complicated add-ons that threaten the stability of the entire system and the security of your data.

Under this scenario, full optimization of business processes, the ability to leverage investment in new technologies, and the flexibility to scale can be severely limited by the accounts receivable system itself. In addition, inability to integrate with other systems, departments, and customers throughout the enterprise impairs management visibility and slows down collaboration, locking the information needed to increase the bottom line into disparate silos.

Older collections technologies are also limited in scope and often lack the customer relationship management component and high security capability now essential in meeting customers' requirements.

In aggregate, these challenges create a chaotic, disjointed collection environment that impacts an agency's ability to provide the innovative servicing needed to attract and retain new customers. Similarly, an in-house collection environment that is technologically limited can negatively impact not only cash flow, but also the growth of the enterprise. The collection entity often becomes a prisoner of their software vendor due to the proprietary nature of their software platform.

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Today's **Internally - Facing Receivables Environment – Slow | Rigid | Closed**

Little Collaboration Between:

Executives

Operations
Finance Accounting

Disparate Facilities

CLOSED

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS,
DEPARTMENTS, FACILITIES

CLIENTS

LEGACY SYSTEM

Your Agency Operations might
do the job, but they are not
Customer Focused.

Rigid & Slower Reporting

Reports Require Slower Manual Edits
Rigid System Reports

SLOW

OTHER BUSINESS
APPS & TECHNOLOGY

Costly & Harder to Integrate

New Technology
Customized Applications

RIGID

Lack of Diversification

Suppliers
Technology Resources
Developers

RIGID

THIRD
PARTY
SUPPLIERS

= **TIME LOSS**

$$$ = **PROFIT LOSS**

Tomorrow's Solution

To overcome these challenges, now and in the future, the most forward-thinking enterprises will begin to transition from their current collection systems, to an open receivables management environment that enables the flexibility, adaptability, and control needed to keep pace with the evolving nature of the collections industry.

