

## Challenge

When Language Line Services launched Your World, Your Language<sup>SM</sup>, the first free service that helps limited-English speakers buy business services, it needed a partner that could leverage Intelligent Communications to bring the offer in on time and on budget, while laying the foundation for future growth.

In order to provide the highest quality at the lowest cost, Language Line needed to maximize its agents' productivity by connecting customers to interpreters as quickly as possible. Yet its legacy interactive response infrastructure was proving too costly, too cumbersome and too limited.

Language Line needed a larger feature set to keep up with its growing product line. The company also wanted to be able to expand more flexibly and cost effectively than its existing Interactive Voice Response allowed. Finally, Language Line was restrained by its communications infrastructure which was composed of several disparate systems. It hungered for the interoperability and reliability that a single, comprehensive communications platform would afford.

## Solution

Avaya Voice Portal and Avaya Dialog Designer enabled Language Line to meet the aggressive launch date for Your World, Your Language while laying the groundwork for improved communications efficiency throughout Language Line's operation. Avaya Voice Portal enables Language Line to deliver efficient and satisfying voice self-service applications within Language Line's existing IT environment. A single Avaya Voice Portal serves all seven of Language Line's large interpreter centers. Avaya Dialog Designer enables Language Line to quickly and easily program Avaya Voice Portal. Dynamically generating both speech and DTMF Voice XML applications, it makes it easier than ever before to create and customize interactive voice applications.

## Value Created

- Consistent, branded customer experience by delivering consistent quality across all customer channels.
- Intelligent, personalized interactions with customers through self-service data collection that reduces hold times and quickly connects callers with an appropriate interpreter.
- More productive internal collaboration by efficiently scheduling home-based interpreters.
- Faster linkage of people, processes and resources by efficiently directing calls to the right resource every time.
- More agile, secure and reliable operations through open standards and flexible, enterprise-wide licensing.

# Avaya Voice Portal Gives Language Line the Reliability, Flexibility, and Scalability for New Interpretation Service

Monterey, California, USA – When Language Line Services launched *Your World, Your Language<sup>SM</sup>*, the first free service that helps limited-English speakers buy business services, it needed a partner that could leverage Intelligent Communications to bring the offer in on time and on budget, while laying the foundation for future growth.

Interoperable, scaleable and flexible, Avaya Voice Portal and Avaya Dialog Designer fit the bill, enabling Language Line to deploy its new offer in just one quarter of the time that might otherwise have been required. Now, with these two solutions in place, Language Line plans to continue to evolve to a more cost-effective, feature-rich communications platform.

## New Service, New Competitive Edge

Before, Language Line had offered its service exclusively to businesses. When limited-English customers contacted businesses that subscribed to the service, they would be connected to a Language Line interpreter to help them through their transaction with that business.

With *Your World, Your Language*, consumers dial a toll-free number to be connected with banking, insurance, telephone, Internet, utility and other vital business services in their native languages within their local Metropolitan Statistical Area. *Your World, Your Language* connects them with a participating business. Callers can talk in their own languages to a host of key businesses, anytime and at no charge.

After just four months in operation, this new service already is proving to be a boon not only to limited-English speaking consumers themselves but also to Language Line and its business clients. AT&T, which uses *Your World, Your Language* to sell its cellular services, residential telephones, Internet service and DISH network, credits Language Line with helping it achieve a phenomenal 57 percent close rate.

Results like that can't help but give Language Line a strong competitive edge in its marketplace. According to Tom Sterns, director, advanced technology development, "We're in the business of helping our customers make money. So far, the results with 'Your World, Your Language' have been very, very good."

## The Challenge

The world's largest provider of phone interpretation services, Language Line Services supports public and private clients in such industries as finance, healthcare, insurance, and entertainment; as well as vital police and emergency services, state and federal government agencies and judicial systems. In this highly competitive service sector, companies like Language Line must stay at the top of their game; they cannot afford to remain stagnant but must continuously strive to improve responsiveness to delight customers, control costs to maintain margins, and take advantage of new technologies to enlist the best-skilled workers, regardless of geographic location.

Sterns comments, "The acknowledged 'Big Fish' in this interpretive services 'pond,' Language Line must continue to be able to provide the highest quality at the lowest cost, without becoming a commodity. This means maximizing our agents' productivity by connecting customers to interpreters as quickly as possible. Our goal is to make that connection in 12 seconds or less, every time, every day."

## New Technology for New Needs

As Language Line expanded, its legacy platform for Interactive Voice Response was proving too costly, too cumbersome and too limited to meet its needs.

*"Our old system wasn't equal to the rapid application development and deployment of new applications and features that we required. We needed a larger feature set to keep up with our growing product line and wanted better text-to-speech and speech recognition services than the old system could offer.*

*"We also wanted to be able to expand more flexibly and cost effectively than our existing systems allowed. We had to purchase additional servers and additional licenses every time we maxed out the number of ports. We needed to purchase two of everything in order to get the redundancy and reliability we required," Sterns says.*

Language Line was also being restrained by its communications infrastructure which was composed of several disparate systems. "Each of the companies Language Line acquired had its own, separate communications system. So we lacked inter-office dialing capabilities and a uniform call flow. We hungered for the interoperability and reliability that a single, comprehensive communications platform would afford," he explains.

