CASE STUDY

Clinical Research Organization (CRO)
Accelovance

CLINICAL SUCCESS:

Contact Center Success in a Clinical Research Environment

Clinical Research Organization Improves Customer Service and Data Quality with the USAN Metaphor Voice Suite

As an award-winning clinical research organization (CRO), Accelovance prides itself on delivering superior customer service to everyone it serves: pharmaceutical companies sponsoring research studies and study subjects. And accurate data is key. Not only must Accelovance ensure the accuracy of the research data it collects from study subjects, it must also ensure that call center agents have the right data at the right time to make on-the-fly decisions about subjects' care. Thanks to the USAN Metaphor Voice Suite, Accelovance can easily make it all happen.

It Was Time to Upgrade

When Accelovance was commissioned to conduct patient surveillance for a clinical research study on the effectiveness of a vaccine to prevent infection, the CRO knew it was time to upgrade its call center platform. Most studies allow some margin of error in the call success ratio. But this test was different. "We must reach every subject, every scheduled week, without question," said Sara Riggenbach, Project Coordinator for Call Center Division of Accelovance. "So the system must work 100 percent of the time."

INDUSTRY: Clinical Research
**COMPANY:** Accelovance

CHALLENGE

Accelovance was commissioned to conduct patient surveillance for a clinical research study on the effectiveness of a vaccine. The data had to be consistent, timely, and accurate 100% of the time.

SOLUTION

Metaphor Voice Suite is an all-inclusive, HIPAA compliant, hosted contact center solution with modular and expandable sets of communications and engagement capabilities.

RESULTS

Accelovance can now reach every subject, every scheduled week. The agent can give more attention to the subject which allows them to collect more accurate data. Accelovance has both the security and availability of data that it requires.
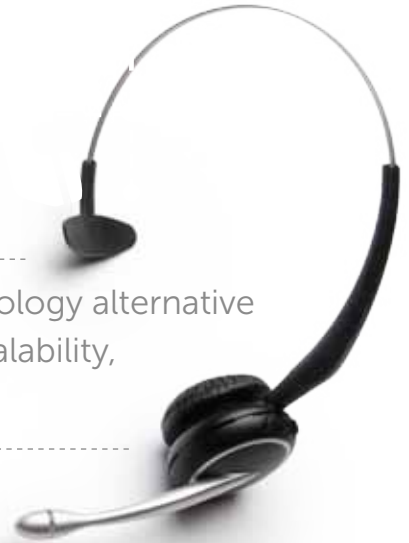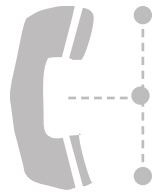
New Research Project Puts Stronger Demands on Call Center System

As part of the study, Accelovance call center representatives must complete a detailed questionnaire with each participant per study protocol to gather important research data. To accomplish this, the call center must be available for both inbound and outbound dialing to all U.S. time zones.

Accelovance also needed a call center solution that would authenticate inbound callers to ensure that the data collected during the call was from the person the caller claimed to be. While Accelovance has possession of patient health information (PHI), the pharmaceutical company sponsoring the research cannot possess that data (for regulatory compliance reasons), so each subject is given a unique identification number. The challenge was that Accelovance had no guarantee that the ID number the caller provided was indeed his/her own.

Finally, Accelovance wanted a system that would take some of the pressure off of call center agents so that they could focus more on the subject and less on making the right decision during the course of a call. Each study has up to 45 specialized dispositions on which agents have to be trained. Agents must understand what each disposition means, what happens when they are chosen and where mistakes can occur. "There was a lot of room for error, and agents were nervous about making a mistake because it would result in bad data. They had to focus so much

on the protocol that it impacted their ability to really listen to subjects and deliver the level of customer service we pride ourselves on," said Riggenbach.

Agent error could also impact the quality of service delivered to the study sponsor. Subjects are assigned to one of several research sites. If the agent determines that a subject meets certain criteria, the agent must call the research site and have a three-way conference call with a nurse and the subject. In the past, the agent had to choose the correct research site from a speed dial list, leaving room for error. If an agent chose the wrong research site, not only would there be a potential violation of HIPAA if PHI was released, but Accelovance's ability to effectively conduct a trial would be questioned.

