



Case Study

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NBC News

Voter Alert Line provides NBC News with groundbreaking solution for 2004 election coverage.

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Bob Ritchey
President
Intervoice

The network was looking for a way to let voters quickly and easily report any difficulties in the voting process. NBC found it with a toll-free Voter Alert Line powered by the Intervoice Omvia platform and a shared-service environment from Contact Solutions.

Situation

The 2000 U.S. presidential election was marked by controversies, recounts and allegations of voting irregularities. Responding to those events, and to the dramatic increase in voter registration for the 2004 presidential race, NBC News did something no other news organization had ever attempted.

In years past, the top-rated broadcast network news organization had devoted significant resources to every national election: an award-winning news team led by anchor Tom Brokaw, the decades-long reputation of the Peacock Network, and an ongoing investment in leading-edge news gathering and reporting technologies.

The Voter Alert Line was built on the foundation of the Intervoice Voice Framework, a modular and scalable platform for the integration of data systems into advanced speech-automation solutions.

But to meet the unique demands of Election 2004, NBC needed a new way to connect and communicate with American voters. That's when the network partnered with a number of academic institutions and non-partisan organizations to create and fund a system designed to collect, analyze and broadcast reports of voting place difficulties.

Solution

That effort produced the Voter Alert Line, a nationwide toll-free telephone channel that citizens used to report voting problems both before and on Election Day 2004.

If, for example, voters could not successfully cast a ballot or felt as if their vote was not properly recorded for any reason, citizens could call the toll-free Voter Alert Line and leave up to a 60-second explanation of their problem. Those messages were captured as a voice file and delivered to NBC News, along with statistics about the location and volume of those calls.

A team of analysts examined the calling patterns and reviewed the contents of individual calls to give

the network a clearer insight into local, regional or national voting problems.

The Voter Alert Line was built on the foundation of the Intervoice Voice Framework, a modular and scalable platform for the integration of data systems into advanced speech-automation solutions. Intervoice Application View, a management and monitoring tool, gave NBC's election specialists real-time statistics on the source of calls, as well as access to individual call recordings. The web portal developed by Contact Solutions provided convenient on-line access to the information generated by the Voter Alert Line effort.

Results

The Voter Alert Line application allowed NBC News to provide groundbreaking reporting on voter issues in the 2004 presidential election, as well as helping:

- Create a first-ever nationwide voter alert line to capture and report incidents of voting problems and to forward that information to election officials

- Collect voter comments of up to 60 seconds in English or Spanish via a nationwide toll-free application
- Review real-time, web-based statistics describing the origin and volume of voter calls
- View voter issue information at the national, state and congressional district levels
- Give voters the option of transferring to their local election offices for information on polling locations

At a time when the integrity of elections are under closer scrutiny, the Voter Alert Line solution fundamentally changed how voter concerns were monitored and reported. The Interoice platform that hosted the Voter Alert Line handled more than 300,000 calls in the days leading up to the U.S. presidential election, and processed more than 200,000 calls on election day itself. NBC News reviewed the status of voting problem hotspots on an ongoing basis, and dispatched reporters to the affected precincts for on-site coverage.

In the days leading up to the election, the network highlighted this groundbreaking effort with on-air promotions by anchor Tom Brokaw. The MYVOTE1 toll-free number was broadcast a number of times, both in promotions and on the NBC Nightly News. NBC also featured the Voter Alert Line website and played .wav file recordings of voter comments about polling irregularities in various campaign-related newscasts.

“The reliability and flexibility inherent in the Interoice platform are paramount in powering increased call volumes and real-time reporting associated with the exciting new Voter Alert Line application,” said Bob Ritchey, president of Interoice.

“Our involvement in this initiative underscores our ongoing commitment to innovation, quality and providing real-time information not only in critical engagements such as the 2004 election but also in everyday business environments.”

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About Intervoice

Intervoice is a world leader in unified communications, powering millions of customer interactions every day. Since 1983, our standards-based IVR/voice portal and IP Contact Center solutions have ignited customer loyalty for the world's leading banks, communications companies, healthcare institutions, utilities and government entities. Our proven IMS-ready multimedia messaging, call completion and payment solutions fuel revenue growth for the world's leading service providers.

With more than 5,000 customers in 75 countries and an extensive channel partner ecosystem, we have a proven track record of helping organizations meet or exceed their business and customer service goals. How can Intervoice help you? Visit www.intervoice.com for information.