## Touchstone for Change

The launch of Language Line's new service, *Your World, Your Language*<sup>SM</sup>, in October 2006, provided the company with the impetus it needed to upgrade its communications infrastructure.

Language Line needed a platform that would enable it to harness the power of Intelligent Communications to move its business forward. *Your World, Your Language* relies on Avaya Voice Portal, which is programmed through Avaya Dialog Designer, to route calls to the most appropriate interpreter in the shortest possible time.

Language Line considered six vendors for the job. Avaya was the only one that was able to work within the launch timeline and within Language Line's existing Conversant

environment. Avaya Voice Portal and Avaya Dialog Designer were able to interoperate with the company's own, homegrown systems and legacy switches. Genesys, Plum Voice Portals, Voxeo and others were not equal to the challenge; their solutions were unable to interoperate with Language Line's existing systems, Sterns said.

## The Avaya Difference

An acknowledged leader for Voice Portals and IVR Systems, Avaya was listed in the Leader's Quadrant of Gartner's Magic Quadrant for IVR Systems and Enterprise Voice Portals, 2005. So the Avaya Voice Portal, which provides unequalled reliability, interoperability and flexibility, was the natural choice for Language Line.

A Web Services-based software platform, Avaya Voice Portal enables Language Line to deliver efficient and satisfying voice self-service applications by combining the power of open standards, web, and IP Telephony. A single Avaya Voice Portal serves all seven of Language Line's large interpreter centers. It supports voice self-service applications within Language Line's existing IT environment and includes best-in-class integrations with the latest in IP telephony, speech recognition, and Service Oriented Architecture (SOA).

Language Line uses several voice self-service applications. These include an inbound customer service line with an auto attendant feature that routes callers to the correct resource. Home-based interpreters also use voice self-service applications to log in without a PC, registering themselves as available to take calls via an automated voice system. By making their home-based interpreters extensions of the contact center, these applications ensure business continuity and flexibility. With Avaya IP Agent, in the event of a failure at one facility, interpreters can readily continue working by logging into another center.

Language Line is also “front-ending” calls for customers in their language of choice. Participating businesses give their customers a toll-free number that they can call when they need to interact with that business, in language, through an interpreter. It also makes the service available through pre-paid calling cards that businesses give their customers. For example, a travel agency might give a pre-paid card to its limited-English speaking clients to use should they need roadside assistance. The card has a built-in pin number that ensures that the user is, in fact, a customer of the participating business. Callers use the card to connect with a Language Line interpreter who then places the outbound call for roadside assistance.

Voice self-service applications like these enable Language Line to improve its responsiveness to its customers and its interpreters alike. Customers get to the right resource more quickly and interpreters are able to register for their shifts more efficiently.

Language Line uses Avaya Dialog Designer to quickly and easily program Avaya Voice Portal. Grounded on an open, eclipse-based speech application development environment, Avaya Dialog Designer dynamically generates both speech and DTMF Voice XML applications. Its open standards and eclipse framework make it easier than ever before to create and customize interactive voice applications. Since it's so much faster and more flexible, Language Line is able to bring its applications online more quickly, making it more responsive to customers and more competitive in its market.

## Multiple Advantages

Avaya Voice Portal, which provides text-to-speech and speech recognition functionalities, is improving Language Line's efficiency, improving customer satisfaction, saving the company money and space, and preparing Language Line to continue to flatten, consolidate and extend its network at its own pace.

According to Sterns, the beauty of Avaya Voice Portal is that, *“It is an end-to-end solution – from servers to the best development tool. Based on open standards, it lets us easily design precisely what we need. And its standards-based programming makes connecting to the database a ‘no brainer.’ All you have to do is add a node.”*

He estimates that Avaya Voice Portal has reduced Language Line's provisioning time by about 30 percent. *“Avaya Voice Portal has greatly reduced our time to market. We are able to develop applications and put them into production much faster than before. We can get the hardware piece done in just days. What used to take us a minimum of 6-12 weeks can now be done in just a couple of weeks. So we no longer have to oversubscribe to services as we did in the past. Now we can develop what we need, when we need it.”*

Similarly, Avaya Dialog Designer has astronomically reduced the amount of time needed to develop applications. *“With Voice Portal and Dialog Designer, our application development is 500 percent faster than with any of our legacy interactive response systems.”*

Avaya Voice Portal also requires less hardware and costs less to maintain than the company's legacy system. It occupies just one quarter of the rack space required by Language Line's Conversant system. *“We were able to eliminate 21 T-1s and now have the equivalent of 1,000 agents in just 50 sq. ft. of real estate,”* Sterns says.

