



Seminole County Elections Office Powers Voter Hotline with Voxeo

Seminole County Supervisor of Elections

Mike Ertel and his team have made significant improvements for voters and candidates under the mission statement: Efficient Elections – Excellent Service – Fiduciary Conservatism – Voter Confidence. As part of this mission, the team installed a user-friendly self-service hotline to provide voters with fast, accurate access to information.

The **Voxeo Prophecy Platform** provides an extremely flexible, easy and cost-efficient IVR solution.

ICOA created the speech-enabled IVR application using Prophecy's built-in Designer application development tool.

Solution Highlights

- ✓ Easy application management, including the ability to update call prompts and messages in-house
- ✓ Prophecy TTS for free speech synthesis
- ✓ Reliable 24x7 hotline
- ✓ Built-in call recording

Background

The Seminole County Elections Office provides residents of Florida's Seminole County with the information needed to exercise their right to vote. This includes details on voter registration, absentee ballots, poll locations, volunteering, upcoming elections and more.

The Challenge

In 1992, Seminole County had approximately 120,000 registered voters and 16 staff members in its elections office. By 2008, the county's population of registered voters had more than doubled to 265,000, while the elections office continued to operate with 16 staff members. To accommodate increased demand, the team sought a more manageable way to provide voters with fast, friendly and accurate service.

Solution

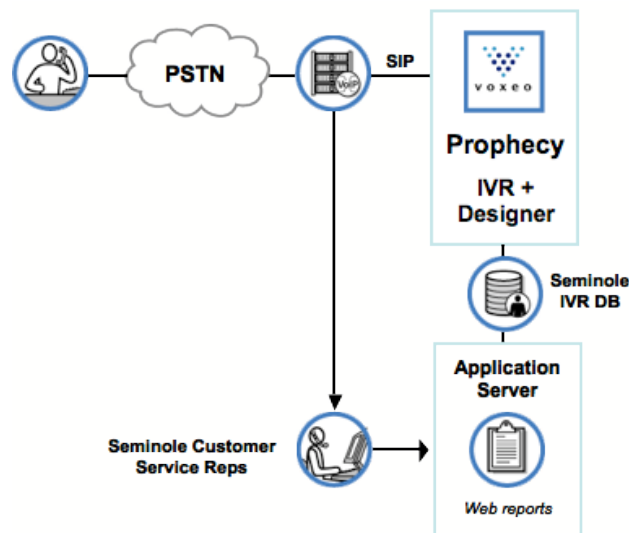
The Seminole County Elections Office selected the Voxeo Prophecy IVR platform to power their 407.585.VOTE hotline. The 24-hour self-service phone solution automates and speeds the delivery of commonly requested information.

Seminole County opted to have Voxeo's 100% standards-based platform delivered as a turnkey server for on-premise deployment. The solution combines the Prophecy IVR software platform, a built-in Voice over IP (VoIP) gateway and a robust audio conferencing solution on a single, integrated rack-mount server.

The voter hotline application was designed and developed by ICOA using Designer, Prophecy's built-in, web-based application creation tool. The intuitive, Visio-like environment makes it extremely easy for Seminole County to manage and maintain their application in-house.

To give a personal touch to the self-service solution, Mike Ertel, Seminole County’s Supervisor of Elections provides the “voice” of the system. The added advantage of this approach is that all greetings, menu prompts and recorded messages are controlled directly by the elections office. In the event of an emergency, Seminole County staff members can immediately and easily update recordings.

Voxeo’s VoiceXML platform enabled straightforward integration with Seminole County’s existing telephony, web-based infrastructure, and back-end data. In addition to delivering general information, the hotline offers caller-specific support such as the ability to confirm voter registration status based on address or date of birth, hear polling locations for an area, or request a replacement voting card.



Solution highlights:

- Prophecy’s built-in, free text-to-speech engine reads requested information back to callers
- Requests for absentee ballots, replacement cards and other information are captured and detailed in a web-based reporting interface for processing by the elections office
- Change of address requests are recorded by Prophecy and uploaded to the election office’s web server for processing
- Integration to Seminole County data is simplified by open standards and support for web services
- Callers can transfer to an elections office employee for additional assistance

Results

Voxeo provided the Seminole County Elections Office with the functionality needed to deliver a great caller experience and tools to ease management – all delivered in a cost-effective, turnkey IVR server that eliminated the need for Seminole County to worry about provisioning and maintaining hardware, testing or configuration. The solution also further reduced costs by bundling valuable functionality, such as Voxeo’s speech synthesis engine, its web-based Designer development tool and call recording, free with the platform.



Seminole County’s automated 407.585.VOTE hotline provides voters with fast, accurate information. The solution has enabled the elections office to:

- Increase service levels without increasing staff
- Reduce caller wait time
- Provide the added convenience of 24x7 automated information access
- Free staff from spending time answering common questions
- Provide a friendly caller interface that uses the voice of Seminole County’s own Supervisor of Elections
- Make fast application updates using Voxeo’s built-in Designer tool

Voxeo’s Customer Obsession Team provides Seminole County with around-the-clock support 365 days a year. For more information about Seminole County Office of Elections, ICOA or Voxeo, see the contact information below.

For more information:

Seminole County Office of Elections

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