Accelovance Turns to a Trusted Provider

Having previously worked with USAN, Accelovance sought the call center technology provider's help implementing a solution that would meet its new, more stringent requirements. At USAN's suggestion, the CRO adopted the Metaphor Voice Suite. The all-inclusive hosted contact center solution provides Accelovance with a modular and expandable set of communications and engagement capabilities that can be deployed quickly and scaled from smaller operations to highly customized enterprise implementations, like that needed for the vaccine study.

Base features of Metaphor Voice include everything Accelovance needs to conduct both inbound and outbound calls. Voice comes with an Automated Outbound Dialer for high volume outbound calling, an Automatic Call Distributor (ACD) for intelligent inbound call routing and an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system for automated customer service. The Suite is managed by a Web portal for tweaking virtually any type of campaign parameter, from answer detection and disposition behavior to dialing modes and connection ratios, call recording, agent monitoring, reporting and more.

KEY FEATURES OF THE METAPHOR VOICE SUITE SOLUTION:

- Automated Outbound Dialer
- Automatic Call Distributor
- Interactive Voice Response
- Campaign Management
- Call Recording
- Agent Monitoring
- Agent Desktop
- SMS
- Social Media

One of the many improvements Accelovance has been able to achieve by configuring these campaign parameters is to authenticate callers per the survey sponsor's request. When a subject calls in, the identification number they provide and the phone number they are calling from are crosschecked with the data Accelovance has on file for that subject. If the information matches, then the caller is authenticated.

"We came to USAN from an out-of-the-box call center solution that did not allow any special programming and constantly required workarounds. It's a breath of fresh air to have a system that can do anything we throw at it," said Riggenbach.

Metaphor Voice also provides a customizable Agent Desktop that enables Accelovance to significantly reduce the margin of error that can occur during a call by eliminating the need for agents to make real-time decisions while speaking with subjects. For example, instead of having to determine whether a conference call with a research site is necessary and having to manually select the correct phone number, the system automatically guides the agent through the steps required to determine if a conference call is required. If the system determines that a conference call is required, the agent is then presented with the correct site information for contact.

"The Metaphor Voice Suite from USAN has given us everything we need for this study. The scalability and customization make it feel like an enterprise-grade solution built just for Accelovance, but unlike a lot of enterprise systems, we can make changes easily and quickly. It's also easy to manage and maintain. We've never had all of that before in a single, reasonably priced contact center solution," said Riggenbach. "This is one that we know will continue to meet our needs – regardless of the requirements our customers provide to us."

"The system is workflow driven, so agents can think less about what they're doing and more about the person on the other end of the phone line. They can focus on the subjects themselves and that personal interaction ultimately allows the agents to collect more accurate data because the subject feels more comfortable sharing that information," said Riggenbach.

Finally, because Metaphor Voice is a hosted, single-tenant solution, Accelovance has both the security and availability that it requires. The system is HIPAA compliant, so Accelovance can rest assured that the data agents collect is both accurate and adequately protected.
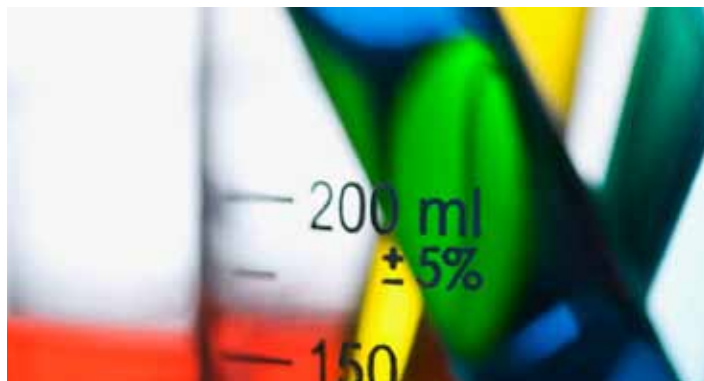
About USAN

USAN helps companies profitably engage customers and deliver amazing cross-channel experiences with the industry's best cloud, premise and hybrid multi-channel customer engagement solution. From traditional telephone interactions to the web, social media and everything between, USAN's portfolio of call center products gives users infinite flexibility in the way they engage customers across channels. In addition to campaign management, back-office integration, and business process automation, USAN's offerings include Hosted IVR, ACD, and Dialers built upon a fifth-generation carrier-grade infrastructure that delivers "five nines" of availability and proven scalability.