



Cook County Hospitals and County Departments Reduce Costs with Avaya Solution Deployed by Accuvoice

Challenge:

Increase its level of customer service to citizens (who were often unable to get the information or help they needed from County agencies via telephone), increase its system capacity for employees of County departments and hospitals (who were unable to be productive using the old system) and increase its ability to handle after-hours inquiries – all without hiring additional personnel.

Solution:

Avaya IPT Contact Center Solutions deployed over a private network, layered with Avaya and Accuvoice Self Service applications to give callers 24/7 access to County information and databases. Avaya Mobility Solutions also facilitate higher levels of productivity and flexibility among County employees.

Value Created:

- Intelligent, personalized interactions thanks to Accuvoice's deployment of Avaya IR, allowing Cook County citizens to call and receive personal information from 12 different County departments around the clock.
- Faster linkage of people, processes and resources with Avaya IP Wireless Telephones that allow Cook County physicians to communicate on the run.
- More agile, secure and reliable operations with Avaya IPT Contact Center Solution which reduces employee-assisted calls by routing 98 percent of calls over the County's own network and employing "least-cost" routing functionality.
- Consistent, branded customer experience across County departments.

Spanning 950 square miles, Cook County, Ill., is the second-largest county in the United States. Its three public hospitals include John H. Stroger Jr. and Provident Hospitals, based in

Chicago, and Oak Forest Hospital, Oak Forest, Ill. Cook County's 12 major departments include the Treasurer's Office, the Assessor's Office and the Building and Zoning Department.

Cook County officials approached Avaya, with whom they'd had a longstanding relationship. Avaya suggested a solution that included Avaya Internet Protocol (IP)-enabled communication software, switches and speech self-service solutions. They also suggested that Accuvoice®, an Avaya BusinessPartner and Premier-level member in the DeveloperConnection Program, deploy the Avaya Interactive Response (IR) solution.

Cook County's Business Challenge:

Inefficiencies in Cook County impacted both the hospitals and all 12 major County departments. In the hospitals, doctors sometimes needed to line up at phones to get lab results. Pharmacy operations were also inefficient. At the County departments, citizens complained that they were unable to get through to the offices they needed, and that services were not available after hours.

All departments received a substantial volume of incoming calls without sufficient staff to handle them. Many misdirected calls were routed to various departments that required a

transfer by personnel to the correct location. Departments were unable to manage the activity in a normal business day or to staff for overtime. Cook County needed a way to enhance its level of service without hiring additional personnel.

Key Capabilities of the Solution

The solution includes Avaya Internet Protocol (IP)-enabled communications software, switches and speech self-service solutions. Specific components include IP-enabled Avaya DEFINITY® Communications Servers and Avaya IP Wireless Telephones. The solution also includes Avaya IR and Accuvoice's Interactive Response (IR) applications.

Avaya Interactive Response (IR) is a self-service software platform for voice and speech applications. Avaya IR empowers enterprises to automate common customer interaction and fulfillment tasks via touchtone, fax, TDD devices or natural language speech. Avaya IR is fully integrated with the Avaya Customer Interaction Suite, allowing callers to move seamlessly from self-service interaction to assisted, live agent interactions as needed, without loss of context.

Accuvoice's IR applications are based on a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) model that recognizes today's contact centers

as complex customer interface environments. Customers need to get information about accounts, orders, specials, or specific information on a host of products and services. They require a personalized environment that recognizes their individual needs.

Accuvoice provided assistance to the following Cook County Agencies:

- Building and Zoning
- Clerk of the Cook County Board (County Clerk)
- Elections (County Clerk)
- Ethics & Campaign Disclosure (County Clerk)
- Jury Administrations/Standby Jury Information (Chief Justice)
- Risk Management
- Office of the Treasurer
- Vital Statistics (Clerk's Office)
- Pharmacy Refill Services
- Office of the Assessor
- Real Estate & Tax (County Clerk)

Seamless Transition to a New System

The project was two years in the making. Avaya and Accuvoice team members worked together throughout the process.

First, team members interviewed numerous representatives of all departments and listened to their concerns. They explained the IR technology and capabilities and made suggestions for application solutions unique to each department. The applications for each concentrated on call direction (auto-attendant), the provision of general information (bulletin board) and special custom scripts with database access.

Total number of calls the County receives per day: 15,000 Work days per year: 260	
Before Solution Implemented:	
Cost for rep to handle calls:	\$5.00 per call or \$75,000 per day
After Solution Implemented (with IR offloading an estimated 40% of calls):	
Dollars saved per day:	\$30,000
Dollars saved per year:	\$7,800,000

Next, team members created statements of work (SOWs) for each department and prepared proposals and return on investment (ROI) information. The pricing of the entire project included upgrades to Avaya DEFINITY® Communications Servers, Avaya IR and other components.

