



Kenwood achieve great customer service with speech recognition technology

In pursuit of continuous business improvement Kenwood/DeLonghi recognised that they wanted:

- **to automate repetitive and mundane operator tasks**
- **customer service levels to remain synonymous with the quality and reliability of their appliances**
- **to free up operator time to concentrate on more complex issues**

About Kenwood/DeLonghi Limited

Kenwood/DeLonghi is a leading household appliance manufacturer. In 2001 Kenwood became part of the De'Longhi Group, strengthening its offering and international presence.

Today Kenwood is a household name in over 80 countries; it manufactures leading houseware and kitchen appliances in several regions around the world.

Kenwood headquarters are in Havant, Hampshire, UK with a second base in Hong Kong to oversee its operations in the Far East.

The Service Team (also based in Havant) is responsible for spares, technical information and support for Kenwood worldwide, and also for DeLonghi support in the UK.

Kenwood and DeLonghi appliances are associated with quality and reliability; therefore any enquiries or contact with the customer service team needs to reflect these attributes.

The Issues

The Kenwood/DeLonghi UK call centre receives enquiries for pre-sales advice and after-sales support via phone, email and fax.

Information on authorised repairers is held in a simple spreadsheet, and is also available graphically on the Kenwood/DeLonghi customer service website.

Kenwood/DeLonghi estimated that the equivalent of one call centre operator was occupied full time with locator calls.

Kenwood/DeLonghi recognised that if they could automate these repetitive and mundane but important calls this operator could be freed up for more productive and fulfilling duties requiring quality 'one-to-one' contact with callers.

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Importantly, the majority of these enquiries are taken over the phone. Calls come from a number of groups of people - UK consumers, authorised repairers, retailers, and other business partners. These calls are answered by a live call centre operator.

The Service Team found that many of the after-sales calls were from customers simply wanting to find where their local service centre was located (locator calls). Kenwood/DeLonghi has an extensive network of authorised repairers around the UK that consumers can be directed to.

The Solution

Already a long-standing Telephonetics VIP customer, Kenwood had implemented the Contact Centre solution in their call centre in 2001, Kenwood/DeLonghi again turned to Telephonetics VIP to discuss the options available to them for automating the locator calls.

Following careful analysis of the type and structure of the calls received, call volumes and the levels of human interaction required, Telephonetics VIP suggested the implementation of a speech self-service solution to handle ➤

Telephonetics VIP is a leading provider of hosted and customer premises speech recognition and voice automation solutions. From voice diallers that automate the operator function and deliver hands-free mobility, to MovieLINE[®], our cinema information and booking system, we have consistently demonstrated our ability to deploy market tailored speech solutions into very demanding environments,

delivering real business benefits to our customers. Our solutions for self-service, call steering, mobility, outbound messaging and business continuity deliver all the potential that speech has to offer.

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▶ these customer requests. The speech self-service solution uses proven speech recognition technology to answer selected calls from customers, listen to their requirements, and action them as appropriate; in this instance to provide local service centre details.

Jeff Turner, Head of After Sales Service at Kenwood/DeLonghi, commented "We were well aware of the benefits speech self-service can offer but wanted to ensure that any implementation would not cause disruption to the level of service we provide to our customers. We chose to work with Telephonetics VIP as they have continually proved that they can be trusted to deliver the anticipated return on investment, and are confident they can meet our ongoing automation requirements."

Using Telephonetics VIP's Virtual Contact Centre Agent solution to supplement existing contact centre agents, Kenwood/DeLonghi has not only been able to improve customer service, but also increased operating efficiencies by being able to direct calls to the appropriate authorised repairers. They can now also gather information on call statistics to ensure they have sufficient levels of repairers in each region.

Why Telephonetics VIP?

Jeff continues "We considered several possible solutions, most of which were too expensive to justify the costs. With an already established relationship

through using the Contact Centre solution, we felt that Telephonetics VIP had always delivered what they promised, provided the anticipated return on investment, and worked with us to develop our processes further."

“ Although we are new to speech recognition and associated automation we are confident that the partnership with Telephonetics VIP will be fruitful for both our businesses. ”



How the Solution Works

Callers dial into the main number where they are first asked if they own a DeLonghi PrimaDonna or Magnifica appliance (complex appliances that are best dealt with by a specialised facility), these calls are swiftly directed to a contact centre agent. For all other appliances the self-service speech solution handles the call, the caller is asked to state whether their product is a 'Kenwood' or 'DeLonghi' brand, then

their postcode, and finally the first line of their address. The automated system then confirms the address given and provides the name, address, telephone number and journey distance for the nearest authorised repair centre, plus an alternative repair centre if appropriate.

The Future

Looking to the future Kenwood/DeLonghi are planning to simplify the automation process further to use the postcode only with no street name, and therefore help to reduce call time even further.

With a move to a modern digital switchboard, more automation opportunities will be opened up. For example automatic identification of the caller's location when calling from a landline, eliminating the need for them to speak their postcode, and the option to text back service agents details to a mobile phone or similar device.

Jeff concludes "Although we are new to speech recognition and associated automation we are confident that the partnership with Telephonetics VIP will be fruitful for both our businesses."

