SYNTELLECT

SYNERGY

Vol. 4 No. 3 Fall 1994

VOICE PROCESSING AT WORK

Life Insurance Giant and Syntellect Team Together to Meet Customer Service Challenge

Cynthia Scanlon

With more than $112 billion of life insurance in force, the Minnesota Mutual Life Insurance Company is the tenth largest mutual life insurance company in America. The company serves 10 million customers through 4,000 associates located throughout 87 general agencies, 39 regional sales offices, and the national headquarters in St. Paul.

Minnesota Mutual provides numerous financial services including insurance, annuities, mutual funds, and pension plans. The company's most commonly used method for disseminating information to its customers is the telephone. Customers call in to receive information concerning their life insurance policy, pending claim, or investment balances. Minnesota Mutual began looking for a more effective way to handle customer inquiries; one which would at the same time allow it to generate more business by offering additional financial services directly over the telephone.

The Syntellect Solution

Minnesota Mutual evaluated the Syntellect solution both technically and financially and decided to install Syntellect's Premier 030 system to manage their volume of calls and create value-added services.

"When programming voice response, you have to break down programming to minute steps, which can be complicated," said Lynda Asher, Minnesota Mutual's Telecommunications Leader. "Syntellect helps with that process. They have a list of everything, and we just pick and chose what we want to do."

Asher added, "When we looked at maintenance, purchase price, and ease of programming and divided it by the number of ports, Syntellect outperformed on price as well."

By installing a Premier 030, Minnesota Mutual was able to increase their caller volume from 24 to as much as 200 percent and eliminate two and half support positions at a savings of $40,000 a year for the company.

Callers waiting on hold for long periods of time, only to hang up in frustration without receiving the information they need, is now a thing of the past. Since installing the system, customers are provided with the financial information they seek quickly and easily, with overall satisfaction ratings running as high as 95 percent.

Eight Customer Focused Applications

Minnesota Mutual answered their customer's needs by using their Syntellect system to develop eight very unique applications.

Syntellect's Premier 030 system allocates applications based on telephone traffic. Lines are automatically routed to those applications experiencing higher call volumes. This is an important feature since the system receives more than 43,700 calls per month or almost 2,000 calls per day. Customers can access any of the system's applications using their touch-tone telephone.

- PSP/IRA Information: Provides Minnesota Mutual's associates and retirees updates on account balances, loan and transfer information, and profit sharing.
- Group Claims Information: Allows financial institutions and disability claimants to access the system by claim number to obtain information about the status of a claim, payment values and data, benefit dates, and filing instructions.
- University of Minnesota Information: Assists University of Minnesota Pension Plan participants in accessing information about general account interest rates, total, source and fund account balances, and loan and transfer information.
- Annuity Service: Permits individual annuitants to access general account interest rates, account balances, and loan and transfer information.
- AccuTrak Service: Provides participants information on interest rates, account balances, and fund descriptions for their pensions.
- MIMLIC Sales Service: Assists clients in accessing current and net asset values on annuities and mutual funds and information on statement requests, transaction processing information as well as recording literature requests.
- Pension Value: Gives corporate pension customers access to rates of return on funds as well as assists them in obtaining, financial strength information, annual report requests, and descriptions of funds.
- Policy Services Service: Provides agents contract information, status, premiums paid to date, and their values. It also allows agents to access premium, dividend, and loan information as well as letting them order current policy information.

Application	Calls Per Month	% Increase In Calls Handled	Calls-Captured Rate	Satisfaction Rate
Annuity Service	20,000	200%	51%	87%
Group Claim	12,000	52%	18%	90%
Pension Value	3,200	45%	100%	92%
AccuTrak Service	1,900	200%+	100%	92%
U of MN Information	1,600	100%	62%	75%
Policy Service	1,500	54%	100%	n/a
MIMLIC Sales Service	3,400	24%	52%	95%
PSP/IRA Information	800	101%	98%	90%

Planning for The Future

Minnesota Mutual plans to automate their Conference Room and Training Resource Scheduling in the near future. "Right now, when you need a conference room, you have to call a contact who has to refer to numerous paper calendars to complete the process. It's highly inefficient," Asher said.

(Continued on page 4)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

INTERNATIONAL NEWS
- Syntellect IVR Adds 24-Hour Customer Service Capability To British-Based Power Company *page 2*

EXECUTIVE PROFILE
- Thomas M. Proud, Chief Financial Officer *page 3*

TECHNOLOGY UPDATES
- Syntellect Unveils System Assurance Program *page 2*
- New Premier 030 Software Releases Announced *page 2*
- Two New ApplicationWorks Packages Introduced *page 3*
- VocalPoint Release 2.0 Is Now Available *page 3*

USER GROUP NEWS
- User's Group Conference Update *page 4*

THE HELP DESK *page 4*

EDUCATION SERVICES Schedule of Classes. *page 4*

COMPLIMENTARY BUSINESS SOLUTIONS

Syntellect and TeleDirect International Offer IVR and Predictive Outbound Dialing Solutions

In September, Syntellect and TeleDirect International signed a marketing agreement to offer compatible inbound calling and outbound predictive dialing solutions to its customers. Under the initial terms of the agreement, the two companies will make joint sales calls and work together to provide complete voice processing solutions to their respective customers.

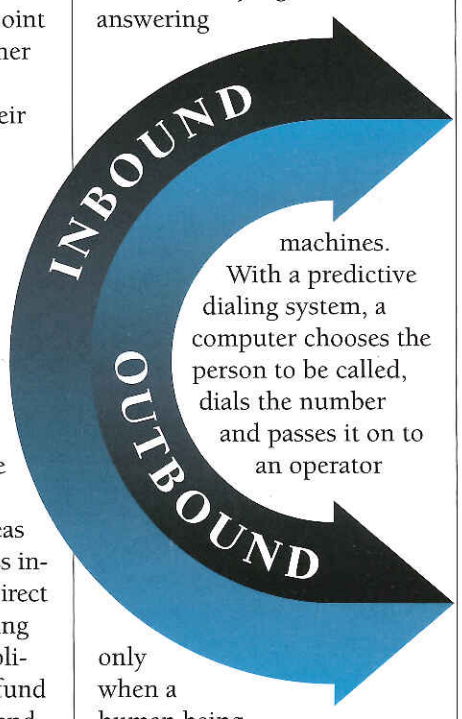
Complimentary Voice Processing Solutions

Similar to Syntellect's VocalPoint systems, TeleDirect call center automation systems feature an open architecture, are based on IBM's OS/2 operating system, use Dialogic boards and are modular in design. Whereas Syntellect solutions address inbound dialing needs, TeleDirect focuses on outbound dialing requirements for such applications as telemarketing, fund raising, customer service and collections.

Outbound Predictive Dialing Explained

Outbound predictive dialing is an automated method of making a large number of outgoing telephone calls to many people without human intervention; then passing calls on to an operator only when it is answered by a human voice.

With manual dialing operations, call operators review paper records or computer terminal screens to determine who to call. They then find the telephone number, dial it, and must often contend with disconnected numbers, no answers, busy signals or answering machines.



With a predictive dialing system, a computer chooses the person to be called, dials the number and passes it on to an operator only when a human being answers the call.

TeleDirect predictive dialing solutions have complex mathematical algorithms that consider, *in real time*, the number of available operators, the probability of getting a no answer, operator intercept or an answering machine, the time between calls required for maximum operator efficiency, the length of an average

(Continued on page 2)

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