



WHITE PAPER



HOW TO MAKE CUSTOMERS FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR IVR:

Cool advanced features that can transform your IVR system into a powerful customer engagement tool

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HOW TO MAKE CUSTOMERS FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR IVR

Cool advanced features that can transform your IVR system into a powerful customer engagement tool

Do your customers curse at your IVR? Do YOU curse at your IVR? As the backbone of your contact center, your IVR system should facilitate customer service efforts – making it easier for agents to help customers and for customers to help themselves.

Thanks to the cloud and advances in IVR technology, organizations and their customers no longer have to settle for inflexible and difficult-to-manage IVR systems. In fact, when fully leveraged, today's IVR systems can serve as powerful tools for customer engagement. Here are seven advanced features that can transform your IVR system into something you—and your customers—will love.



Today's IVR application can provide Natural Language, Directed Speech, Press or Say, or just Touchtone functionality. The choice is up to you.



ANI IDENTIFICATION/AUTHENTICATION

Identifying and authenticating callers are important first steps to starting a call, but they can easily aggravate callers if not handled efficiently. Caller ID by Automated Number Identification (ANI) can provide quick access to account information by accelerating the caller identification and/or authentication processes. Callers that can be identified with ANI have a 3-5% increase in IVR utilization because of the shortened path to

authentication in the IVR. Some IVR applications can track repeat callers and offer them the ability to update their account profile in your CRM. The result is increased ANI MATCH rates in the IVR, which increases your IVR containment. It creates a better experience for your caller while providing your business with the latest customer contact information.



SPEECH

Virtually everyone has had a bad experience using a speech-only IVR application. The system doesn't recognize your request or misinterprets your speech. But speech functionality has come a long way in the past 10 years, and it's a good thing, because the proliferation of mobile phones has made touchtone-only IVR applications equally frustrating. In this day and age, using either touchtone or speech-only can result in frustrated customers and apologetic agents.

We have found that transitioning a touchtone or speech application to a "Speech only" or "Natural language with speech only" application results in an 8-10% reduction in IVR utilization. That means up to 10% of callers are opting out of the IVR system to speak directly to a customer service agent. These customers are typically calling from

an environment where background noise prevents the IVR system from working effectively or where the customer would prefer not to speak out loud to the IVR.

A unique feature called "Speech Transitioning" addresses the challenges associated with speech and mobile devices. Speech Transitioning dynamically reacts to the caller's speech success/failure at each menu and transitions the caller from "Speech Expert" mode all the way down to "Touchtone Only" mode with several modes in between. As callers successfully respond to the IVR, they are transitioned up the speech mode ladder. Today's IVR application can provide Natural Language, Directed Speech, Press or Say, or just Touchtone functionality. The choice is up to you.



IVR PERSONALIZATION

Advanced IVR personalization functionality is a powerful way to improve customer satisfaction rates while reducing contact center costs. By increasing the caller's confidence in the information provided by the IVR, personalization reduces repeat calls and increases first call resolution.

But realizing these benefits requires sophisticated personalization features that go beyond a formal greeting at the start of a call.

Following are three fundamental ways to personalize IVR interactions.

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PERSONAL GREETINGS

This methodology greets the caller after identification and authentication processes have been completed using static information. Greeting the caller by name, account status, the number of years he/she has been a customer or other options are all possibilities. For example, your IVR might say, "Thank you Mr. Smith for calling and being

a valued Lawn Depot gold customer for the past eight years."

Personal Greetings like this can be configured to play based on a number of conditional combinations from static information returned from your CRM.



PERSONAL ACCOUNT PROFILE

A customer's ever-changing personal account profile can also be used to personalize IVR interactions. Personalized messages can be configured to play for low balance or late payment warnings, special account offers, change of address or phone number inquiries, and more.

For example, a customer calls his bank to check on a deposit he made to a checking account that is carrying a high balance. This triggers an IVR sales opportunity. Before confirming the deposit, the IVR plays the following

message: "Take advantage of our high-yield, two-year CD and enjoy an additional promotional quarter percent by signing up today."

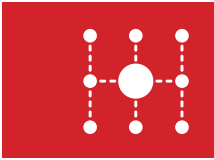
Personalized promotions based on account profiles offer limitless possibilities for aligning the IVR system with business goals or simply increasing IVR utilization by reminding callers of self-service functionality available in the system.



IVR TASK COMPLETION MESSAGES

Tracking callers over time and during their IVR interactions produces valuable information. Traditionally this information has only been available offline in reporting databases, or in CRM host applications with relevant account profile or transaction data. But that's no longer the case. Your IVR system can access this information and use it to personalize interactions in real time. Historical data and the caller's menu choices are tracked based on the caller's ANI and/or account number.

As an example, let's take a caller who makes a payment via the IVR and calls back within 24 hours. The IVR will know the payment task took place and can play a simple non-intrusive prompt: "Please note, if you've made a recent payment, it could take up to 24 hours to post to your account." The message is played at the start of the call, thereby providing the customer with the information they need.



MULTI-CHANNEL FUNCTIONALITY

The days of an IVR system operating as an expensive silo – a costly necessity – have come to pass. Today's IVR systems feature multi-channel functionality that enables your business to engage customers in other channels. Your IVR system can be used as the gateway to multi-channel introduction, customer sign-up and opt-ins, and drive interactions to the contact channels your business and customers prefer. Integrating IVR processes with text messaging, email and Web interactions can improve efficiencies and support your multi-channel strategies.