The open receivables environment (ORE) is an open standards-based framework that serves as the core of collections activity, maximizing interoperability and providing the ability to adapt business rules and processes associated with managing receivables – faster and cheaper than ever before. Most importantly, an ORE is a smart investment for the enterprise because it delivers unprecedented control, allowing customers to get their hands on their company's most valuable assets: receivables transformed into cash flow.
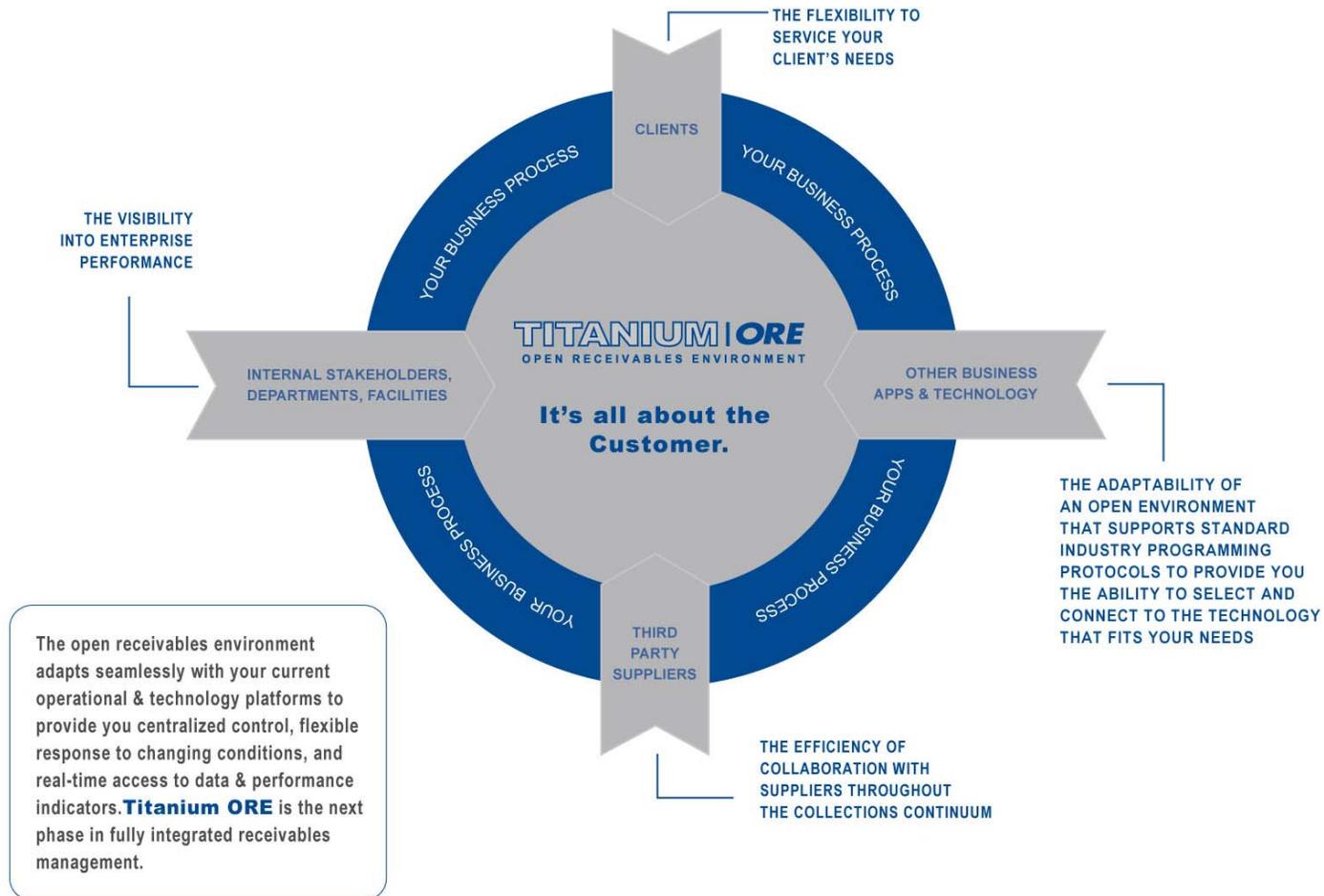
A receivables management platform built on open standards drives innovation and promotes customer loyalty by minimizing integration challenges and by allowing rich information sharing, smooth workflow, new efficiencies, high productivity, better uptime, and improved security.

Envision an industry-leading receivables management system built on this type of open framework that empowers your organization with cutting edge contact management capabilities AND the ability to customize, collaborate, and control the receivables management process. Titanium ORE from CR Software, is the first, most complete platform to allow the true end-to-end integration required to achieve agility within the collections operation.

This technology represents the next breed of receivables management platforms and is engineered, from the ground up, on open standards that maximize interoperability.

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The Customer - Focused Receivables Management Environment — Faster | Flexible | Open

THE FLEXIBILITY TO SERVICE YOUR CLIENT'S NEEDS

CLIENTS

YOUR BUSINESS PROCESS

YOUR BUSINESS PROCESS

THE VISIBILITY INTO ENTERPRISE PERFORMANCE

INTERNAL STAKEHOLDERS, DEPARTMENTS, FACILITIES

TITANIUM | ORE
OPEN RECEIVABLES ENVIRONMENT

It's all about the Customer.

OTHER BUSINESS APPS & TECHNOLOGY

YOUR BUSINESS PROCESS

YOUR BUSINESS PROCESS

THE ADAPTABILITY OF AN OPEN ENVIRONMENT THAT SUPPORTS STANDARD INDUSTRY PROGRAMMING PROTOCOLS TO PROVIDE YOU THE ABILITY TO SELECT AND CONNECT TO THE TECHNOLOGY THAT FITS YOUR NEEDS

THIRD PARTY SUPPLIERS

The open receivables environment adapts seamlessly with your current operational & technology platforms to provide you centralized control, flexible response to changing conditions, and real-time access to data & performance indicators. **Titanium ORE** is the next phase in fully integrated receivables management.

