



Wisconsin Physicians Service Seeks Help in Self-Service IVR and System Applications

Background

Wisconsin Physicians Service (WPS), a Midwest regional healthcare provider, administers Medicare programs in 6 states, serving more than 140,000 healthcare providers and over 6.6 million program beneficiaries. In addition, WPS administers TRICARE For Life, which is Medicare-wraparound coverage for TRICARE-eligibility beneficiaries, serving all of the U.S. and U.S. territories. They have been a leading not-for-profit health insurer in Wisconsin, and their services have grown to reach active-duty and retired military personnel, seniors, and families across the region.

WPS is also a successful provider of administrative services for the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). WPS Government Health Administrators (GHA) manages Medicare Part A and Part B benefits for millions of seniors across the U.S. Their Military and Veterans Health (MVH) program also serves millions of members of the U.S. military and their families through TRICARE. WPS also offers standard health insurance plans for the citizens of Wisconsin.

Challenge

WPS determined they needed to update their phone switch for a variety of technical reasons. This change prompted a review of the overall platforms and capability that is currently supporting their multiple call centers. This review identified several functional and technical limitations of their current suite of applications and platforms. In addition to using older voice recognition software, they noticed that an increasing number of callers opted out of their current self-service application to speak to an agent, which unnecessarily drives up their cost while presenting a less desirable experience for the caller. WPS decided to take this opportunity to select a new, more robust platform, and developed a contemporary suite of self-service applications to best meet their goal of effectively balancing cost and caller experience.

The previous application lacked the type of intuitive design flow needed to encourage callers to stay in the interactive voice response (IVR) and successfully complete their request. The IVR, in addition to self-service, provides basic processing for all callers attempting to reach TRICARE. Often, these callers were identified as callers for a different TRICARE service center which required agent assistance to transfer them to the appropriate provider.

Initially, WPS issued an invitation-only RFP for a new phone switch and the corresponding self-service applications. MicroAutomation, a vendor for WPS Government Health Administrators division, provided an independent Call Center technology analysis for the Military and Veterans Health division. The result of the analysis suggested a highly cost-effective platform and suite of applications for the self-service IVR, computer telephony integration (CTI) and agent screen pops that were independent of the new phone switch selection. This analysis caused WPS to see the value in issuing two new RFPs, one for the phone switch and one for the accompanying Call Center platform and applications in a true best-of-breed model.



Solution

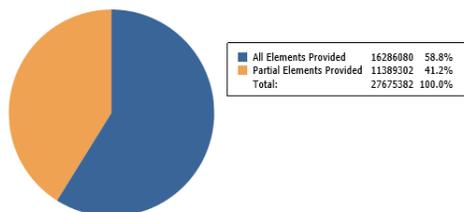
MicroAutomation was ultimately selected to provide the application development, IVR platform, CTI, and back-end systems integration necessary to meet or exceed all stated requirements and systems and business goals. WPS had tight timelines to implement the new phone switch and new IVR platform and applications. The MicroAutomation project took three months to design, develop, and test, and another three months to complete the integration process with the selected phone switch and back-end systems.

The solution architecture fully addressed WPS' Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) requirements as well as the need for full fail-over and system redundancy. MicroAutomation designed the new IVR applications to focus on the caller and model a caller's conversation with a real agent. The latest Nuance speech recognition software was used to enhance the recognition of the IVR platform. The Enghouse CP IVR platform was selected for several

reasons. First, it allows open standards applications to run on the platform which allows WPS to change platforms without losing their application development investment. Second, the CP Platform has a proven record of successfully processing high call volumes using a voice intense application. Since the implementation, the IVR is involved in 93% of all inquiries.

The functional design of the IVR was an area in which MicroAutomation spent considerable time to improve the containment rate. MicroAutomation experts worked with business leaders, Call Center managers, and agents to understand routine pain points to automate. The design incorporated streamlined questions and best practices for timeouts and retries to encourage callers to remain in the self-service application. In addition, MicroAutomation used an established voice talent to record prompts providing an IVR persona and allowing for a human feel to self-service.

Current Year Transferred Calls: All Elements Provided vs Partial Elements Provided



“MAI and WPS have partnered for nearly 2 decades with great success! I was very fortunate to get to know Suresh and the team early on as we implemented the initial IVR solution. I can always count on the MAI team, and it is truly a great partnership.”

- Jim Gomon, Director, Vendor Management and IT Services, Wisconsin Physicians Services

Summary of Results

- 25% increase in IVR containment
- 100% of callers reaching the correct Tricare provider
- 70% screen pop delivery
- IVR involved in 93% of total calls

Results

The results were immediate for WPS and the solution performed as expected. The containment rate increased from 25% to nearly 50%. The IVR was more intuitive and sounded more personable, which compelled a 25% increase in containment rate within the self-service applications. Additionally, using the intuitive front-end call router function, calls that were not appropriate for this service were automatically transferred to the correct TRICARE provider without the need for agent interaction.

Since the date of implementation WPS MVH has received 4.6 million calls, 93% of which the new IVR is involved in. Additionally, 50% of the calls that the IVR is involved in still need agent interaction, but 70% of calls transferred to agents have data for screen pop, which reduces the overall agent handle time. MicroAutomation and WPS are continuously working to increase the effectiveness of the IVR to decrease the total amount of calls transferred to agents.

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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