

# One of the largest 311 services sets the gold standard for municipal service platforms

The 311 service creates a fast, seamless service experience in its IVR with Nuance.

As one of the largest 311 services in North America, this municipal service platform handles over 20 million calls every year. They streamlined their service by upgrading their IVR to an intelligent, conversational platform with Nuance Natural Language Understanding technology. Now, citizens can use natural speech in English or in Spanish to explain their enquiry, and the platform will provide the information they need or our route them to the appropriate service area for hands-on support.

**Customer** | One of the largest 311 services in North America

**Challenge** | Upgrade a legacy touch-tone IVR to improve agent availability, and provide callers more service routes and faster solutions to their enquiries.

**Solution** | Using a new intelligent IVR system with Nuance Natural Language Understanding, callers can describe their intent in conversational speech.

**Results** | The 311 service now has 37.2 percent greater agent availability, serves callers in English and Spanish, and can route callers to the appropriate agency, department, or contact center agent more accurately.

“Our long partnership with Nuance has helped us adapt our platform to frequently changing citizen needs. It’s enabled us to provide a modern service experience that the citizens and visitors of our city can rely on.”

**Director of Customer Experience at the 311 service**

## Key metrics



**37.2%**  
increase in  
agent availability



**1.6 million**  
calls into the IVR  
in 2019



**84%**  
CSAT score

## Challenge

### One phone number, thousands of different requests

This 311 has always strived to set the gold standard for municipal service platforms. With more than 350,000 city employees across 120 agencies, offices and organizations, the service platform serves more than 8.3 million city residents—and that's not including the thousands of tourists that visit every year. The service platform is open 24 hours a day, seven days a week, and offers non-emergency services, government contact and responses to information requests.

Since the platform's launch, its team has always looked for ways to improve the service. Previously, when citizens dialed the 311 number, they would need to cycle through a series of touch-tone menu options using their telephone keypads before finding the service area they needed. Not only did it take a long time to capture the caller's intent, it was also difficult to accurately route them to the appropriate agent.

"The original system only had four options, which meant we had to continually reprioritize our services day-to-day," says the IT and IVR Manager at the 311 service. With thousands of different enquiries citizens could be making, and new enquiries coming in every day, the platform's IVR needed a more intelligent and flexible solution for capturing customer intent.

## Solution

### A conversational experience for the city

The 311 service designed and developed an updated IVR platform in cooperation with Nuance and their partner. Using Nuance Natural Language Understanding technology,

the IVR can understand citizen intent from their natural spoken language, and either route them to the right service area, or immediately provide the information they're seeking.

The intelligent platform offers a more seamless, conversational experience for citizens calling the 311 number, and delivers fast solutions to their enquiries. The platform can now handle up to 400 different call types—covering everything from heating complaints to tax-related services. In addition, with the built-in self-service capabilities, many queries can be resolved without needing to route the caller to an agent.

Operating on the new platform, the 311 service's team also has the flexibility to add dynamic messages and update the IVR's vocabulary whenever needs dictate. Over the past few years, this capability has helped the team quickly adapt the 311 service to respond efficiently to planned events such as marathons, as well as unexpected events like weather emergencies and COVID-19. "With the ability to add dynamic messages to the IVR, we can be both proactive and reactive," says the IT and IVR Manager at the 311 service. "It helps us solve citizen enquiries faster and support our call center by resolving calls up front."

## Results

### An effortless service for millions of citizens

In 2019 alone, the 311 service handled 1.6 million calls in the IVR serving citizens across a wide range of service areas. And using Nuance Natural Language Understanding, intent recognition and call routing is more accurate, resulting in a 37.2 percent increase in its agents' availability—giving them more time to focus on complex cases.

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**IT and IVR Manager  
at the 311 service**

Plus, it's a service that never stops improving. The team at the 311 service has worked closely with Nuance to make major updates to the platform, including the addition of frequently requested services like auto pound and license plate lookup. And the team has even added the ability to serve customers in Spanish—the second most commonly spoken language in the city.

The Spanish functionality and dynamic up-front messaging have had a positive impact on citizens and their use of the system. "Nuance worked closely with us to understand every aspect of our organization," says the Director of Customer Experience at the 311 service. "From initial implementation to ongoing support and optimization, it's been a collaborative effort that's shaped a standout service."

### Learn more

The 311 service continues to set the standard for municipal service platforms, offering fast and seamless experiences to every citizen that gets in touch. To discover what you can achieve in your contact center with Nuance, email us at [cxexperts@nuance.com](mailto:cxexperts@nuance.com), or visit [www.nuance.com/enterprise](http://www.nuance.com/enterprise).



### About Nuance Communications, Inc.

Nuance Enterprise is reinventing the relationship between enterprises and consumers through customer engagement solutions powered by artificial intelligence. We aim to be the market leading provider of intelligent self- and assisted-service solutions delivered to large enterprises around the world. These solutions are differentiated by speech, voice biometrics, virtual assistant, web chat and cognitive technologies; enabling cross-channel customer service for IVR, mobile and web, Inbound and Outbound; and magnified by the design and development skill of a global professional services team. We serve Fortune 2500 companies across the globe with a mix of direct and channel partner selling models.