

STIRLING COUNCIL CASE STUDY

Background

Stirling Council is dedicated to providing quality services to the Stirling community. The Council aims to get the best from public money in terms of cost and quality; looking at new ways of delivering services; ensuring sound management and good information systems that help the Council to listen to and give feedback on customers and citizens views. The Stirling Council contact centre provides easy access to all Council services and was created to improve customer service and extend opening hours. For more information about Stirling Council, see www.stirling.gov.uk

Challenge

The Stirling Council contact centre handles in excess of 350,000 phone calls per year from the community. These calls range from refuse and council tax matters, to requests for housing repairs and emergency care services.

Stirling Council is committed to delivering the highest quality service to its customers and continually requires accurate data to help understand the clarity, quality and usability of the services provided, to ensure outstanding customer services levels are achieved.

Traditional methods of measuring satisfaction levels resulted in the following -

- **Low response rates** – polling satisfaction levels involved the contact centre making calls to a sample of citizens who recently used the service. Due to calling hours and the gap between received service and the time of the call response rates were poor.
- **Lack of resources** - as new council services were rolled out, regular and consistent polling to gauge customer opinion was not feasible due to the substantial resources and time required to carry out the surveys.
- **No real time reporting** – the contact centre had no immediate visibility of the results of the satisfaction surveys and therefore was not in a position to act on problem areas in a timely fashion.

Solution Overview

Stirling Council required a flexible and innovative method to capture satisfaction levels and comments, from customers of the contact centre for council services.

They needed to capture the information in real-time, whilst retaining a user-friendly method of polling callers. To this end, the decision was taken to initiate a post-call survey from the contact centre using speech recognition to provide a friendly and natural customer contact method. An additional requirement was the ability to self-manage the on-going requirements and the ability to develop and maintain all required surveys in-house with minimal external assistance or cost.

Upon review of the market, Stirling Council evaluated and selected the SpeechStorm



“We selected SpeechStorm’s Questionnaire Builder because it offered us optimum flexibility by providing complete self management capabilities which help keep our costs to a minimum. This self-management approach demonstrates considerable reductions in TCO compared to other solutions we researched. Staff members are now able to focus full time on delivering excellent customer service.”

Alan Whisker
Customer Service
Development Manager
Stirling Council

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Questionnaire Builder solution due to its advanced speech recognition technology and the simplified self-management console. The browser-based console named assistDashboard, allows in-house personnel to develop and deploy all required surveys and monitor reports and results in real-time.

Benefits

The speech questionnaire builder enables the call centre agents to take more calls – the call centre agent introduces the survey to the caller at the end of every call. Once the caller agrees to take the survey they are transferred directly into the speech recognition application freeing the agent to answer the next incoming call immediately.

Flexible delivery model – to assist Stirling Council with the most effective use of their budget the SpeechStorm Questionnaire Builder solution was provided under a hosted ASP model on a pay-per-use basis. This “cost per survey” approach allows Stirling Council to accurately budget the usage to their requirements and negates the often-prohibitive development, IT and labour costs of many similar solutions.

Future

Based on the initial success of the speech solution, Stirling Council is now in the process of developing a facility which utilises the SpeechStorm platform to gather payment details, providing customers with additional options for making payments, at any time. In addition, other departments at the Council are already showing a keen interest in SpeechStorm for new and varied methods of information capture.