



Optimising IVR and Speech Applications



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Introduction

ICR's experience in optimising the performance of IVR and Speech applications is of great benefit to companies for both new and existing deployments.

Organisations are often forced to implement telephony-based self-service systems within tight timescales to meet critical business needs; the requirement for a rapid delivery can sometimes be at the expense of careful and considered solution design in terms of applications, systems and overall strategy. For this reason ICR provides a number of services for improving IVR and speech recognition systems.

The scope of this document is to illustrate these services at a high level and provide companies with an insight into some areas which need considering when designing and implementing an IVR and Speech application.

ICR's expertise ensures optimisation of the following performance indicators.

1. Customer service
2. Call maturity within the self-serve applications
3. Cost reduction
4. Revenue generation

About ICR

ICR is independent from technology vendors and is therefore in an ideal position to provide expert and independent advice to companies for solution optimisation.

Services include the following:

1. Expert Review
2. Application Re-design
3. Strategic Business Investigation

Expert Review

This involves expert IVR and Speech consultants auditing existing systems or proposed new solutions and making recommendations for improvements and optimisation.

The analysis tasks for this type of study cover the following areas:

1. Business objectives
2. Caller objectives
3. Are 1&2 compatible?
4. Caller profiles
5. Call flow and menu structure and their ability to meet business and caller objectives.
6. Prompts / scripts and their suitability for business and caller objectives.

7. Existing management information to identify problem areas for callers
8. Management Information structure
9. IVR-caller / agent-caller interaction.
10. Brand optimisation and consistency across multiple channels
 - Agents
 - IVR
 - Web
 - Paper based promotional activity.
11. Cost to the business of caller drop out in terms of agent usage and customer service.

Some of the recommendations which come out of this type of study may include:

1. Improved Call flow
2. Improved Prompts / Scripts
3. Recommendations for additional management information and how it can be used.
4. Development of a system to effectively handle multiple customer profiles
5. Consistency of branding

Deliverables

A comprehensive report containing information gathered during the analysis phase and recommendations for system improvement.

Application Re-design

For heuristic analysis of the call flow and user experience ICR employs an adaptation of a model widely used in the web world; ICR has adapted this model specifically for use with IVR applications and heuristics which pertained specifically to web technologies have been replaced with heuristics that are more IVR-centric. ICR uses this heuristic model not only for optimising existing applications but also to aid use centred design of new applications.

The heuristic categories are as follows:

- Clear instructions
- Landmarked appropriately
- Audio quality
- Recover from errors
- Inform and move on
- Transfer when in difficulty
- Any channel
- Speed of use

ICR provides this service to help companies understand what can be achieved with voice technologies within their organisation from the following perspectives:

1. Reducing costs
2. Improving customer satisfaction
3. Improving security
4. Revenue generation.

This service is utilised by companies which are taking their first steps into the world of self-serve technologies, **and** companies which have had exposure to these systems and are interested in extending their use and exploring new ideas

The benefits this service delivers can be significant for the following reasons.

1. Applications are designed and implemented in a cohesive logical manner.
2. Quick wins can be identified which may not be apparent to the organisation.
3. Economies of scale can be gained through interconnected implementations
4. Opportunities are identified in areas of the business where beneficial use of these systems has not been obvious.

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