It also greatly reduces licensing costs by enabling active licenses to be shared across multiple voice portal configurations. In the event of an outage, licenses can be freed from the affected site and manually moved in real time to spare hardware capacity at an unaffected site. This gives Language Line the disaster recovery/business continuity security it needs – without having to purchase spare licenses.

**“With Voice Portal and Dialog Designer, our application development is 500 percent faster than with any of our legacy Interactive Voice Response systems.”**

*Tom Sterns, director, advanced technology development*

Ease of administration and speedier provisioning is only part of the story. The speech recognition that is built into the Avaya Voice Portal is enabling Language Line to customize data collection for its customers, reduce its own overhead and connect callers to the appropriate interpreter more quickly. Customers spend less time on hold or in queue, which in turn drives retention up.

Avaya Voice Portal is also contributing to improved agent productivity. *“With this self-service application, customers provide such information as their billing i.d. and specify the language required. So agents spend less time collecting data – a non-revenue generating task,”* Sterns says. Instead, agents can immediately focus on routing callers to the correct interpreter, which drives Language Line's bottom line. Efficiency is up, since agents spend less time per call.

Moreover, Sterns says, *“The quality of the development tools and the feature set is 100 percent better with Avaya Voice Portal. At the same time, it is also proving to be easily half as costly as our legacy interactive response system. Moreover, since the new system is standards-based, we can choose the most appropriate vendor for any of the components that we need.”*

## Looking Ahead

Language Line understands that Intelligent Communications holds the key to differentiating its business from the competition. The company is planning to improve its call reporting functionality by upgrading to the newest version of the Avaya Call Management System. It also will be moving to Application Enablement Services, which lets traditional IT data application developers interface with Avaya Communication Manager through standard Web Services via SOAP/XML methods. There's less re-training involved, since this provides a standard and familiar method for IT data application developers to implement new and innovative solutions.

Language Line is migrating to a system in which Voice Portal profiles a call and identifies the class of interpreter that is needed. *"This will give us the benefit of queuing,"* Sterns says. The company will continue to deploy additional Voice Portal features, including the integration of voice with Web services. In the future, he envisions that customers will be able to use a "click-to-call" feature to connect with an interpreter from the Web.

Finally, Sterns also sees the company bringing in Avaya Business Advocate which, he says, will enable the company to deliver a consistent, average call answer speed of less than 10 seconds.

Other companies considering Avaya Voice Portal should expect to need half as many developers as before, Sterns advises. JAVA will be an important skill set, he adds, recommending that companies also should take advantage of the store of knowledge held by Web developers.

Systems integrator BrantTel Networks, San Jose, Calif., an Avaya BusinessPartner, advises Language Line about these and other new Intelligent Communications technologies that are changing the way the services sector does business today.

## Learn More

For more information on how Avaya Intelligent Communications can take your enterprise from where it is to where it needs to be, contact your Avaya Client Executive or a member of the Avaya Authorized BusinessPartner program, or visit **"Do Your Research"** at [www.avaya.com](http://www.avaya.com).

## APPLICATIONS

- Avaya Voice Portal
- Avaya Dialog Designer
- Avaya Communication Manager
- Avaya Call Center
- Avaya Call Management System
- Avaya Interactive Response
- Avaya CONVERSANT® System
- Blue Pumpkin Workforce Management
- NICE Analyzer

## SYSTEMS

- Avaya S8710 Server in Local Survivable Processor mode
- Avaya G650 Media Gateways
- Avaya IP Telephones

## SERVICES

- Avaya Maintenance Agreement

All statements in this Case Study were made by Tom Sterns, director, advanced technology development.

### ABOUT LANGUAGE LINE

The world's leading provider of language-based services, Language Line Services is a trusted partner to thousands of organizations whose focus is to effectively serve the rapidly expanding market of limited English proficient speakers. The company delivers a dynamic suite of solutions spanning phone and video interpretation, document translation, interactive software-based translation, and interpreter training and certification programs. Language Line Services delivers support for over 170 unique languages to its portfolio of thousands of clients in telecommunications, healthcare, financial services, government, insurance, travel, and more. For information on how Language Line Services is helping clients achieve their strategic multicultural marketing and regulatory compliance objectives, please call 1-800-752-6096 or visit [www.language.com](http://www.language.com).

### ABOUT BRANTTEL NETWORKS

Headquartered in San Jose, Calif., BrantTel Networks is a communications company that provides expertise in the voice and converged enterprise marketplace to FORTUNE 1000 customers. A distributor of Avaya communications solutions, BrantTel is a member of the Avaya BusinessPartner program specializing in IP Telephony design and voice application deployment. For more information, please visit [www.branttel.com](http://www.branttel.com).

### ABOUT AVAYA

Avaya is a global leader in enterprise communications systems. The company provides unified communications, contact centers, and related services directly and through its channel partners to leading businesses and organizations around the world. Enterprises of all sizes depend on Avaya for state-of-the-art communications that improve efficiency, collaboration, customer service and competitiveness.

For more information please visit [www.avaya.com](http://www.avaya.com).