



# HigherGround®

## COMPANY BACKGROUNDER

### Overview

HigherGround, Inc.® is a global player and software solution developer in the market for call recording and monitoring, agent evaluation, call center training, analytics and reporting. Founded in 1973, the HigherGround mission is to deliver voice and data collection and analytics tools with the highest level of service to enable our customers to maximize performance and profitability.

HigherGround provides customers with the tools to maintain service quality in their contact centers by delivering timely, accurate information for analytics and decision support to improve operations, performance and ultimately increase profitability. HigherGround's call recording, quality assurance, analysis and reporting tools empower clients with the knowledge and insight needed to monitor and verify phone and data transactions, improve agent performance, optimize resources and provide a comprehensive view of contact center performance. These proven solutions provide instant access to imperative business intelligence for sound decision making and bottom-line control for compliance monitoring, risk management and improved performance. With the unique HigherGround-exclusive access, the traditional business intelligence void is filled by integrating contact center business intelligence to provide insights that enable managers to make decisions and fine-tune business strategies that will gain competitive advantage and improve business operations and profitability.

Today, after a successful transition from consultant to software and turnkey hardware provider, HigherGround works with its customers to improve human resource utilization, reduce workload, increase customer service efficiency, decrease the costs associated with telecommunications systems and most importantly, add sustained value to the entire process of customer relationship management.

With the most advanced multidimensional analysis and reporting system and widest database integration capability in the market today, the company's data collection, reporting and recording solutions provide a means for organizations to better manage the customer contact process through superior resource utilization. To attain the ultimate goal, excellence in customer service, HigherGround focuses on the business basics of leveraging current contact center resources and intellectual capital to maximize profitability of the enterprise. As a seamlessly integrated value-add to CRM, HigherGround's tools to access business intelligence put the right information in the hands of the right people at the right time in the right format to enable better analysis and knowledgeable, informed decision making. This is the cornerstone of the company's success and is the differentiating factor between a contact center and a profit center.

HigherGround's seasoned management team brings a breadth of experience in business intelligence, telecommunications, consulting, technology and service to a market that continues to look for new ways of achieving economies of scale while providing the utmost in customer care and service to its constituents.

Today, the company's deep client roster boasts well-known and established entities in a variety of industries and markets: American Red Cross, AOL Time Warner, Australian Administration Services, Bank of India, Brinks Home Security, Burlington Northern Santa Fe Railway, California State University, Conoco-Phillips, EXXON, J. Paul Getty Trust, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, Los Angeles Port Pilot, Marine Exchange of Los Angeles, New South Wales Ambulance, Miller Brewing Company, Parkland Hospital, TEAC, Union Pacific Rail Road, United States Air Force, Navy Exchange, University of Southern California, UNOCAL, Virgin Mobile, and various municipalities and cities throughout North America.

HigherGround offers its products and service agreements directly, and through a well-established and growing network of business partners and distributors throughout the United States, Canada and Australasia.



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## Strategic Focus

In assessing the market and consulting with its loyal, established client base, HigherGround has identified a number of critical requirement areas which no other single, competitive solution can provide.

- **Data Collection**

HigherGround is a data collection and reporting solution provider that focuses on the contact center space and various vertical markets. The solutions integrate data from multiple sources for better decision making. Some of these sources include call recordings, screen captures, agent evaluations, revenue, agent statistics, PBX and ACD data, and enterprise database information. All applications integrate seamlessly. The HigherGround software is very simple to implement and allows users to set up and run reports, or schedule them to be run in the desired format – graphical charts, tabular format, compressed data, executive summary and more – on the information that is most important to their business. HigherGround solutions also integrate information from multiple locations and can replicate data to a centralized site. Security permissions may be set up by the user administrator to limit access to appropriate individuals.

