Healthcare organizations transition to intelligent self-service IVR for Medicare providers, saving millions in operational costs and improving customer experience.

Background

Since 2003, CMS has delivered the Medicare program through a trusted group of health insurance organizations. These Medicare Administrative Contractors (MACs) compete for CMS 7-10 year contract awards. The environment is highly regulated, and CMS is annually challenged to deliver exceptional service at lower costs. In the 1990's, one of these MACs engaged MicroAutomation to implement a more intelligent approach to customer service and address issues in their contact center. The results were so profound, CMS recommended the MAC community to follow suit.

Challenge

Provider service interactions are detailed and complex. This means lengthy Average Handle Times (AHT) with many CMS rules to comply with on every call. But there were other challenges as well, including:

HIPAA compliance – to obtain information from CMS, providers must securely authenticate with three forms of identification, a National Provider Identifier (NPI), a Provider Transaction Access Number (PTAN), and Tax Id Number (TIN) along with additional information about the patient and the encounter.

Service Levels and Cost – CMS has a commitment to create a positive experience at minimal cost to the tax payer. With average Speed of Answer (ASA) targets of 60 seconds or less, constant cost pressure from CMS, and the complex nature of the customer interaction contact centers became a very tense environment. In addition, customers who required assistance outside service hours needed to wait and call the following day.

Handle Times and Agent Experience – In addition to the authentication process, large amounts of information must be communicated to providers creating a lengthy call experience. This leads to a lot of redundant, complex interactions where mistakes can easily be made by agents while frustration mounts for the customer. This leads to agent burnout and attrition.

Rigid Technology – The automated systems in place were non-conversational and content-poor. In addition, the systems could not scale. Changes to the proprietary code base were time consuming

and expensive. This resulted in poor customer satisfaction, adoption and call routing.

Solution

With a proven track record of delivering impactful Call Center Solutions, three MACs engaged MicroAutomation to modernize their systems.

MicroAutomation implemented an intelligent Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system with Natural Language Processing (NLP) and a Computer Telephony Integration (CTI) solution to correctly route and provide content rich, time saving screen pops to agents supporting Medicare Part A, Part B, and DME providers. The solution needed to authenticate callers, provide self-service functions, and be fully HIPAA compliant.

MicroAutomation's self-service solution featured:

- Best-of-breed hardware and software technologies based upon the VoiceXML open-standards platform
- State-of-the-art advanced speech recognition (ASR) and Text to Speech (TTS) technologies
- Caller authentication with six points of data security to comply with HIPAA requirements
- Backend data integration to CMS host systems using a scalable web services architecture
- Customized reports to easily track CMS service levels as well as IVR effectiveness and trends.

Results

The solution provided Medicare customers with a conversational interaction that was simple, user-friendly, and content-rich. The intelligent design of the architecture made the solution responsive, flexible, and scalable. An informative, reliable solution was key to self-service adoption. For calls that required agent interaction, authentication information was passed automatically to available agents via "screen pop" allowing them to pick up where the IVR left off in the transaction and saving up to 60 seconds per call.

The IVR self-service functions deflected 50% -75% of the transactional volume away from call center agents and provided a capability to provide service to customers outside of normal business hours (24/7/365). The CTI solution allowed for call routing to the right

agents and removing the burdens of redundant information collection for authentication. This resulted in lowered handle times and vastly improved agent experience.

All three health organizations recognize the value of MicroAutomation's solution and retain MAI to maintain, manage, and extend the solutions capabilities.

Today, the intelligent self-service solutions implemented across all 3 MACS collectively handle more than 10 million calls annually. This represents 57% of Medicare's Provider Customer Service call volume.

- By successfully deflecting common and tedious tasks away from agents, the solution saves each organization more than $5 million annually.
- In a 2018 MAC Customer Satisfaction Survey conducted by CMS, the MicroAutomation IVR solution for these three organizations ranked 1st, 2nd, and 4th in the industry.
- MicroAutomation's solution has scaled and adapted to work in other complimentary Self-service channels in a cost-effective manner with a total cost of ownership that has paid for itself several times over.

- By removing redundant and low-value activities, agent satisfaction and attrition have been improved, further lowering operational costs
- The solution is fully HIPAA compliant and has significantly reduced operational risks that arise from non-compliance with CMS regulations and service levels.

Summary of Results

- ➢ **Annual Contact Center Savings over $5M per client**
- ➢ **Up to 75% Customer Service transaction containment**
- ➢ **Up to 60 second reduction in AHT per call**
- ➢ **Top ranked Customer Satisfaction scores from Medicare Providers**
- ➢ **Over 10 million CMS Provider Customer Service calls handled annually**
- ➢ **Enterprise Scalable, meeting difficult HIPAA and Service Level metrics**
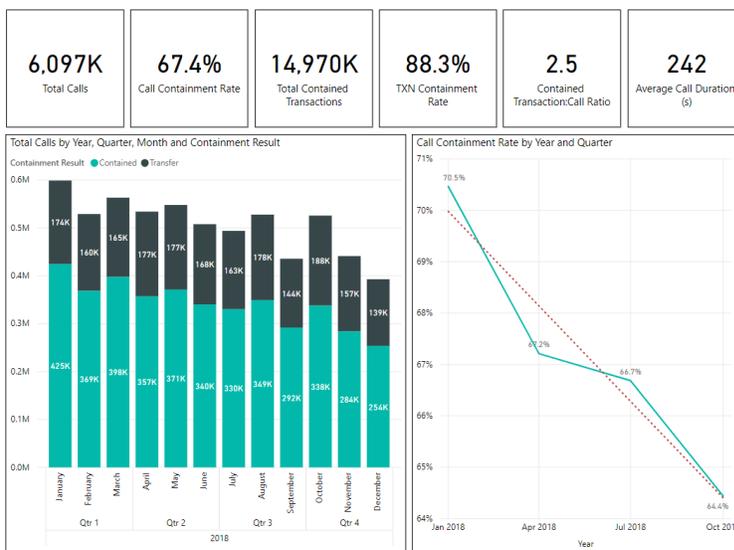
2018 Call Analysis for a MicroAutomation Customer

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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