Benefits for Cook County

“Our three hospitals expect to see their telecommunications bills drop dramatically,” said Catherine Maras O’Leary, chief information officer for Cook County. *“At the county level, we’re saving \$8 to \$9 million a year by routing 98 percent of our calls over our own network and using ‘least cost’ routing functionality.”*

The new Avaya IP Wireless Telephone Solution for physicians allow employees to communicate on the run — an investment that O’Leary estimates has paid for itself in only a few months.

Revolutionary changes in pharmacy operations have resulted in significant time and dollar savings each year. *“We receive as many as 1,600 to 2,000 prescription refill requests a day,”* said O’Leary. *“We’re operating more efficiently, wait times are down and we’re delivering better service to the community.”*

Accuvoice’s deployment of Avaya IR among the 12 County departments has provided residents with fast, automated, round-the-clock access to information. The County will now be able to handle a large percentage of its business on a 24x7 basis rather than during a normal business day. Since

hiring additional personnel to staff these departments after hours was never an option, the enhanced level of service is significant.

For example, a caller could receive information on the status of tax payments and refunds from the Cook County Treasurer’s Office, the assessment value of property from the Assessor’s Office and the status of a building permit or zoning designation from the Building and Zoning Department. Since Avaya IR will be linked directly to County databases, it can verify identities and share specific, personalized, real-time information using text-to-speech capabilities.

In addition, a bulletin board function automates answers to such common questions as hours of operation and department functions, giving residents a quick way to access information after hours or during peak calling periods — and freeing County workers to spend time on more complex tasks.

O’Leary adds, *“We look at the County as an enterprise. Like any large business, we needed a solution that would be extremely dependable and able to accommodate our scale. Avaya had a path for companies to follow that could get us where we wanted to be.”*

Learn More

For more information on how Avaya can take your enterprise from where it is to where it needs to be, contact your Avaya Client Executive or Authorized Avaya BusinessPartner, or visit us at www.avaya.com

About Cook County

Founded in 1831, Cook County is the 2nd-largest county in the United States, spanning some 950 square miles. Its three public hospitals include John H. Stroger, Jr. and Provident Hospitals in Chicago and Oak Forrest Hospital, Oak Forest, Ill. The County has 32 clinics. Cook County's 12 major departments include the Treasurer's Office, the Assessor's Office, Building and Zoning Department, the Clerk of the County Board, Real Estate and Tax and Jury Administrations. The 26,000 employees of the County serve over five million citizens. The County Board of Commissioners is led by President John H. Stroger, Jr.

About Accuvoice

Accuvoice® is an Avaya Certified IR Application Developer, with developed applications for the Avaya IR/IVR in the public sector, and in such industries as telecommunications, retail, healthcare, and financial services. Accuvoice is an award-winning Independent Software Vendor and Voice Processing Co-Marketer certified by Avaya at the highest level. Accuvoice designs and develops custom IR applications and off-the-shelf turnkey software solutions. CRM and Self-Service Applications are a part of this value proposition. Accuvoice offers touch-tone or voice (NLSR), text-to-speech, faxing, and out-calling as packaged or customized IR/IVR applications.

Accuvoice's dedication to quality, service and dependability has resulted in contract awards from many notable businesses and government agencies. All the Accuvoice voice response software packages are specifically designed to meet the needs of businesses. All applications are designed to reside on platforms offered by Avaya, but built on standards that comply with other world-class switches. For more information, visit, www.accuvoice.com.

About DevConnect

The Developer*Connection* Program (DevConnect) is a comprehensive set of innovative sales, support, marketing and services programs through which Avaya works with members to develop and promote their products and solutions that interoperate with Avaya solutions.

For more information, visit DevConnect at www.devconnectprogram.com.

Applications	Systems	Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avaya MultiVantage® Communications Applications• Avaya Communication Manager• Avaya Interactive Response• Avaya INTUITY® AUDIX® Voice Messaging• Accuvoice Interactive Response	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avaya DEFINITY® Communications Server• Avaya S8700 Media Servers• Avaya S8500 Media Servers• Avaya G650 Gateways• Avaya 4600 Series IP Telephones• Avaya 3620 IP Wireless Telephones	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Services provided by Accuvoice

All statements in this Case Study were made by Catherine Maras O'Leary, chief information officer for Cook County.