

A new contact center design for Valley Medical Center helps members navigate the system effortlessly



Client profile

Valley Medical Center's hospital and clinics are an integral part of the public healthcare delivery system in Santa Clara County, emphasizing quality care, research, teaching, innovation and — most importantly — a focus on a positive patient experience. Their mission is to provide accessible, high-quality healthcare and excellent service to all people in Santa Clara County, regardless of their socioeconomic status and ability to pay. They support everyone in the valley with access to compassionate treatment that nurtures a healthy lifespan and reduces the burden of illness.

The global pandemic revealed weaknesses in the contact center for the County of Santa Clara's Valley Medical Center hospitals and clinics. Drawing on our existing relationship, Valley Medical Center worked with NTT DATA first to recommend and then to design a hybrid on-premises and cloud solution that would optimize the existing contact center and bring their service vision to life. This self-service portal now offers improved interactive voice response (IVR) and supports six languages.

Valley Medical Center wanted to make it easy for members to take greater control over routine tasks without having to speak to an agent.

Business need

Easing pandemic pressure and planning for the future

When COVID-19 hit in 2020, Valley Medical Center's contact center faced an influx of interactions which caused delays, overwhelmed contact center agents and affected the contact center's ability to manage member needs such as booking appointments or communicating with their healthcare provider.

The County of Santa Clara's Valley Connection Contact Center serves as the "front door" of the medical system, as it's used to manage appointments and member experience touchpoints. Their self-service system at the time required members to go through multiple steps; it was not particularly user-friendly.

This meant that the uptake of the self-service options was low. Another factor that contributed to low adoption was that self-service options were available only in English.

Valley Medical Center wanted to improve the experience for both members and contact center agents. They also wanted to make it easy for members to take greater control over routine tasks such as making, canceling or rescheduling appointments without having to speak to an agent.

Solution

Using AI and machine learning for effective CX

The County of Santa Clara and NTT DATA have been working together for 10 years. They've partnered with us to manage their platforms, implement upgrades and build solutions. They asked us to do a complete contact center assessment, including a comprehensive evaluation of their self-service environment to identify areas where advanced technologies could enhance the overall customer experience (CX).

During the two-month consultancy, we evaluated their existing business process, their technology platforms and their strategy for supporting omnichannel communication and becoming more integrated in the future. Together, we developed an intelligent and nimble solution that focused on delivering a streamlined experience by way of enhanced routing and expanded, speech-enabled, self-service capabilities, supporting six languages.

We proposed a hybrid design that would combine elements of their on-premises Cisco system with Google Dialogflow CX.

The application design focused on collecting caller intent at the start of the call. This approach reduced the cognitive load on the caller and enabled them to move to their desired destination with minimal effort. Where opportunities existed for self-service, the application streamlined the identification process by leveraging a combination of known member data and member provided credentials. Multiple safeguards were put in place to ensure member privacy was preserved throughout the process.

Outcomes

Managing complexity with a smarter contact center

The Valley Connection Contact Center now enables greater operational efficiency and cost savings, as improved reporting and analytics give a better insight into how members are using the contact center and where improvements can be made.

Improved CX and EX

Determining the member's intent upfront allows the member to quickly move to their desired destination with minimal effort on their part. Under the new solution, members only identify themselves to make or change appointments or order new medical ID cards. Any information provided by the member is passed to the agent if the caller wishes to speak to a live agent about their call reason. Agents also have a better employee experience (EX), since they can assist members personally, rather than answering a call only to transfer it.

Scalable and responsive

The system's modular design means that features and capacity can be added as the number of clinics grows. The platform also enables Valley Medical Center to respond to crises faster, as they can add new messages and routing capabilities in hours, not weeks.

More self-sufficient members

The new design is user-friendly and serves members on their own terms, when and where it is most convenient for them. This increases platform uptake and reduces the number of queries routed to agents.

Together, we developed an intelligent and nimble solution that focused on delivering a streamlined experience supporting six languages.

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