- **Powerful Data Integration and Reporting**

At the heart of HigherGround's business intelligence solution is Report Commander Pro™, a remarkably simple to use, flexible reporting tool that allows instant access to the recordings and telestatistics clients are looking for. HigherGround's Report Commander Pro and Database Manager integrate data from multiple sources within the enterprise. Virtually any data source that has to do with customers, accounts, phone calls, stations or agents can be automatically integrated into the HigherGround system. PBX and ACD data integrations automatically tie call data and agent data to recordings, enhancing the information that is available about each recorded call. Report Commander Pro enables contact center managers to establish a relationship between these various data sources and can report on all types of performance data: agent performance statistics, peripheral performance data and performance observations, and correlate these types of data against each other. Reports can be emailed, printed and/or sent to a Web site. They can also be scheduled to automatically notify the user by page or email. Clients can search and find recordings and related data based on a phone number, account number, company name, vertical market, attachments to calls or whatever field they choose.

- **Measurement of Key Performance Indicators**

The HigherGround system can measure the most common organization level Key Performance Indicators (KPI's). These include *Call Quality and Customer Satisfaction* which can be easily tracked using the HigherGround Agent Evaluator and Screen Capture, *Service Level and Average Speed of Answer* which are identified through the integrated PBX and ACD data via Report Commander Pro, and *First-Call Resolution* through HigherGround's Praetorian with call flagging and phone number matching capabilities.

- **Tools to Leverage the Customer Experience**

HigherGround is developing tools to leverage the customer experience by integrating the various types of customer-centric data needed to realize corporate objectives and execute corporate strategy that ultimately leads to growth and business longevity. The information that can be accessed and analyzed not only serves as a source of feedback to help guide KPI development in the contact center, but also can be used throughout the organization to improve operations and ultimately increase profitability. Announcements about these exciting new tools will be made in the near future.

- **Access to Business Intelligence**

HigherGround is the only company that provides a comprehensive business intelligence tool for complete contact center management—a fully integrated system that operates with any enterprise database system. Business intelligence capabilities capture and make available all information in one screen for easy access, analysis and decision making.



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- **Intuitive, Fast and Feature-Rich Technology**

With rapid search capabilities and nearly instant access to call recordings and related data—virtually in seconds, HigherGround's products are so intuitive and easy to learn that a new user can be up and running in minutes. All HigherGround programs integrate seamlessly so components can be added at any time.

- **Superior Service**

Known for outstanding service, HigherGround offers a unique alarm monitoring service that provides remote diagnostics for almost every system area and immediately sends an alarm if a system problem occurs. The industry-unique I'm Alive™ notification service dials in nightly to say the system is up and running. If that call is not received, HigherGround immediately contacts the client's dedicated onsite manager or dispatches a technician to solve the issue.

## The HigherGround Product Family

**HigherGround Fusion Series 7™** is a complete family of data collection and reporting tools coupled with call recording and quality assurance solutions for call centers in all industries including the public safety marketplace. These tools can be used to monitor and verify phone and data transactions, improve agent performance, optimize telecom resources and provide a comprehensive view of contact center performance.

The Fusion Series 7 product line was designed with a common-sense approach. Each system is tailored to the client's particular needs. Solutions typically start with the Praetorian Voice Recorder™; then clients can add components to increase functionality and capability and get a more comprehensive view of their contact center performance. Whether recording full time for compliance or risk management, or recording randomly for quality monitoring, Praetorian provides tailored solutions that are fast and easy-to-use, simplify complicated tasks, satisfy the strictest reliability standards and deliver great value for the dollar.

**Praetorian Voice Recorder™** is a turn-key system for scheduled, on-demand and full-time recording that digitally records and stores every agent-customer interaction. Praetorian lets users digitally record and store every agent/customer interaction to redundant hard drives; instantly find, access and replay any call recording directly from the desktop; route call recordings via email and archive recordings to durable, space-saving, external hard drives for desktop access to unlimited hours of call recordings. Praetorian provides complete system capability for instant call retrieval, easy reporting, automatic archiving, instant messaging and a host of other security and single-point control features. Praetorian includes the **Report Commander™** for standard reporting, **Voice Archiver** for unlimited storage, **Report Archiver** for storage of critical data, **Control Tower** for centralized management, **Instant Retrieval** for immediate access, **Real-Time Monitor** for monitoring calls as they happen, **Digital Signature** for authenticity verification and **Instant Messaging** for real-time training and agent coaching.

