



MicroAutomation Implements Interactive Voice Response (IVR) for a Major Water Utility

The Challenges

MicroAutomation responded to an open RFP a major water utility that requested a new Interactive Voice Response (IVR). MicroAutomation competed with other bidders and won the bid based on of superb design, excellent project planning and confidence in MicroAutomation's superior customization skills.

A challenge many businesses face is the use of agent time in a call center for transactional activities. Customers become frustrated since their wait time increases and they have to be on hold for longer times than expected. This frees up the time of agents to deal with other calls and increases the ROI of the company.

In the case of this major water utility, they faced these and many other issues due to an outdated IVR system. The legacy system was implemented over ten years prior and no longer supported. It also had no backup and if the system failed, it would result in a huge call volume issue. This existing IVR did not have many features the company wanted including multi-lingual options, voice recognition and the ability to pay by phone.

In addition to these issues, queue times were longer than they would have liked and they were facing over 2,000 transactional calls on a daily basis that could have been handled with in an automated fashion. This was taking up a lot of agent time and costing considerable expense.

Another issue that this utility was facing was the permitting portion of their business. When a plumber completed a job in a new or pre-existing home, they had to manually call the call center to report the ticket and job number and request an inspector to come out and approve the job. This process took the time of two people – the call center agent and the plumber. Agents also had to manually schedule inspectors to go to different sites for the upcoming days. This permitting process was time consuming and much too cumbersome.

The Solution

MicroAutomation was contracted to help increase call center efficiency and customer satisfaction. The solution to this was to implement a "Customer Care" Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system. This would be efficient in allowing customers to perform their needed transactional activities by phone. Customers could now pay their bill by phone or split their bill into two and put a seven day hold on their account. They could even enter their own meter readings if a representative was unable to come out to their home to do a reading.

This system was also made available 24/7 and available in both English and Spanish so that customers are now able to call the utility and make a payment any time that they like, not just when the call center is staffed. This ability shortened wait times and allowed agents to take more involved calls. It also increases agent satisfaction and saves money in the long run.

A second "Inspection scheduling" IVR was put in place that allows for plumbers to use a PIN number to schedule various types of inspections. The PIN is unique to the licensed plumber and ensures the security of the system. Now this information can be entered into the IVR and schedule inspectors to homes the next available business day.

This additional IVR allows for customer satisfaction as the previous paper methods are not used to request inspections, adding lead time and making permitting projects last longer. It also benefits the utility as they are able to use it to schedule inspectors and not use agent time and increase overhead costs.

This solution was written in non-proprietary industry standards and is extremely flexible and scalable.

The Benefits

- Reduces agent time on transactional calls
- Increases customer satisfaction
- Reduces wait time
- Improves agency efficiency and utilization
- Reduces operating costs
- Customized to meet your business needs



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IVR Features

Use of IVR to allow customers to pay their bill by phone and customize payment schedules if needed.

Ability to enter meter readings: If a representative is unable to come to the home of a client and get meter readings, the IVR allows a customer to enter their own meter readings into the system to bill them properly for services.

Automated inspection requests: Now plumbers can use the IVR to enter information about completed projects request inspections

Inspector scheduling: Use of the IVR to schedule inspectors to go out to homes and complete jobs. Automatic detection of next available appointment is included so this is not required to be completed manually.

24/7 Availability: Now customers can use the IVR whenever they like. This makes it so that they do not have to call in a certain time window in order to get an agent and make a payment.



About MicroAutomation

Commercial, government and 911 customers worldwide have benefited from MicroAutomation's expert design, development, deployment and support of their contact centers for over 20 years. Outstanding creativity, the ingenuity and forethought of our engineers and partnerships with a wide-range of leaders in our industry allow us to continually provide our clients solutions that surpass expectations. www.microautomation.com

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