IVR Self-Service - Nicor Gas

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About Nicor Gas

- Natural gas distribution company
- Largest subsidiary of Nicor, Inc. (NYSE: GAS)
- Mission: provide safe, reliable natural gas
About Nicor Gas

• Located in northern Illinois and Chicago suburbs

• Serves 2.1 million customers in 641 communities

• 32,000 miles of pipelines
Business and Technical Challenges
Business Challenges

- Volatile natural gas costs
- Increase in customer contacts
- Flat operating budget
- Customer dissatisfaction with existing IVR - growing cordless and cell phone use
Technical Challenges

- End-of-life technology
- Integration with a Unisys mainframe (VT-100)
- Repoint to a new Customer Information System (web services)
IVR Old and New
What the old IVR delivered…

- Steady performance since 1998
- Voice of Nicor - greeting all 888.Nicor4u calls
- Touch-tone interaction
- Prioritizes gas emergency calls
- Performs self-service functionality, including: account balance, payment due date, enter a meter read, etc.
- 25% call completion/self-service rate
What the new IVR with Speech Recognition promises…

- Improved self-service performance – 5+ points
- Voice talent representing Nicor Gas’ persona
- Understand caller profiles/tendencies/grammars
- Streamlined repointing effort to new CIS
- Leverage skills-based routing and maintain call prioritization
- Increase customer satisfaction ratings
- Offer business customers their own “path”
- Broadcast messages administration
Project Goals and Results
Project Goals

- Self-service utilization - from 25% to 30% take rate
- Increase customer satisfaction ratings (natural language interaction, etc.)
- Position for Cordaptix integration and future Contact Center technology implementations (i.e. CTI, new applications, etc.)
- Treat business callers through new IVR tree
- Business and system administrative ownership
- Avoid hiring Contact Center employees
Project Results

- Averaging 27%-30% self-service rate
- Voice recognition rate consistently at low-to-mid 90s
- Language segmentation
- Connect call purpose with skillsets
- Tailoring new rep. training to leverage skills-based routing
- Identifying future opportunities (appointments, moving orders, etc.)
Significant speech technology contributions

- SpeechPak design templates
- Synonyms/Grammars
- Persona
- Tuning sessions
Empowering Your customers and employees with speech technologies

SpeechTEKI 2006 Empower

The Voice Solutions Showcase

Thank You