

TELUS offers conversational customer experiences on its phone channel with Nuance.

Using Nuance Natural Language Understanding, customer intents can be identified from natural, conversational voice.

A large telco uses Nuance Natural Language Understanding to recognize customers' intents from conversational speech, making interactions with the IVR effortless. Customers no longer need to answer a series of rule-based questions, and transfers to specific service areas are more accurate.

Customer | TELUS

Challenge | Replace the rules-based questions in its legacy IVR (interactive voice response) with a more seamless customer intent recognition process.

Solution | Nuance Natural Language Understanding (NLU) technology allows customers to express their intent in natural, conversational language, and callers are transferred to the service area they need.

Results | Customers have a more seamless experience when contacting TELUS and more customers are using the self-service IVR.

“Nuance Natural Language Understanding offers our customers a completely new experience. With one point of contact for all our services, it’s much easier to get customers to the service area they need.”

**Michael Giorgio, Director,
Technology Operations, TELUS**



Key metrics



74%

rise in customers using self-service IVRs



51%

reduction in transfers of calls shorter than two minutes



\$3.8M

saved in 18 months with 50% of total traffic

Challenge

Riding the wave of speech innovation

With over 13 million customer connections, TELUS is one of Canada's largest telecommunications providers. It offers a wide range of services, including internet access, voice, entertainment, business productivity solutions, and even healthcare—making it a unique provider for the country.

The telco has always put customer service at the forefront of its operations, and it wanted to streamline its legacy IVR system to offer customers a more seamless experience. Previously, customers calling the IVR were met with a sequence of rules-based questions that determined which service they were trying to access. But, as the number of TELUS services continued to grow, this process became longer.

With the rise of virtual assistants like Alexa and Siri, TELUS wanted to create an effortless IVR experience that would already feel familiar to customers. The telco knew a more conversational experience could reduce customer frustration, as well as cut costs—it just needed the right partner to make it happen.

Solution

TELUS strikes up a conversation with Canada

TELUS integrated Nuance Natural Language Understanding into its IVR to streamline the experience for customers calling the contact center. Now, when a caller connects to the telco's IVR, they're greeted with the message: "How can I help you today?" Customers simply respond in natural speech, and their intent is recognized within seconds—all without the need for rules-based questions and lengthy menus.

"Without awkward questions and menus, it's much easier to introduce new service routes into our IVR as our product range continues to grow," states Julie Nimmo, Sr. IVR Product Manager, TELUS.

With fast, accurate intent recognition at the start of the call, it's easy for TELUS to direct customers to the service area they want to reach. If it's as simple as making a transaction related to their phone bill, the customer can be directed to a self-service option—or if it's more complex, they can be transferred to a live agent who's ready to solve the problem.

Results

A streamlined approach to IVR

After just a few months, TELUS had integrated Nuance Natural Language Understanding into its IVR for its wireline customers (those using TV, internet, and landline).

It was a simple transition, with no unexpected challenges along the way, and the telco started seeing results almost immediately. Soon after the launch of the NLU module, TELUS saw a 51% reduction in transfers of calls shorter than two minutes, indicating that more callers were ending up in the right service area.

The updated IVR was proving popular too. In fact, TELUS saw a 74% rise in customers using the self-service IVR. They achieved a 79% successful intent recognition rate, and saved \$3.8 million in 18 months with 50% of total traffic since implementing Nuance NLU.

As more TELUS customers start engaging with the IVR, it's looking for new ways to update the NLU module—whether it's as simple as improving its accuracy, or more complex like

By partnering with Nuance, we have really taken our customers first strategy to the next level by reducing customer effort.

Satnam Sidhu, Manager, Customer Interaction Strategy, TELUS

Integrating the Nuance Natural Language Understanding module hasn't just saved our customers' time; it's saved our agents' time too. And ultimately, that saves us money.

Phil Schultz, VP, Strategy and Development, TELUS

introducing new service routes. The telco has even been able to introduce a feature that prevents 'pocket dialed' calls reaching agents, deflecting over 60,000 calls in its first year.

TELUS is currently working closely with Nuance to introduce the NLU module to its large French-speaking customer base, and it's also looking to completely redesign its legacy IVR in the coming years.

Learn more

TELUS integrated the Nuance Natural Language Understanding module with its existing IVR, but every Nuance journey is unique. Discover what you could achieve with a flexible conversational technology partner by emailing cxexperts@nuance.com, or visiting 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.