VoiceObjects

Postbank

Customer Reference Story



Driving Voice Applications to New Heights

VoiceObjects shows that with the right voice server platform you can increase customer satisfaction, reduce costs, improve application management, scale applications to support an unlimited number of calls, and better analyze your call flows and call volumes. Customer satisfaction and cost-effectiveness can go hand-in-hand. The Phone Application Server from VoiceObjects enables low-cost, high-quality telephone-based self-service.

At a Glance

Deployment Data

- Customers: 11.9 Millions
- Call volume per day: 120,000 - 200,000
- Ports: 750
- Recorded prompts: 25,000

Unlimited capacity:
Nearly unlimited scalability thanks to VoiceObjects' server technology.

Low operating costs:
Low personnel costs for administering the overall system thanks to integrated functions for monitoring and maintenance.

Integration into existing business processes:
VoiceObjects is based on open standards and allows the reuse of business processes and logic systems developed for the web.

Investment protection:
VoiceObjects integrated readily with the existing voice processing technologies and telephony platforms thereby protecting Postbank's previous infrastructure investments.

An ambitious project

Postbank is Germany's largest retail bank, with nearly 12 million customers. Postbank chose VoiceObjects' Phone Application Server to relaunch its self-service telephone banking system in December 2004. Since then, a friendly telephone voice has greeted customers and offered them telephone banking services and product information, or transferred callers to an agent if requested. This relaunch marks the successful conclusion of one of the most ambitious projects ever in the banking voice portal sector. Postbank's voice portal offers a wide range of services and content, combining optimal user-friendliness and value for customers. It has exceeded all targets for efficiency and customer satisfaction. With an average of 120,000 calls per day - and peaks of up to 200,000 calls - this was a real challenge.

The project has been a great success for everyone. Callers enjoy simple and convenient access to the services they want, and Postbank benefits from significant improvements in efficiency. Callers have readily accepted voice-driven self-service, reducing pressure on the contact center. Postbank's agents now have the time to concentrate on in-depth queries and, where appropriate, to up-sell or cross-sell other Postbank products. VoiceObjects' innovative server technology has also simplified the integration between Postbank's existing IT infrastructure and telephone self-service, bringing numerous advantages in terms of flexibility and scalability, future-proofing and investment protection.

Intelligent dialog design and personalized services

Customer acceptance of telephone self-service is driven primarily by the system's user-friendliness, as well as the added value of the services and content offered. VoiceObjects designed a modern, user-centric voice user interface for the Postbank voice portal. Callers can quickly access topics of interest, and extensive context-sensitive assistance is provided. To improve the caller experience, Postbank's previous computer-generated voice output (text-to-speech) was completely replaced by high-quality recordings of professional voices. For example, numbers such as bank routing codes, account numbers and account balances, are now spoken naturally to create a more conversational dialog. Special recording techniques were used to ensure that all digits and numerical sequences are delivered with appropriate intonation and in a variety of ways – just as real people do in natural conversation. With its unique personalization abilities, the VoiceObjects solution is responsive to each customer's personal preferences and interests. Using secure authentication methods, the voice portal system treats each caller as an individual, permitting fast and efficient navigation for experienced users. First-time callers, on the other hand, receive detailed instructions. In addition, customers can select their "preferred voice" from four different personas.



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Customer self service via telephone
Information about
Services and Products

- Account Balance
- Search for Transactions
- Payment Transfer
- Standing Order Management
- Tax Free Declaration
- Fonds- and Interest Updates
- Request Forms

High value services

VoiceObjects has added features such as account balance read-out on authentication, as well as a comprehensive transaction search facility. Callers can have all their recent transactions read out to them, or they can search their transactions by credits or debits, for specific dates or amounts, or for a range of values. For money transfers, frequently used account numbers are stored so that bank routing codes and recipient names can be presented instantly for confirmation. Customers can also create and manage their own statements, and schedule future and recurring money transfers. At any time, a caller can transfer to a live agent and the system gives the estimated waiting time if appropriate.

Complex tasks

More than 25,000 recorded prompts were compiled for the multifaceted Postbank telephone service, including questions, answers, help and greetings, as well as general information about the voice portal. All this is provided in four different voice variants (personas). Administering this number of audio files is a huge challenge. The appropriate prompt for each situation must be retrieved and played to the user in real time, so that an intelligent dialog develops. This is a large and complex application, efficiently managing 750 concurrent calls, as well as seamless integration with Postbank's account management software and numerous back-end databases. An increase to 1,500 concurrent calls is planned.

Architectural simplicity

The only possible architecture to solve this challenge is a server-based system that integrates perfectly with existing back-end infrastructure and efficiently manages large volumes of transactions with a high degree of personalization. VoiceObjects' Phone Application Server offers an ideal solution: it dramatically reduces set-up and operations costs, and sets new benchmarks for cost-effectiveness, quality, performance and reliability.

The VoiceObjects Server is the world's only true Phone Application Server. It smoothly integrates voice applications with existing business logic, and allows the creation of an individual "voice website" for each user. This forms the basis for personalization, and brings a high level of added value to the services. As a standards-based open platform, VoiceObjects Server is able to make use of existing voice- and data-processing systems, to protect existing and future investment in this infrastructure. VoiceObjects Server is supplemented by a powerful, easy-to-use Integrated Development Environment (IDE), which both designers and programmers can use to develop and implement user-friendly voice applications quickly and easily. Full support for management and administration, also provided by VoiceObjects Server, further reduces the costs typically experienced with traditional voice systems. Fully integrated lifecycle and content management capabilities permit voice services and their related content to be easily updated and redeployed with no downtime. The bottom line is dramatically reduced operating costs and, at the same time, continuous improvements in quality and efficiency for Postbank telephone banking.

VoiceObjects

VoiceObjects is the phone application server company. VoiceObjects works with carriers and enterprises around the world to deliver a personalized customer service experience to more than 500 million callers every year. VoiceObjects Server, the company's flagship product, supports phone-based applications at more than fifty leading companies, including Adobe, T-Mobile and Volkswagen Financial Services. For more information, please visit www.VoiceObjects.com.

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