



# Collections project

## INDUSTRY:

Financial Services

## THE CHALLENGE:

Automate 'commit to pay' calls, debit card payments and registration of a recent payment using a solution that is fully open standards, interoperable with existing infrastructure and easily customised.

## THE SOLUTION:

- *Application SCE Tool:* Vicorp xMP
- *Application Runtime Platform:* Vicorp xMP
- *Media Server:* Nortel MPS
- *Application Server:* IBM WebSphere
- *ASR Engine:* Nuance OSR & IBM WVS
- *TTS Engine:* Nuance RealSpeak

## The challenge

The collections business of this large financial institution accounts for a large volume of low value time-consuming and expensive inbound calls that require handling by customer account managers (CAMs). A significant percentage of these calls come from customers who are in the early stages of card debt and who wish to either make a payment or indicate their intention to pay.

'Commit to pay' calls, in particular, were causing significant challenges to the call centre operation as they provided little or no value to the business, yet tied up valuable skilled agent resources.

Having previously experienced long lead times for making changes to existing applications the organisation insisted on having the flexibility to be able to make controlled system changes without the need to call upon scarce and expensive application development resources. Additionally, the solution was to be fully open-standards and interoperable with existing infrastructure.

In order to alleviate the pressure on the call centre and to enable the live agent resources to be dedicated to providing real improvements in customer service, the organisation embarked on a project to provide an advanced speech recognition solution to automate the handling of these calls.

## The solution

Vicorp's xMP was chosen as the application technology environment for its market-leading open-standards approach and its innovative application management capability that enables internal business users to make controlled system changes within a fraction of the time it had previously taken.

Additionally, xMP enables organisations to take control of their brand image that is portrayed through the voice channel. The customer organisation used this capability to brand their application in several ways so that customers were answered by different business units, based on their stage of outstanding monies owed.

**THE BENEFITS:**

- Reduction in collections FTEs required to support the current business volumes
- Flexibility to improve call centre service levels
- Flexibility for the business to be able controlled small system changes, including the use of brands
- Improved consistency of process driving both operational risk and customer experience

**The benefits**

The project was an instant success with an increased level of self-management by the organisation and a differentiated offering to targeted callers. It was delivered on time, within budget and produced the following high-level business benefits:

- Good return on investment and fast payback
- Reduction in collections FTEs (Full Time Equivalent) required to support the current business volumes
- Flexibility to improve call centre service levels
- Flexibility for the business to be able controlled small system changes, including the use of brands
- Improved consistency of process driving both operational risk and customer experience

Results achieved with this project included:

- ROI after just 5 months, £1.5 million had been collected and a further £800,000 in customer promise-to-pay in this short period.
- The business is now able to make controlled system changes in a fraction of the time and cost previously required
- The system has been proven to be robust and reliable

**Moving forward**

The success of this project has proven how the automation of certain calls can bring speedy and great benefits to organisations. Automated systems are becoming more widely accepted by callers and this is opening up new opportunities to companies looking to cut costs for the long term.

## Contact us

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