



MicroAutomation Helps an Agency of the US Department of the Treasury achieve a 93% Call Automation Rate

Background

With the increasing amounts of delinquent, non-tax, debt owed to the United States, Congress passed the Debt Collection Improvement Act of 1996 (DCIA) which gave the Financial Management Service (FMS) the authority to collect federal debt owed to all agencies – making them the central resource for all federal agency debt collection. FMS, known now as Bureau of the Fiscal Service, is a bureau of the United States Department of the Treasury whose overall mission is to disburse Federal payments, manage the Federal Government's collection and deposit systems, provide accounting and reporting services throughout the Federal Government, and coordinate the collection of delinquent debt via the Debt Management Services Operations Center (DMSOC).

The DMSOC plays several key roles in the operation of the Treasury Offset Program (TOP), a government-wide debt matching and payment offset system. TOP takes advantage of FMS' centralized disbursement process by matching a database of delinquent debts owed to various government agencies against payments made by the government. When a delinquent debtor record is matched to a payment being issued, the payment, such as an Income Tax Refund, is intercepted and applied to the debt owed.

Challenge

With the new responsibilities of FMS came challenges as well. One of those challenges included how to handle the increased call volume without exhausting their call center budget. Initially, the agency established a call center to handle inquiries from taxpayers wishing to know if their income tax refund may be offset due to payments owed to the Federal Government. As new State Governments joined the program and the economy began to suffer through a downturn in 2008, call volumes continued to rise. The problem worsened as the Federal Government began to implement the Economic Stimulus Act of 2008 that provided tax rebates to taxpayers after the standard December to April tax season.

FMS quickly realized that they needed to look for additional options to overcome call spikes, improve agent efficiency and handle their growing call volume. It became clear that FMS needed to increase call handling capacity, minimize agent call time, control costs and increase caller satisfaction quickly on a very limited budget.

Solution

MicroAutomation was selected because of our expertise in integrating disparate call center systems, implementing effective Self-Service applications, and developing custom solutions.

MicroAutomation's first mission was to update the agency's call center environment with Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) that would allow an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system to collect caller identification information and send the information to the agent's desktop as a "screen pop" as the call is delivered to an available agent. This dramatically reduced the time an agent needs to complete a call and increases caller satisfaction by reducing agent wait times, increasing completion rates, and eliminating data entry errors.

To further aid agents in handling calls, MicroAutomation developed a custom Call Tracking System (CTS) application that allows agents to quickly display debt and offset information for callers and allows the agent to document the reason and resolution for each call for tracking purposes. The call tracking history for the caller is displayed during the call and also maintained in a relational database for reporting.



Finally, MicroAutomation implemented a Self-Service IVR application that allows callers to get debt and offset information directly from the system and not have to be transferred to a live agent. The TOP Debt Inquiry application helps to offload routine debt and offset inquiries from the agents which represents a significant portion of the calls. The self-service application has reduced the overall volume of calls for the agents and allows agents to address the more complex calls that require their expertise.

The solution was based on open standards technologies such as VoiceXML which resulted in significant savings on development costs and provided flexibility for future expansion or projects. MicroAutomation worked closely with the agency staff and the legal organization to develop and implement the Self-Service component to ensure that all guidelines and service level agreements were met and Personally Identifiable Information (PII) for callers was protected.

Recently, FMS went through a major upgrade of its center and implemented a new redundant, Avaya telephony switching infrastructure. The upgrade allowed FMS to establish an alternate, geographically separated call center to ensure availability of their services.

Results

Today, the new contact center solution developed by MicroAutomation for the Financial Management Service of the US Department of the Treasury handles over 5,000,000 calls per year

Summary of Results

- > Raised automation rates to 93%
- > Reduced operating costs and increased service levels through faster completion of calls
- > Allowed the Financial Management Service to start tracking caller activity by calls and transactions
- > ROI in less than 1 year

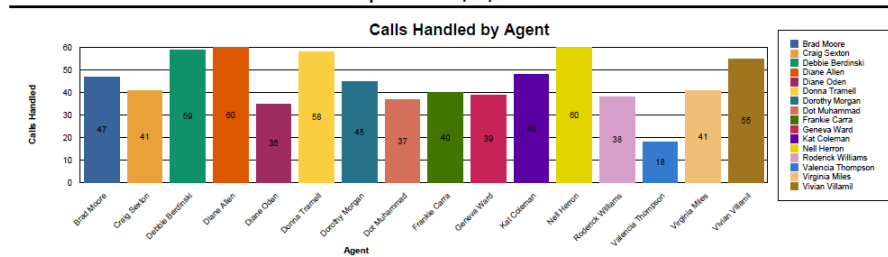
and allows FMS to collect over \$1.2 Billion annually in taxpayer debt.

During the busy tax season, over 93% of the calls received by FMS are handled by the Self-Service IVR application and agents handle the remaining 7% of calls with virtually no caller hold times.

More importantly, the new system allows FMS to track caller activity, completed transactions, and agent activity to generate daily, weekly, monthly, and annual reports to track the effectiveness and progress of the call center

Agent Activity Report

Report Date: 04/23/2008



Login Time	Logout Time	Duration	Calls Handled			Talk Time			Available	ACD Time	
			ACD	Non ACD	Total	ACD	Non ACD	Total		Unavailable	Work
Brad Moore (ID: 3334)											
04/23/2008 06:40:16	04/23/2008 17:30:36	10:50:20	20	27	47	:00	3:32:06	3:32:06	:00	10:50:20	:00
		Totals:	20	27	47	:00	3:32:06	3:32:06	:00	10:50:20	:00
Craig Sexton (ID: 3308)											
04/23/2008 07:07:25	04/23/2008 16:23:00	9:15:35	28	13	41	:00	3:12:24	3:12:24	:00	9:15:35	:00
		Totals:	28	13	41	:00	3:12:24	3:12:24	:00	9:15:35	:00
Debbie Berdinski (ID: 3325)											
04/23/2008 06:53:24	04/23/2008 16:27:14	9:33:50	27	32	59	:00	3:37:03	3:37:03	:00	9:33:50	:00



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About MicroAutomation

MicroAutomation is a full service integrator of call center solutions and provides a broad range of professional services and products. MicroAutomation solutions are based on creating an effortless caller experience through Speech-enabled Interactive Voice Response (IVR), improving live agent efficiency utilizing Computer Telephony Integration (CTI), and providing analytics tools to report, manage and refine each solution element to maximize the overall performance of your call center.

MicroAutomation also offers contact center products and professional services including:

- The Award Winning Call Center Millennium™ Solution Series
- Complete solution design
- Configurable and custom application development
- Turnkey implementation
- Comprehensive customer support
- GSA Advantage IT Schedule: GS-35F-0419L

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