

## **E-MAIL MANAGEMENT GAINS GROUND**

Flooded with rising volumes of customer e-mail, companies face a problem with only two answers: assign more customer service agents to e-mail response duties, or deploy an e-mail management response system. More companies are opting for e-mail management software over live agents, according to Frost & Sullivan's latest report, "U.S. E-mail Management Systems." As a result, analysts predict this market will hit \$2 billion by 2007.

"The dramatic growth rates in the e-mail management software market can be explained by the fact that the technology is an effective solution to a pressing customer service need," says Frost & Sullivan Industry Analyst Katrina Howell. "Companies are able to assign a fraction of the agents that would otherwise be required to respond to e-mail volumes reaching into the thousands."

The backlog of e-mail accumulated during any given day has caused customer care centers to ask employees to work overtime. Moreover, companies are increasingly aware of the consequences of delaying a response to customer e-mail inquiries. Studies have revealed that the number one complaint of online customers is the failure of a company to respond to an e-mail message within three hours.

"Within the space of a few years, e-mail has become one of the most common forms of customer communication," says Howell. "This has transformed e-mail into a severe pain point for numerous businesses, giving rise to the pressing need to adopt e-mail response management systems."