**Mentor QA Suite™** enables contact center managers to easily evaluate agent performance, identify low-skill areas and set benchmarks for agent productivity. Clients will increase customer satisfaction by monitoring and evaluating agents to identify training and coaching needs, provide best-practice procedures and examples for agents to help them learn to handle calls more effectively and efficiently. Mentor Quality Assurance includes the **Agent Evaluator** which offers real-time or playback evaluation of calls, detailed scoring and exception reports, extensive sorting and filtering and instant email feedback. **Screen Capture** records workstation screen actions and replays them in synch with voice recordings. Screen Capture tracks screen titles and controls screens remotely.

**Telecom BI Suite™** is a set of flexible and easy-to-use contact center analysis and reporting tools that deliver timely, accurate information for analytics and decision support to improve operation, performance and ultimately increase profitability. The core of the Telecom BI Suite is the **Report Commander Pro™** which integrates data collected from the PBX or ACD systems as well as CTI and enterprise databases to account numbers, companies and contacts in customer enterprise databases, and to call recordings, screen captures and attachments to calls; all in a single intuitive interface to analyze data, secure intelligence and generate reports on virtually any criteria. Other Telecom BI components include **Usage and Cost Accounting** that reports on telestatistics, **Enterprise Network Licensing** that supports multiple users, **Multi-Site Integration** that centrally generates reports from separate sites, **Centralized Collection/Reporting** that combines data for integrated reports and **Voice/Data Replication** for redundancy and disaster recovery.



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**HigherGround Capture-911™** is a cost effective, easy-to-use voice logging and radio transmission recording software solution for proven liability protection and compliance, which has been tailored to meet the specific needs of public safety communication centers. With Capture-911, users' access, replay and email recordings from the desktop in just a few mouse clicks. Capture-911 offers over a dozen search options for fast, easy and accurate retrieval of recordings. Sort and filter on user-defined data or ANI/ALI fields. Monitor recordings in real time. Capture-911 offers online storage for instant desktop access to unlimited hours of recordings, and durable, economical space-saving removable hard drives for easy-to-access archived data. Users can even differentiate calls by tagging call types with customized public safety attachments for analysis and fast, easy reporting.

## HigherGround Integrated Partner Solutions

In 2004 HigherGround has introduced two (2) new offerings to the North American marketplace. The leading edge capabilities of these solutions make them ideal choices for any contact center with a need for on-line agent evaluation and training.

**Agent-e™ by TalkTactics™** is a leading-edge, web-based agent coaching and evaluation tool. Developed by HigherGround partner TalkTactics, a premier worldwide contact center training provider, Agent-e gives managers a cost-effective, convenient way to drastically improve contact center operation by assuring that agents reach and maintain peak performance. Not only does Agent-e evaluate and report on voice communications, it also allows users to grade a complete range of staff competencies such as web chat, email and written correspondence.

**TalkTactics Training Engine™** is a customizable classroom training solution for contact center agents offering more than 50 separate skill-set modules that can be mixed and matched to cover what is important to the specific contact center. Exclusive evaluation options allow the user to grade on virtually any criteria. Classes are context sensitive and provide agents with techniques, not scripts, which enable them to quickly recognize the potential of every call and act accordingly. Agents are then able to use their own judgment during customer interactions to dramatically improve their first-call resolution rate. This in-house training tool saves as much as 75% of total training time over traditional seminar-type education.

## Client Support and Professional Services

The Fusion Series 7 product family is backed by the ultimate **HigherGround Client Support and Professional Services** and the industry exclusive **I'm Alive™** notification service. I'm Alive, included with every system, ensures reliability by calling the Fusion Series 7 server nightly to say "I'm alive." If the call is not received, HigherGround technicians respond and, in most cases, fix the problem before the user knows it occurred. Proactive alarm monitoring monitors over 250 hardware and software items, identifies hard-to-detect, suspicious activities or system outages and alerts on-site personnel or HigherGround's own certified technicians. **HigherGround University training courses** are available with purchase. All HigherGround products are designed with Windows®-based functionality, an intuitive GUI, ODBC compliance, a thin-client platform and open architecture for scalability to meet the needs of any business or organization.

