

## Users of Your IVR Self-service Application May Not Always Be External

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### REASONS FOR EMPLOYEE SELF-SERVICE

- ☎ Lowers over all cost in providing these applications
- ☎ Can be created quickly with minimal cost and time
- ☎ Can be connected to existing systems such as Human Resources, job scheduling, inventory, etc.
- ☎ A more secure method for self-service than web
- ☎ Can be limited to phones of a certain CallerID to improve security with physical restraints
- ☎ Allows this service 24/7
- ☎ The CallerID may also shorten the application by defining what the employee can do and also automatically do abbreviated applications
- ☎ Frees up the existing live customer service representatives' time to address the needs of paying customers
- ☎ Since the employees are not calling fellow employees, privacy is protected and time is not wasted

Many previous newsletters have begun the discussion of self-service customer service application design by recommending you look first at the user and defining their needs. There is a natural tendency to think of the users as being external to your organization such



as a client or a 3rd party firm that your company does business with. This may not be the case, so this month's newsletter will evaluate some reasons to have a self-service application created for your own employees.

There can be countless reasons to create an internal self-service application for employees. Obviously the cost savings of providing this internal communications through a self-service IVR solution has to be right up at the top.



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## HUMAN RESOURCES

As soon as you start a discussion of HR services,..... security and privacy must be considered paramount. This employee HR application may be just as simple as an individual just wanting to call in to report they are going to be absent or late. You may want the system to automatically notify the employee's department. The system may be tied to the current personnel records to see if that employee has sick days to take. If not, the system can be used to prompt the individual to take a vacation day. Also, interactive notices may need to be given back to the caller if their HR profile shows they have missed too much work. If such notification is given, this can be dated and time stamped in their records and written to a log file that that notification was delivered.

The employee may also use the system for a variety of functions such as scheduling vacations, checking pension funds, or even changing insurance during open enrollment periods.

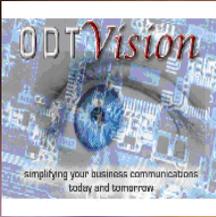
A number of years ago, a large university HR department came to us requesting a self-service IVR solution for "Employee Verification." This client had the need for an employee to call into their IBM host system running their IVR applications and request an authorization code that the employee could then give to a third party individual such as a car loan officer. With that

code, that second individual could now access parts of the employee's personnel record to determine work history and income for the loan application. This firm was looking to make this application self-service as they had two clerks currently doing this function and had the following issues:

- ⇒ This service could only be done M-F during business hours and they wanted to take it 24/7
- ⇒ They didn't like that fact that these two low level clerks knew what everyone at the university made and had access to all their personnel records
- ⇒ They had told the clerks on several occasions to not gossip about some one was getting a loan or someone's attorney had called about a divorce but this gossip existed
- ⇒ By turning this application over to an IVR self-service application, they lowered the cost of providing this application
- ⇒ This freed up those clerks to go do work that actually required a human assistance in HR



Another possible HR VRU function is to replace existing hourly time clock applications. Now the office phone extension provides the ability for the individual to clock in or out from a physical location. This approach works great in a campus environment and reduces equipment cost while allowing all posting to be automatic and directly to the HR systems. Now the firms know who had punched in and who is absent.



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### THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

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.

Another HR function is remote payroll entry. By limiting the access of this functions to the CallerID of the manager's cellular phone, this function is locked down but still can be done from the field.

### DATE AND TIME STAMPED

Many applications require a time stamp. Perhaps you have an employee logging into to an area of a building and you want to track who is



where and when. The desk phone within this area now is used as the IO to the IVR application for this employee to identify themselves and post a time stamp. This could be an employee providing security check as they execute their rounds after hours. Maybe the employee is signing out equipment with the phone located in the equipment sign-out room. Now the system knows who got what equipment, files, etc. and when.

### EMPLOYEE OUT OF THE OFFICE



Many employee's job functions require that they work out of the office, such as a serviceman making a repair at the client's site.

Just because this repairman in off-site, it doesn't mean the corporate office doesn't need to know what the status of the job is and how the employee is doing on their assignment. As this repairman works through their day; they can post progress, get a new job assignment, or pass off a future job already assigned to another fellow worker if their day gets backed up. This ability to pass off an assignment facilitates the ability for the job order to be done in a timely matter. Now the central office knows how things are going in the field and this allows the job scheduling information to be tied to an client notification/inquiry system. The job scheduling system can then calculate the next job's estimated timing for that appointment and that next job's customer could be notified of changes. Examples of job notifications:

- ◇ that their room is clean
- ◇ the delivery will take place EDT of.....
- ◇ The future appointment needs to be rescheduled tomorrow at.....

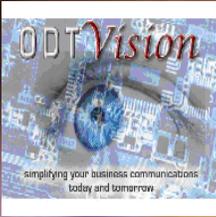
### NOTIFICATION

After hours events may require the notification of certain employees responsible for a particular job function



or who are on call. This notification may be delivered from the IVR through a text message, an email or even a call.





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THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX  
IN CUSTOMER SERVICE

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#### INQUIRY

Your salesman may be in the field at a client site and needs to know immediately if something is in stock, what is the current pricing or that client's order status. That salesman's cellular phone acts as a terminal where they can do various inquiries to gain that information quickly even if this is outside business hours.

#### ORDER ENTRY/EDITING

Maybe a salesman in the field needs to order some more forms or office supplies. It is easy for that salesman to call into the IVR application to modify an existing Client's order based on a request from that customer.

#### CONCLUSION

To summarize this newsletter's talking points, it should be your goal to improve communication with your employees and make that information flow to and from them easy. At the same time, it is desirable to lower the cost for this improved communication and

functionality. By taking many of these applications to self-service IVR applications, you have freed up human resources where those live customer service individuals can now go and address jobs that actually require human assistance. By removing the employee's need to talk with a live customer service representative, that CSR is now free to address other calls and functions. That may very well mean improved customer service for the firm's paying customers since it is a more efficient use of resources. The trend to use self-service applications for quick solutions is more acceptable now and common place in corporate America. Self-service IVR applications are now a way of life. Individuals may very well rather get a quick solution at their convenience than wait in a holding Queue. ■