The Creative Evolution of SLM Interfaces

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Two systems – one goal

IVR

SLM!
The SLM Advantage

• Short call flow
  – Flatten menus

• Callers get to “speak their mind”
  – Everyone knows how to do that!

• Skills based routing
  – Transfer to the “expert”

• Faster call resolution for all
  – Everyone wins
Skills Based Routing Examined

- Targeted training for agents
  - Lower overall training costs
- Faster resolution of complex problems
  - Experts trained to solve specific issues
- BUT manage call center carefully
  - Avoid specialized agents sitting idle
  - Avoid internal transfers and misroutes
SLM Is Not Perfect

• They might not want to speak their mind
• Longer development / deployment time
• Heavy customer involvement
• Some callers still won’t play along
• Maintenance required
Today’s SLM: Better than ever

• Technology always evolving
  – Better recognizers
  – Better SLM development tools

• Practice makes perfect
  – Simplify the process
  – Maximize potential

More accurate results / Faster deployments
The “Old” Way

- Process is simple:
  - Create a dummy application that asks callers “How may I help you” then transfers to a rep.
  - Record 20-30,000 utterances or “answers” to that question
  - Transcribe them
  - Have someone at the customer classify each utterance into buckets
  - Build a grammar based on those rules
Old Way – What it Means

• Build the app, train the customer, oversee the whole process
  – Intense effort required from 1 or 2 people at the customer
  – The process is new to most customers
  – Utterance classification can become subjective
  – Review cycles are important
Technology to the rescue

• “SLM parse” tools for building / managing SLM
  – Input data, output an SLM grammar in any format
  – Easily manage and update grammars
• The new way – faster implementation
  – Collect utterances from agents and business owners
  – Expand small data set into statistically relevant sample <patent pending>
  – Eliminate lengthy data collection process
Two approaches – both good

• The new tools make things easy...
  – Less customer involvement (no utterances to tag)
  – Less management time from designers (but still some)
  – Grammar development is fast
  – Maintenance is easy: stay ahead of the curve

• But we’ll still use the old way...
  – What we think they will say may not be what they actually say
  – Data collection helps understand your business
  – The “new” tools still apply
Our pledge as designers

- Use SLM to better the customer experience
  - Consider customer goals \textit{first}, then build routing rules
  - Strive to improve routing behind the scenes
  - Create experts to save money AND shorten calls
    - “I’ll transfer you to the voicemail experts. They can fix anything!”
  - Keep it current! (Marketing promotions, product names, etc) SLM parse makes it easy

Never lose site of the goal:
  faster, more intuitive user experience
Empowering Your customers and employees with speech technologies

SpeechTEKI 2006 Empower
The Voice Solutions Showcase

Thank You