

Speech
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THE IMPORTANCE OF
**Testing, Tuning,
and Tools**

The January/February issue of *Speech Technology* gave you insight into the importance of testing, tuning, and tools in the article, "The Test of Time" written by Leonard Klie. If you are considering deploying a new speech application or upgrading your existing interactive voice response system for your enterprise or contact center, make sure you read the following additional valuable information from these industry experts. As always, thank you for turning to *Speech Technology* to support your purchasing decisions within this industry.

Sincerely,

La Shawn Fugate
Publisher, *Speech Technology*



Speech Self-Service in the Contact Center: It Has to Work Especially in a Down Economy

Regardless of the economic landscape, businesses leverage speech self-service to simultaneously improve customer satisfaction and reduce costs. During an economic downturn, contact center staffing levels may be in jeopardy while the pressure to retain and acquire new customers and generate more sales increases putting even greater importance on the performance of contact center solutions and speech self-service.

Businesses have to do more with less, which makes optimizing speech self-service performance a no-brainer. But when it comes to the testing and monitoring tools available to contact center and IT managers for optimizing performance, there is no end in sight. **So how can you weed through all the options to find the simplest, most cost-effective option for you?**

KISS

Sometimes, the simplest option really is the best. Simply put, remote performance testing and monitoring is one of the least expensive and most valuable ways a business can optimize self-service because it is done from the only perspective that really matters – the customer's.

For many of IQ Services customers, testing and monitoring from their customer's perspective provides an integrated view of performance that cannot be seen with internal monitoring methods. By generating automated traffic that traverses the PSTN and executes a complete end-to-end transaction, IQ Services helps businesses observe, tune and verify self-service performance (and the performance of each integrated component) from the all-important customer perspective. For as little as 9¢ per call, these remote services can provide valuable insight into the customer experience because the automated testing and monitoring traffic exercises the self-service application just like real customers. The results reveal not only existing issues or defects, but also opportunities

to improve based on performance trends collected over time.

Integrated, remote testing and monitoring services conducted from the customer perspective help uncover issues that can lead to customer dissatisfaction and lower containment as well as opportunities to optimize before customers are negatively impacted. While testing services are used before and after cutover to make sure a new, upgraded or repaired solution is performing as expected before customers use it, monitoring services are used after deployment to make sure the solution performs as expected 24 x 7.

TEST IT

Performance and load testing for speech self-service solutions involves generating controlled levels of calling traffic to figure out how well the solution will handle lots of callers as well as callers making different types of requests. The test allows businesses to work out issues before real customers use the contact center or communication solutions. Any customer-impacting issues experienced during the call – with the carrier, switching, application, host connectivity, CTI, etc. – are resolved so the real customer experience is not negatively impacted. When it comes to speech self-service in particular, performance testing under load is critical as increased load on speech resources has a direct impact on the number of re-prompts experienced by the customer.

MONITOR IT

Remote availability and performance monitoring for speech self-service solutions involves generating a specific number of automated customer transactions per hour (one call at a time) to ensure the solution continues to perform as expected from the customer perspective around the clock. If an issue is detected, the appropriate technical people are notified so appropriate action can be taken. In addition to

"Thanks for taking care of this change in such a fast manner. We really appreciate your help. So far IQ Services monitoring service has worked very well and has also given us the opportunity to perform some more system optimization to keep our customer happy."

— Rehan A,
Auto Industry

the immediate and actionable data provided during an issue notification event, the monitoring data collected over time can reveal time-of-day and day-of-week issues as well as other trends that represent an opportunity to optimize the self-service solution.

A PARTNER YOU CAN DEPEND ON

Since 1996, IQ Services has stayed focused on the same driving purpose...delivering cost-effective, responsive testing services and superior customer service to contact center and communication solution owners. In the days when concepts like customer experience and outsourcing were uncommon, IQ Services was all about helping its customers improve customer satisfaction and increase customer retention by improving self-service experience through outsourced testing services.

Thirteen years and tens of millions of calls later, IQ Services is still going strong and is still committed to contributing to the success of its customers. Check out IQ Services and its partners at www.iq-services.com.