



Pizza Hut Orders Up Better Customer Experience



Natural Language Call Steering Helps Reduce Customer Wait Times and Increase Revenue

Call routing is a critical function of Pizza Hut Australia's business model. But the company's legacy system wasn't delivering. "Much of our business originates via phone, with customers phoning in orders for pick up or scheduling delivery, explains Patrick Branley, director of technology at Pizza Hut Australia. "With such a massive call volume, even the smallest inefficiencies are greatly magnified, negatively impacting our business and that of our franchisees."

The legacy system routed calls to franchisees based solely on caller location, resulting in high lead-generation fees paid by the franchise with only a subset of those leads converting to orders. To improve efficiency, Pizza Hut Australia decided to overhaul its fragmented call-routing infrastructure to increase the quality of inbound calls to franchisees.

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Pizza Hut Australia

The fragmented legacy system was cumbersome and provided limited visibility into the customer experience. For example, the old system could catalog which customers abandoned their calls prior to ordering, but lacked the ability to identify when those customers dropped off. And that insight would have helped the team understand how to optimize the performance of the self-service application.

Out with the Old, In with New Ingredients

The Pizza Hut Australia team considered updating its legacy call-steering system, but chose to build a new solution using the [Five9 Intelligent Virtual Agent \(IVA\)](#) platform. Updating the legacy system would have required updates to several disparate components, with no guarantee that the patchwork approach would deliver much advantage. Pizza Hut Australia ultimately decided to build new applications for natural language call steering and self-service based on the latest IVA technology from Five9. Factors driving the decision included Five9's attractive cost structure, robust reporting capabilities, and the ability to make future changes and updates without the need to engage outside development resources.

"We were at the end of life for our existing system," says Branley. "We needed to upgrade, and we also wanted to improve the customer experience and create efficiencies for our franchisees."

The Five9 IVA capabilities act as an abstraction layer to Google's speech and mapping APIs, which enable an intuitive voice-based interaction that effortlessly connects the caller with his or her neighborhood Pizza Hut restaurant. When a customer dials



Pizza Hut Australia Case Study | Retail

Pizza Hut Australia operates approximately 270 restaurants in Australia, all linked via a single phone number that fields more than 3,000 calls each day.

Challenges

- Expensive and complex: Phone-based orders were costly; needed to automate and streamline orders
- Minimal reporting: Couldn't identify why customers abandoned orders
- Lacked integration: Voice and web were separate systems
- Costly to support: Required external vendors for changes

Solution

Five9 IVA routes incoming calls and allows customers to choose what they need. Callers state their address or location and are connected to place an order or provided with details of the nearest restaurant.

Results

- Solution creates cost efficiencies in contact center and call costs
- New system eliminates high lead-generation fees incurred by the legacy system
- System streamlines customer interactions and routes subsequent calls to caller's preferred restaurant
- Robust, on-demand reporting aggregates customer interaction data and enables identification of trouble spots for adjustment
- AI and natural language processing enable a truly conversational, highly accurate interaction
- Ease of management allows in-house team to maintain and update IVAs

Pizza Hut Australia's main phone number, the IVA asks if the customer is calling for pickup, delivery, or something else. Once the caller answers that question, they're asked to state their address or postal code, and the IVA routes the call to the neighborhood restaurant.

Because speech recognition is based on Google's speech-to-text and not a set of closed grammar, the experience is truly conversational and highly accurate. And due to the richness of Google's mapping data, the customer can even geo-locate based on landmarks. For example, someone could indicate they are near a grocery store at the intersection of X and Y streets, and automatically be routed to the nearest Pizza Hut location.

"Closed-grammar architecture would have required significant front-end work to get the IVA up and running," adds Branley. "But through Five9 we were able to use Google's speech-to-text engine, which has been trained to understand and translate into text the numerous ways people describe addresses and locations. This meant that we didn't have to construct grammars that would have included street names, house numbers, postal codes, or other types of location-matching information. We were also able to use Google's geolocation API to find the location of the nearest store after the caller gives the virtual agent an address or location."

"The Five9 solution was easy to implement and actually wrapped up ahead of schedule, which is unheard of with a project of this magnitude."

Patrick Branley, Director of Technology,
Pizza Hut Australia

A Fresh New System

Five9 IVA capabilities enabled Pizza Hut Australia to centralize customer data via flexible API integration, coalescing what were previously disparate systems around a common set of services. Offering a broader array of self-service options enabled Pizza Hut Australia to improve customer satisfaction, increase loyalty, and ultimately drive repeat purchases.

At a more granular level, the new virtual agent capabilities deliver unique benefits for the company as well as individual franchisee. These benefits include:

- **Streamlined future calls:** System retains answers from each customer interaction so subsequent calls from the same phone number automatically route to the caller's preferred restaurant.
- **Robust reporting:** On-demand reporting aggregates customer interaction data and enables Pizza Hut Australia to identify trouble spots and adjust as necessary.
- **Simple, in-house updates:** The Five9 Studio 7 platform's drag-and-drop interface enables your IT personnel to make updates and build in additional functionality without having to engage outside development resources.
- **Ease of management:** A centrally located data repository empowers in-house staff to update the system without involving outside vendors.
- **Single API layer:** Website and IVA capabilities utilize the same intelligence to support existing and future capabilities.
- **Cloud-based architecture:** Everything is managed centrally in the cloud, so there's no need to manage separate hardware, software, and other equipment.

Specific benefits to franchisees include:

- **Universal local calling:** Pizza Hut Australia purchased the virtual agents through its carrier, Telstra, which reduced telephony costs. Calls are connected as local calls, reducing transit costs.
- **Automation of re-orders:** Future iterations will include the ability to automate re-orders for frequent customers.

Looking into the Future

This Five9-enabled natural language call steering application is the first element of a multi-phase plan underway. Now that it has deployed the call-steering application, Pizza Hut Australia is focused on subsequent phases of its contact center initiative that include the automating common inquiries.

"Using natural language processing to automate the routing of inbound calls is an important first step in this process," says Branley. "We have plans to use Five9 IVA technology to further streamline and enrich the customer experience."

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About Five9

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