



CASE STUDY:

Plum Delivers an IVR-Based Automated Help Desk Solution for PNY Technologies



PNY Technologies is a billion-dollar enterprise, distributing thousands of computer-related products including memory chips and graphics cards. The PNY call center relies on Plum turnkey systems for IVR solutions that are robust, reliable, easy-to-modify, and manageable.

Key Requirements

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| Live modification of prompts and other IVR information | 24x7x365 reliability |
| Ease of maintenance | Integration with Avaya Definity |
| Rapid implementation | Solution Implementation |

The PNY Technologies tech support call center has a difficult job: Supporting literally thousands of product SKUs from both the current and prior product lines. Product pricing is aggressive and lifetime support guarantees are standard. Hence, profitability depends on handling support as efficiently as possible. PNY turned to Plum Voice Portals to supply the most effective and economical IVR solution for the task.

IVR had been in use by PNY for years. The company had relied on both an Avaya ACD and an Avaya IVR as the key call center technologies. But the Avaya IVR system carried significant disadvantages. Reliability was questionable, and maintenance was onerous and expensive. Most problematic, even minor changes to the IVR call flow required a knowledgeable technician to be brought in. Each change also required a complete system shutdown and reboot. With product changes occurring on a weekly basis, the Avaya solution proved far too expensive to maintain.

Plum offered a compelling alternative. The IVR call flow was constructed with flexible VoiceXML. Administration and maintenance of the Plum Voice Portal is dramatically easier than it was with the Avaya IVR. A browser-based utility allows for real-time changes to the call script. Call script "nodes" are added, deleted, or modified in real-time, without any need to shutdown the system. And thousands of nodes of answers to FAQs have been added without the assistance of a technician or programmer. Each node could employ pre-recorded prompts or text-to-speech voicing. And the changing of pre-recorded prompts was as easy as possible: a new wav file can be recorded and uploaded to the IVR application by anyone on the call center team.

The Plum system integrates with the Avaya Definity switch to receive ANI and DNIS information, while enabling both blind and bridge transfer. Once installed, real-time system monitoring was enabled, ensuring rapid service and support and the best possible uptime.

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On-going benefits

Easy, real-time modification of the IVR application - The PNY product set changes with the seasons, and each product requires a slightly different set of options on the IVR system. Avaya's system required shutdown of the machine with every change. Plum Voice Portals enable management and modification of the PNY IVR application in a straightforward and convenient manner. The PNY team can access the IVR from any workstation, as management utilities are browser based. Via this browser interface, PNY makes real-time changes to the structure and content of the information presented to callers. Changes are made without any interruption to existing calls. There is no need to shutdown or reboot the Plum system; Callers are served around the clock, without interruption.

24x7x365 monitoring and remote management - PNY has not faced any system outages of their Plum VoiceXML IVR system. But 24x7x365 monitoring of the system will enable both Plum and PNY to respond expediently if a problem should arise. The Plum operations center receives detailed, round-the-clock feed back from the system at PNY's call center. If software maintenance or repair is required, remote maintenance boards allow the Plum operations staff to rebuild the PNY system from the BIOS up. If hardware maintenance is required, Plum offers both 4-hour onsite maintenance and next-day cross shipment of a full operational replacement.

Easy and affordable expandability - There is no practical limit on the expandability of the Plum VoiceXML IVR system supplied to PNY Technologies. Additional telephony gateways can be added to handle the company's ever-increasing call volume. Setup of additional gateways can be accomplished in a matter of minutes, and all gateways can be managed from a single centralized administration UI. Plum's VoiceXML app server and admin, housed on the initial VoiceXML IVR system installed, can manage thousands of simultaneous ports.

Lower call center costs - Now that PNY's IVR system is robust and easy-to-manage, callers are increasingly satisfied with using the automated system and are relying less-and-less on the assistance of live operators. Roughly 60% of calls to PNY support lines are now handled entirely by the Plum VoiceXML IVR system. And average call length has decreased by roughly 20%, indicating that callers are finding the information they need much more efficiently than before.

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