

customer care solutions from Nuance



case study :: Vodafone Spain

Profile

Vodafone Spain is part of the Vodafone Group, the worldwide leader in mobile communications with a presence in 27 countries and Partner Networks in an additional 32 throughout the five continents. Vodafone provides a complete range of mobile telecommunications services, including voice and data communications, which are accessed by more than 179 million proportional clients. Vodafone Spain serves around 13 million customers, who benefit from the experience and capacity of this world leader for connecting in the mobile world. Vodafone Spain saw speech technology as a way to bolster the quality of its customer service, while reducing operating expenses related to maintaining a large stable of agents to field calls.

The Background

Facing increasingly high call volumes, Vodafone Spain was looking to improve customer satisfaction surrounding the way calls were handled by the mobile provider's call center – a combination of live agents as well as technology for self-service through touch-tone dialing. Customers were frustrated by the long wait times to get information or have their problems resolved. At the same time, Vodafone wanted to achieve greater efficiencies in how it handled the heavy volume of call traffic.

Vodafone Spain saw the answer in the speech technology from Nuance and the speech services from integrator and voice service provider Ydilo AVS. A speech-enabled integrated voice response system (IVR), Vodafone Spain officials maintained, would allow for simple, fluid exchanges where customers could get quality service without the wait and resolve their most frequent queries on their own.

With partners Nuance and Ydilo, Vodafone Spain built out new automated call center capabilities that deliver complete customer service. Both pre-paid and post-paid customers can use natural speech to get answers to frequently-asked questions, set voice mail settings, check pricing options, monitor and redeem reward points, as well as activate special promotions, among other functions.

"Vodafone Spain has a strong commitment to improving customer satisfaction and they've pushed the envelope in terms of letting customers effortlessly help themselves without requiring any type of learning curve," said Peter Hauser, general manager and senior vice president at Nuance. "The new speech system is key to that endeavor."



Customer-Centric Care

Since the automated speech system has been in place, Vodafone Spain reports increased customer satisfaction and a higher rate of call completions. In fact, the speech system is delivering a customer satisfaction level better than calls handled by an operator, according to Vodafone Spain, and the company has actually been able to increase the number of self-managed services as a result of fully leveraging the speech technology. “Vodafone Spain is delighted that advanced speech technology has made such a significant improvement in the level of customer service for its 13 million customers,” said José María González, IVR Channel Manager, at Vodafone Spain.

“Our speech system is key to delivering top-notch customer service, and our research shows that many are more satisfied with the IVR system’s response compared with how calls are handled by human operators.”

Specifically, customer satisfaction rates have jumped 14% with the speech system compared with where they were with the previous, automated touch-tone technology. Even more compelling: customer satisfaction rates are 8% higher with the automated system than they are with live agents, according to Vodafone Spain’s research.

To gauge whether the company is meeting its customers’ needs, Vodafone Spain continuously solicits feedback – most recently, on the automated speech application. Each day, the company conducts approximately 9,000 surveys with random call-in customers to gauge their satisfaction with the automated services. Thanks to the intuitive nature of the system, customers are reporting record levels of satisfaction and many do not recall if their needs were met by an automated system or Vodafone agent. Moreover, Vodafone Spain is leveraging the feedback from the surveys to make on-going refinements to the system so it evolves with customers’ requirements.

Business Results

From the first moment of implementation, Vodafone Spain has also seen some compelling business benefits from the automated speech service. Among them:

- The company was initially able to handle 2 million calls on an automated basis with 99.7% system availability. Today, the system handles over 8 million calls per month, or an average of 250,000 calls per day.
- 62% of calls are fully handled by the automated system.
- Only 6.4% of calls are diverted to agents due to recognition errors.
- By piggybacking promotions onto the automated speech system, Vodafone Spain was able to increase sales of additional services—specifically, a 25% to 26% success rate among those customers receiving the special promotions.

“Vodafone Spain’s results show that speech technology is increasingly becoming more widely accepted in society,” said Ydilo representative Juan Jose Martinez, Customer Service Manager for Vodafone. “At the same time, the Vodafone Spain project results have proven the importance and added value from the service provider, from the design of intuitive voice services to a smooth operation and a seamless integration with the backend systems, all with a continuous improvement philosophy.”

About Nuance Communications, Inc.

Nuance is the leading provider of speech and imaging solutions for businesses and consumers around the world. Its technologies, applications, and services make the user experience more compelling by transforming the way people interact with information and how they create, share, and use documents. Every day, millions of users and thousands of businesses experience Nuance's proven applications and professional services. For more information, please visit www.nuance.com.

About Ydilo

Ydilo Advanced Voice Solutions of Madrid, is the European leader in advanced voice-recognition services and multimedia solutions for conventional, 3G mobile, and IP telephony systems. Founded in 1999, Ydilo has been designing, building, and hosting self-service voice-recognition systems for customers in the telecommunications, financial, transportation, tourism, services, and public administration sectors. For more information, please visit www.ydilo.com

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