

HypoVereinsbank boosts **satisfaction** and **efficiency**.

Nuance Recognizer enhances phone system at one of Germany's largest banks.

Challenge

- Handling calls from larger customer base through merger
- Increase self-service without compromising customer experience
- Implement computer telephony integration (CTI) to reduce agent talk time and enable cross-sell/up-sell opportunities

Solution

- Nuance Recognizer speech recognition solution
- Call Steering
- Self-service IVR applications
- CTI with screen pop to agent's computer

Results

- 40% of calls handled completely through automated system
- 85% of callers choose to use speech applications
- Realized a significant reduction in call center costs

About the company

HypoVereinsbank (HVB), a member of the UniCredit Group, is the one of the largest private sector banks in Germany, with more than five percent market share, 26,000 employees, 731 branches and over four million customers. The bank's core competencies span retail banking, corporate banking, commercial real estate financing, wealth management, and international capital markets.

“Increasing cost pressures and offshore banking will in the future lead to a greater use of automated phone banking and brokerage services. The high volume of joint projects we have successfully completed with Nuance over the past few years has become the foundation for future banking deployments.”

Michael Kloos, Managing Director
CreaLog

The challenge

HVB, like all members of the UniCredit Group, is committed to providing its customers with fast, innovative, and high-quality solutions across all its business segments. When UniCredit merged the customer service operations of HVB and Bank Austria in 2005, it seized the opportunity to take customer care to a whole new level. The company realized that call center agents' ability to provide highly efficient and personalized customer service for their increasing customer base was limited without self-service support for phone banking transactions and related services. HVB Direkt — the company that oversees call center services on behalf of HypoVereinsbank — set out to deliver a state-of-the-art speech-driven customer interaction telephone solution that would integrate into the banks' existing call center environment and support agents in conducting banking transactions and related services.

A primary goal for HVB's new system was to automate routine over-the-phone customer service transactions, thereby reducing the number of calls handled by agents and driving down call center costs, without

compromising the customer experience. This required that the new solution deliver exceptional speech recognition performance and a natural, conversational voice interface design. It was also imperative that the system include computer telephony integration (CTI) as a means of reducing agent talk time and assisting call center staff in cross-selling and up-selling products for bottom-line impact.

The solution

After evaluating proposals from a number of major international vendors, UniCredit and HVB Direkt chose Siemens as the main contractor and project manager for its new telephone banking system. CreaLog, a leading provider of voice dialog systems in Europe, was selected to design and develop customer interaction applications using Nuance Recognizer speech recognition software from Nuance Communications.

Nuance Recognizer is a best-of-breed speech recognition solution that drives higher business performance through more efficient self-service solutions that increase automation rates and improve customer

satisfaction. Using state-of-the-art acoustic models and natural language dialog, Nuance Recognizer provides unprecedented accuracy, reliability and ease of use to help callers resolve issues or complete transactions on their first contact. CreaLog designed the voice user interface, including call flow and dialog prompts, to optimize self-service interactions for a superior caller experience.

Using Nuance Recognizer's sophisticated speech recognition capabilities, the telephone banking system authenticates HVB customers by asking for their account number, date of birth, and PIN number. Authenticated callers are prompted for information to determine the purpose of their call — whether they wish to request information, conduct a transaction, or resolve an issue. Based on their responses, the system either guides the callers through a self-service interaction or transfers them to a live agent for assistance.

If the caller's request requires live assistance, the system automatically transfers the caller to an appropriate agent trained to help with specific transactions such as buying shares or purchasing traveler's checks. When the speech-enabled system transfers a call, CTI technology allows screen pops to the agent's computer screen with the customer's authentication status, details from the current call, and other information about the caller from backend systems. Instant access to this information enables the agent to provide faster and more personalized service to bank customers.

The deployment

HVB Direkt took a phased approach to its speech-enabled deployment. System and application design and development, including dialog creation and usability testing, started in 2005. A pilot deployment including a phone banking application followed in 2006. CreaLog used pilot feedback and performance results to tune and optimize the speech applications prior to the final full-scale roll-out. Full deployment of the new customer interaction solution was completed in July 2007, providing support to 1,200 bank employees in six locations across Germany and Austria.

The results

HVB's automated caller interaction solution is now handling 20,000 calls per day, with more than 85% of the bank's customers choosing to use the speech applications rather than opting out to a live agent. Because over

40% of the calls received are handled completely through the automated self-service applications without any need for agent involvement, HVB has increased the number of calls they can handle without increasing call center headcount and has realized a significant reduction in call center costs. The new solution has boosted customer satisfaction by eliminating frustrating wait times, providing fast, easy access to personal account information 24 x 7, and enabling more efficient and personalized service.

"We are pleased that the majority of our customers are using the new speech-enabled customer interaction solution for over-the-phone service transactions," commented Mr. Karsten Linz, Head of Communications Technologies at HVB Direkt. "By automating a significant percentage of routine transactions, we are offloading a significant number of calls that previously went to our agents, allowing them to focus on providing specialized service to high value customers."

As further proof of success, HVB's automated telephone banking solution received the "Best Enterprise Services" award at Voice Days 2008, Germany's premier speech event. According to the panel of judges, the HVB solution was selected based on its advanced speech recognition and natural dialog capabilities; its sophisticated self-service features; and its proven ability to shorten processing times for customers by recognizing up to three input parameters within a user's utterance.

Looking ahead

HVB is just one of many progressive banking institutions around the globe that are choosing to embrace automated customer interaction solutions for reducing costs and improving customer care. Given that the success of any speech-driven self-service system depends on the accuracy and reliability of its underlying speech recognition technology, Nuance Recognizer has become the solution of choice for companies looking to achieve differentiation and win customer loyalty by delivering an exceptional customer experience.

CreaLog understands the critical role that speech recognition plays in its ability to deliver high-performance speech systems for customer-focused, service-oriented companies throughout Europe.

About Nuance Communications, Inc.

Nuance Communications is reinventing the relationship between people and technology. Through its voice and language offerings, the company is creating a more human conversation with the many systems, devices, electronics, apps and services around us. Every day, millions of people and thousands of businesses experience Nuance through intelligent systems that can listen, understand, learn and adapt to your life and your work. For more information, please visit nuance.com.