THE EFFICIENCY OF COLLABORATION WITH SUPPLIERS THROUGHOUT THE COLLECTIONS CONTINUUM

Titanium ORE raises the bar by shifting the old collections environment to the new customer relationship management focus of today. With an architecture that encompasses operational, analytical, and collaborative functionality, Titanium ORE provides the true end-to-end solution for managing client and debtor relationships. It generates consistent treatment of all the customers' accounts and tracks every step of the collection process lifecycle, thereby ensuring effective management and rapid collection. These advantages help customers increase their cash flow and reduce the cost of doing business.

Full interoperability enables the enterprise to integrate collections tools, applications, business processes, partners, and clients in a cohesive environment allowing high productivity and effective collaboration thanks to seamless sharing of information according to well-defined business rules and privileges.

The ability of the collections agency of the future to compete is largely based on access to business intelligence. With Titanium ORE, decision-making is enhanced via real-time performance indicators, visible across the enterprise, and robust reporting capabilities. These indicators deliver the intelligence that managers and collectors need to lower defaults, boost recoveries, reduce the risk of lawsuits, and respond quickly to market changes and new regulations.

The Titanium ORE platform is the only collections system that is built, from the inside out, to provide the access, ease of use, and integration required for faster, more streamlined results. The cutting-edge graphical user interface is easy to use, allowing organizations to minimize training and improve collector retention. This truly open system allows organizations to transfer knowledge faster, save time and money on training, and service customers with consistency.

Titanium ORE is a significant first step toward increasing return on investment (ROI) by helping agencies reduce the complexity, time, and costs associated with integrations while allowing organizations to eliminate silos and leverage investments in other new technologies. In addition, Titanium ORE allows an agency to take charge of its own vendor selections. The open receivables environment provides the freedom to switch vendors at will, or run champion/challenger scenarios in order to choose the lowest priced or best service vendor – not the ones that are mandated by the collections software partner.

Titanium ORE satisfies customers in another way: It allows the enterprise to create new value around its receivables data and to better serve customers with new and innovative offerings that can enhance their competitive edge. What makes this possible is the distributed Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) of Titanium ORE and its open standards, allowing for integrated data and applications.

Conclusion

Titanium ORE is a feature-rich Open Receivables Management Environment. Below is a summary of key features that help meet the needs of the enterprise and its customers:

Robust customer relationship management

Titanium ORE provides superior customer relationship management by offering rich information sharing for clients and their customers. The Open Receivables Environment is capable of enabling unprecedented data exchange capabilities that allows agencies to offer their clients the ability to easily transfer files, monitor the status of accounts, and generate customized reports. It could also serve as a dynamic platform for self-service by allowing the debtor to check account status and make online payments without agent interaction.

Dramatically improved uptime, productivity, and security

Titanium ORE supports high availability and increased security by partitioning and clustering data at various tiers of the architecture including web, application, and database servers. This environment boosts productivity by supplying real-time information while maximizing record maintenance, data integrity, and information assurance. In addition role-based, user-defined access control helps to safeguard valuable information, reduce the risk of fraud and theft of account information, and provide managers with optimal flexibility and integrity. With these combined features, the enterprise can lower its costs, streamline business processes, maximize productivity, and enhance security.
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Reliable reports that drive the enterprise

Titanium ORE provides the enterprise with the accurate, real-time business intelligence that can drive its business success. A flexible dashboard feature presents specific statistics in a graphical, easy-to-analyze format for any role, client, portfolio, or department in the organization. In addition, Titanium ORE provides data warehousing allowing intense data mining, analysis, and reporting while never impacting the day-to-day collections operations. These features allow the enterprise to optimize its business model to enhance its receivables management operations and streamline its processes in order to maximize profits and benefits for customers.

Summary

In life and in business, the status quo amounts to a bad idea: Compared to an ORE, sticking to obsolete collection technology handcuffs your collection capabilities and flexibility putting an agency at a competitive disadvantage. The switch to the leading edge Titanium ORE is a smart move, empowering an organization to boost its agility in order to better serve customers and adapt to changes.