## Partnerships and Alliances

The company's goal is to provide a complete management solution that enables clients to leverage their current telecom resources and access the business intelligence information hidden in their contact center in order to help them make informed business decisions and turn their contact centers into vital, profitable organizations. To achieve its goal of providing sustained and measurable value to its clients, the company has established technology and marketing partnerships with the following product and service providers: Technology Partners - Advantech, Ai-Logix, Inc., Brooktrout Technology, Concerto (Melita), Left Bank, Microsoft Software Developers, Nortel Networks Developers, Rising Sun Technologies, Success Sciences and TalkTactics. Marketing Partners - Advanced Communications Solutions (ACS), Amcom, CML Technologies, Commercial Electronic Corporation, DSS Corporation, Electronic Business Systems, Executive Systems, Graybill Electronics, MacTek Systems, Teltronics, Inc., Unique Communications and WS Lang & Associates. Separately and together with its partners, HigherGround provides the infrastructure needed to ensure smooth and cost-efficient contact center operations. HigherGround also works closely with clients to incorporate their requests and ideas into its product offering. This not only encourages a client's future growth and satisfaction, but ensures HigherGround's continued success.



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## Key Management

### **Terry Ryan**

Chief Executive Officer and President

As CEO and President, Terry Ryan crafts and executes the company's vision and business plan, focusing on organizational and business development activities. Prior to becoming CEO and President, Ryan served as the company's Chief Operating Officer. Before joining HigherGround in 1998, he was the sales manager for Hydraulics International. Ryan's extensive computer technology background and experience also includes service in the USAF as a Mechanical Support Engineer for the C-17 program, Test Manager for Joint Service missile development and Project Engineer for classified computer programs.

### **James M. Ballard**

Vice President, Sales

With more than 20 years of sales and management experience in the telecommunications industry, Ballard leverages his extensive knowledge to advance HigherGround's Partnership Program in North America. Based in Ohio, he is leading HigherGround's continued market expansion and broadening our sales team and sales channels.

Most recently Ballard was the director of sales for Startel Corporation and focused on the healthcare and university markets. Beginning in 1994, Ballard played an instrumental role in establishing and nurturing partner programs with major telecommunications technology providers for IntegraTRAK, Inc. of Seattle, WA. During his tenure there, Ballard served as both strategic alliance manager and director of sales. His sales career began with Dictaphone Corp., selling dictation systems to the healthcare and legal markets. As the regional sales manager for its special markets division, he sold voice recording systems to buyers in the public safety market as well as the Chicago financial district. Ballard also sold call accounting systems for Infortext Systems Inc. of Schaumburg, IL.

### **Ric Cahak**

Vice President, Client Support and Research & Development

Ric Cahak leads HigherGround's service and support operations and oversees the development of new products and technological advancements. His main responsibility is to manage the interaction between the company and its customers as it pertains to actual service and feedback that will lead to new product improvements. Before joining HigherGround, Cahak spent 12 years with AT&T as both Manager of Operator Services and as Sales Manager and eight years with the William Morris Agency as the company's Telecommunications Director.

### **Jake White**

Director, Marketing

Jake White joins HigherGround with more than 15 years of diverse marketing and branding experience. As marketing director for CoPort Technologies, White planned and executed the launch of three online products and served as the company's spokesperson. White managed marketing campaigns, website development and investor communications for clients such as Disney, Avon Breast Walk, Liberty Media, Boeing Financial and Dick Clark Productions as a national account manager for Russell Communications Group and EPOS. Prior to working for these agencies, White was a buyer for The Sharper Image, selecting new products and negotiating vendor agreements for introductions in their catalog and retail stores. Mr. White also volunteers his marketing services to trade and philanthropic organizations including the International Association of Business Communicators, L.A. Shares, The Fragile X Foundation and Friends of El Faro.



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