



CONVERSATIONAL IVR:

How implementing a Conversational IVR system can help utility companies improve customer service, decrease operational costs, and enhance productivity

...Because telephones are meant for talking!



Objectives

- ◆ Current customer needs and options for accessing information
- ◆ Describe the differences between conversational style database searches and conventional voice recognition products
- ◆ Explain the unique business advantages of how a conversational Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system is *the* ideal solution for deployment in a variety of utility company scenarios.
- ◆ Site specific examples of how utility companies are leveraging their infra-structure investments, improving customer satisfaction and receiving quick R.O.I.'s



What is the Customer Need

How many of you have wanted to:

- ✦ **Call into a Company**

- (...when you don't know the extension # or the correct name spelling)

- ✦ **Get a telephone number, fax number or e-mail address**

- (...without having to talk to anyone)

- ✦ **Call a Hotel Guest**

- (... when you don't know the room number)

- ✦ **Get a simple piece of information over the phone**

- (... with no hold time)



Current Options for Accessing Information or People over the Telephone

- ◆ Use the Telephone Keypad
 - ▶ Requests can only be expressed as a sequence of alpha or numeric digits
- ◆ Talk to a Live Agent/Operator

.....OR



Current Options for Accessing Information or People over the Telephone

- ◆ Employ the Power of a Conversational Speech-Enabled IVR System



Bottom Line:

Why do Organizations want to Speech-Enable their Enterprise Directories?

- ◆ *Reduce Operational Costs*

- ◆ *Increase Customer Satisfaction*



What is an IVR?

- ◆ Today the most popular uses of IVRs are for automated attendants, call routing and information retrieval
- ◆ IVRs allow callers to have voice-activated access to large databases of company information.
 - ◆ For ex., to call an employee in a large organization, simply pick up the phone and speak their name
 - ▶ No more dial by name
 - ▶ No more fumbling on the numeric keypad.



Drawbacks of conventional IVRs

- ✦ Only listen for specific pieces of information
- ✦ Once heard, it processes and searches the database, attempting to retrieve the correct information
- ✦ Problems occur when the databases get large, and there are multiple pieces of information that sound the same or are spelled the same.



Example

- ✦ Caller wants to be connected to Steve Dailey.
- ✦ The database contains two people named Steve Dailey and one named Steve Daley.

What happens with a conventional
IVR?



What is a Conversational IVR

- ◆ Conversational search is the most natural method for conducting search and retrieval functions in voice-driven auto attendant, call routing and information retrieval functions.
- ◆ Provides the caller with the ability to obtain desired result through a natural dialog similar to that of a live operator.



How does a Conversational System work?

- ◆ A conversational process takes the caller through a series of questions to ensure easy access to people or valuable information
- ◆ Conversational IVRs combine sophisticated speech recognition techniques with the ability to search large databases, all while having an intelligent, dynamic conversation with the caller.



How does a conversational IVR handle "Steve Dailey"

Caller: May I speak with Steve Dailey, please?

CSO: Did you say Steve Dailey?

Caller: Yes.

CSO: Did you want Steve Dailey in accounting or receiving?

Caller: Accounting

CSO: Please hold while I connect you.



Unique Conversational Features

◆ Spelling

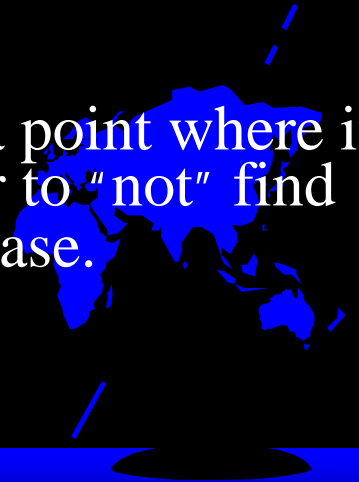
- ◆ Built-in spelling enhances the probability of finding a successful match

- ▶ "Dailey vs. Daley

◆ Garbage Rejection

- ◆ Conversational IVRs have the ability to tell you when a name is **NOT** in the database.

- ▶ The searching technique is fine-tuned to a point where it can conduct a conversation with the caller to "not" find someone that does "not" exist in the database.



Conversational Systems in Action

Ideal solution for:

- ◆ Corporations

- ◆ Auto attendant, corporate directory assistance services

- ◆ Telephone Companies

- ◆ Public directory assistance, personal directories and frequently called number services

- ◆ Call Centers

- ◆ Speech-enabled transactions
 - Order Status
- ◆ Intelligent Front-Ends.



Unique Business Advantages for Businesses and Customers

Business can:

- ◆ Increase customer satisfaction
- ◆ Reduce operational costs
- ◆ Eliminate peaks and valleys
 - ▶ 7 x 24 x 365

Customers receive:

- ◆ Easy access to valuable information
- ◆ Fast and accurate service
- ◆ Unlimited access
 - ▶ 7 x 24 x 365



Case Studies:

Here are a few examples of how utility companies are leveraging their existing PBX investment and receiving live operator-class performance without live operator overhead

- ◆ ConEdison
- ◆ Northeast Utilities



The Simple Business Goal

Live Operator Class Performance...

... without Live Operator Overhead !





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