Consider a "One Call Pay and Confirm" process that can eliminate unnecessary and expensive callbacks by

allowing a caller to make a payment, check their account balance and confirm receipt of payment, all in a single call. Since most payments do not post immediately, One Call Pay and Confirm informs callers when they can expect their payment to be posted and offers the option to be notified via an SMS message when the payment is posted. This feature improves first-call resolution rates, because customers do not need to call back to confirm that a payment has posted. These common tasks are proactively addressed outside of the IVR system. Because the company anticipates the customer's needs, One Call Pay and Confirm also improves customer satisfaction.



REPORTING AND METRICS

Improving IVR utilization and call containment can reduce call center costs. But in order to make the appropriate changes in your IVR, you need to know the details of when and where callers are transferring to agents or ending their calls. A modern IVR reporting tool can provide this visibility.

Some IVR reporting tools allow you to pattern caller behavior in your IVR. An IVR provides all the raw data,

and the tool makes it available with full conditional drill-down and detail call traces. Such a tool can identify containment opportunities and allow you to select pre-determined filters to categorize IVR call types. Some tools also allow you to request recordings so you can "listen" to your customers interact with your IVR. By filtering and selecting drill-down criteria, you can listen to just the callers that are struggling.



FLOW FLEXIBILITY

In today's IVR systems, a single call flow can be designed to support multiple products, multiple lines of business and service different categories of callers. Systems that use a "table driven" approach for basic features such as Greeting, Goodbye, Thank You and Emergency prompting messages, can be controlled and managed by the

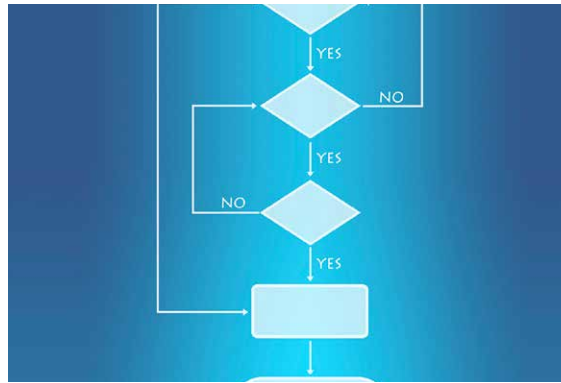
business; there's no need for IT involvement. In addition to simple changes, advanced features such as ANI Match, Time-of-Day Routing and Pre-Screening Account Data can be dynamic, which allows your business to be flexible. These table-driven features can be modified in real-time via a web portal.



CALL ROUTING CONFIRMATION AND ANALYZER

The Call Routing Confirmation and Analyzer can help you optimize IVR utilization by tracking why callers request live agent assistance. Before a customer is transferred, the Call Routing and Confirmation Analyzer plays a message asking why a caller is requesting a live agent. The information is recorded and can later be analyzed for menu modification, thus reducing the number of calls that are routed to an agent.

For example, a company may find that a significant number of customers call to add a spouse to their account, but that is not an option in the IVR menu. This item can be added to the menu to reduce the amount of time agents spend addressing this request. In some cases the request may be appropriate for a self-service application to be fulfilled completely via the IVR system, further optimizing IVR utilization and lowering customer service costs.



Don't use an IVR vendor that is just learning to provide hosted services, or the hosted services vendor that does IVR as a side business. Choose a provider that has proven success delivering carrier-grade services.

PUTTING THESE FEATURES TO WORK FOR YOU

Should you use Directed Speech or Press or Say? How many choices on a menu are too many? When should you prompt a caller to enter a terminating # sign for multi-digit menus? Should you flush the buffered touchtone digits after a non-interruptible prompt? Should you be using earcons in your IVR, and if so, when? If you cannot answer these questions without hesitation then you should work with a professional team of IVR experts that can help you determine the answers and will host your system.

A cloud-based IVR services provider can design and build an IVR system that meets your business requirements. But be wary of vendors who are new to the cloud. Critical IVR applications require operations to be scalable, flexible and, most importantly, available. So don't use an IVR vendor that is just learning to provide hosted services, or the hosted services vendor that does IVR as a side business. Choose a provider that has proven success delivering carrier-grade services.

Your IVR system can be used as the gateway to multi-channel introduction, customer sign-up and opt-ins, and drive interactions to the contact channels your business and customers prefer.

INTRODUCTION TO USAN

At USAN, IVR is our expertise. We have been developing complex IVR applications and hosting IVR systems in the cloud for over 20 years. During that time we have designed, written and deployed complex IVR call flows and processed high quantity call volumes in virtually every vertical market for the most demanding customers.

Our IVR team works with your business owners, IT groups and marketing teams to design and build a world class IVR that utilizes the advanced features introduced in this paper. The key to success is our years of IVR experience matched with your business goals and customer behavior to create a flexible IVR that you can control and monitor, and can grow with your changing business. To learn more about how USAN can help you, call us at (770) 729-1449.



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About USAN

USAN helps companies profitably engage customers and deliver amazing cross-channel experiences with the industry's best cloud, premise and hybrid multi-channel customer engagement solution. From traditional telephone interactions to the web, social media and everything between, USAN's portfolio of call center products gives users infinite flexibility in the way they engage customers across channels. In addition to campaign management, back-office integration, and business process automation, USAN's offerings include Hosted IVR, ACD, and Dialers built upon a fifth-generation carrier-grade infrastructure that delivers "five nines" of availability and proven scalability.