Vision Voice Vantage, Inc.

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

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Outbound Transactions Within Your IVR Application

Most everyone has used a self-service **I**nteractive **V**oice **R**esponse (**IVR**) application at some point. You call a phone number, are given instructions and voice prompts which allow you to navigate through the application. This IVR application gives the user responses with information it obtains from the system or the caller can supply information which the system now uses for their profile/account or the task at hand.

The types of applications can cover almost anything but what is common in all the tasks is that the user has called into the IVR application and then, interactively worked their way through the self-service functions.

News flash, the IVR application can deliver information to a user without them first calling into the unit.

What we are talking about here is that the IVR application starts the process to deliver information. This could trigger from the result of any process:

1. On a certain day at a certain time, the IVR application initiates the logic to send outbound information

2. A certain status has changed and that information now must be delivered to someone

3. A third party person is using the system and they initiate the IVR application to send someone another form of outbound information

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SEND

What we are discussing here is the ability to go beyond the interactive activity that you associate with most IVR applications and to have built-in ability to deliver information to someone that is not currently a part of this session or if they are, to have the ability to deliver information to a secondary device such as sending a hard copy report to a fax. There are basically four different methods of delivery:

☎ Call Out
☎ Send Email
☎ Send Text Message
☎ Send Fax

The Call Out

Any call out application must follow federal rules for calls as to hours of operation, privacy, no call lists, etc. It is a good policy to allow recipients to opt out of system.

As discussed, your IVR application could initiate a call out based on some condition such as a scheduled event, change in status such as an emergency condition that the application has became aware of, or even at the request of some user.

Example of Scheduled Event:

At 8:00 AM each day, the IVR application pulls up a screen at ABC Insurance to see which policies are now over due and places a friendly call to the policy holder to let them know that their policy is over due and a payment of "X" dollars is due. During this session, the IVR application may allow the receiver of this call to go into the payment processing side of the IVR application where the policy holder could make the payment.

Example of Change in Status:

In this example, the IVR is monitoring some variable to see if there is a change that requires someone to be notified. Let's say you have a water plant and the IVR application is monitoring the chlorine levels within an open area 24/7. At the point where the chlorine sensor detects a level beyond a threshold maximum, someone is called to notify them of this.

Example of Call Out Request:

A number of years ago, we had a city government that wanted the ability to add to their current IVR application an employee notification system. In this application, a supervisor would call into the system to record a message such as "Snow removal will start at 4:00 AM" and then would enter a code to define which group of employees would get this message. Now the unit initiates calls to each employee within the selected employee group and plays the voice message just recorded. The IVR application also logs if the employee got the message live or was left as a voice message with a date and time stamp of the call.

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The logic of the call out process is the same as most of your other IVR applications where you collect information you are going to use in the process such as names and phone numbers. This is similar to the syntax and logic you have seen before. Then you would just take the line off hook followed by "PutDigits" and the phone number in the logic of the script.

Email/Text Message

In order to do emailing with the ODTVision VRU, you have to purchase the email option for your VRU. Emailing is very similar to the call out process, however instead of using the dialogic card and phone lines to deliver the information, you are now using the licensed copy of Microsoft Outlook that has been installed on your VRU and the API for Outlook to the ODTVision software. Once purchased, a code within the security HASP key is installed to allow this process.

Scheduled Event:

A number of years ago we were in one of the largest close-out companies in the country. They looked at the cost of everything they do. One of the most expensive labor costs they had were the truck drivers. One of the least expensive costs they had were the stock boys at minimum wage. At 8:00 each morning the IVR application pulled the estimated time that each truck will be at the store's receiving dock and then sent an email to the store manager so he could have the stock boys waiting there to open the doors. As soon as the driver backed in, they pulled out the pallets for that store, close up the trailer and notify the driver to be on their way. This lowered their overall cost vs. the driver getting out of the truck, finding the store manager, then finding the stock boys to complete this process.

Status Condition Requiring Email:

Say you are processing orders and find an account has now reached the level where their next order will be on credit hold. Perhaps this system process was being done in the middle of the night. It is important for your firm to notify that client

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Get Your Own Demo Today

Contact us to get your own demonstration of the ODTVision Voice Response Unit. This demo application is a simplistic order entry and shipment status system which is running off a Microsoft Access database. The demo is in the test mode and you will be using the "Test Phone" feature of the ODT VISION VRU to simulate a phone call to the data. Manuals and case studies are also available on the web site.

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that their order is not being shipped due to credit hold and they need to correct this condition in order to receive the shipment. You can use the IVR to send an email notifying the client.

User Initiated Email:

Last month we talked about Elliott Reality. When a housekeeper calls into the IVR to post that a unit is clean and ready for occupancy, the IVR will send an email or text message (depending on the notification method chosen by the client) to the renter notifying them that their unit is ready.

Text Message

If your ODTVision has the email option, you can also send text messages. The only difference is that you need to supply a cellular phone number instead of an email address. You also have to determine if you are going to send it directly to that phone number or to a 3rd party service that will forward to the phone number. In most cases you would use a 3rd party service as it allows you avoid tracking the recipient's texting provider, but there are charges for the service. If you plan to send it directly to the phone number, you will need to know the carrier's text message domain.

To send a text message directly via email, just substitute a 10-digit cell number for 'number' for each carrier below:

- AT&T: number@txt.att.net
- Qwest: number@qwestmp.com
- T-Mobile: number@tmomail.net
- Verizon: number@vtext.com
- Sprint: number@messaging.sprintpcs.com or number@pm.sprint.com
- Virgin Mobile: number@vmobl.com
- Nextel: number@messaging.nextel.com
- Alltel: number@message.alltel.com
- Metro PCS: number@mymetropcs.com
- Powertel: number@ptel.com
- Boost Mobile: number@myboostmobile.com
- Suncom: number@tms.suncom.com

Faxing

If you have a fax interface on your host or network, you can have the IVR application dump jobs to that I/O which has collected data from your application and you may also include attachments.

In conclusion, you have a variety of ways to deliver outbound information and you can tailor the transmission to each user's needs. Just keep in mind, the process doesn't always have to begin with a user calling the VRU.