

Definity-G(x) Demystified:
By Walt Medak

Q: We have been proposed an attractive maintenance contract from an independent interconnect company for our Definity G3V9, Intuity R5, CAS and CMS. The one thing it seems this non-OEM company can't provide are the QPPCN "Fixes" in the case of bugs in the software. If we were to contract with this independent interconnect company, is there any way we can obtain those QPPCN's in the secondary market?

A: The short answer to your question is no, there is no place I'm aware of that you can obtain a QPPCN "Patch" in the secondary market, although I'm sure that you still could from the OEM, but surely at some fee. Those "Bug-Fixes" are the temporary "Software Patches" that the OEM can program into an existing system without having to replace the Processor circuit pack that has the software resident in flash-RAM. When a QPPCN is released, it's usually in concert with the release of the corrected "Bug-Fixes" in the new Processor software load. All that we have found that's necessary to get that correction is to purchase a new Processor circuit pack with the new release of software programmed on it. In most cases, this will lag the QPPCN no more than a quarter or two, and I've not had an experience that this was a problem for any of our clients. In fact, I've never had an experience where either the client, or I, knew the advantage if any to the QPPCN for their particular system, so for the most part, the QPPCN concern is a slight if any problem for *most* Definity users. In some bleeding-edge, high capacity and custom Call-Center applications, there may be some concern for the ability to obtain QPPCN's as soon as they are released, but for the greater part of the Definity community, there's probably no cause for worry. Let me turn the table here, and ask a question of you..... have you ever been told that a feature you are trying to use is suffering from a bug that a soon-to-be-released QPPCN will repair? If your answer is yes, then you may have cause for concern. If the answer is no, you probably don't. QPPCN's serve two purposes as I see it. One is to repair genuine problems in the software, usually pertinent to a small segment of end-users. The other is to serve the marketing end of the OEM to raise the possibility of a concern in order to make one think twice about enlisting other than OEM support for their system. If there are other purposes, I would like to hear about them. If there are not, answer yourself honestly as to which of these brings your question to me.

Q: We are trying to give part-time backup to certain agents in our call-center. We are using vectoring with EAS. Is there any way to utilize some agents as "Secondary" during some portions of the day without having to change their assignments in the "Change Agent" screen, i.e., entering a secondary skill when needed and removing it when not?

A: If I were to take a guess, I would bet your call-center is either comprised of few agents, or many skills each with few agents. These types of call-centers are the most difficult to program properly with the limited human resources many small call-centers are faced with. Convention states that if you want a call to go to a Primary agent if available before a Secondary agent (the case in most call-center applications) you program the agent(s) just that way; Primary in one and Secondary in the other. In your case, you want to differ that arrangement at differing times of the day if I read your question right. To do that, digress from the convention of Primary and Secondary agents, and make those agents Primary members of different skills. Then write your vector to queue to both skills (the actual Primary one first) during the time of day you want both to cover said calls, and only to the Primary one during those times of the day you need only them. This is accomplished using the "goto step "x" if time-of-day.....", using different step numbers and programming each for either queuing to one or both skills as you need. Depending on your experience with vectors, this can be either confusing or simple. Most programmers who have little time writing vectors mistakenly think they are complex animals that require lots of training before an attempt is made, but most who are somehow forced into using them find they are quite simply a top-down list of common-sense commands; a basic script that becomes second nature due to the few commands that are needed for most vectors. Please contact me if I haven't made my example clear enough.

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