



INTERACTIVE INTELLIGENCE®

Deliberately Innovative

Case Study

**Contact Center Automation**

- Multimedia Recording & Quality Monitoring
- Customer Feedback Management
- Outbound/Blended Dialing & Campaign Management
- Network-based Pre/Post-Call Routing
- Web Self-Service & Knowledge Management
- Workforce Management

**Enterprise IP Telephony**

**Enterprise Messaging**



# Magazine Subscription Fulfillment Company Uses Speech Recognition

## Increased Client Retention & Differentiated Service Offerings

### About CDS Global

CDS Global is an international data management company. Its clients are some of the world's largest magazine publishers and direct marketing firms. CDS was founded in 1972, and is backed by parent company, The Hearst Corp. CDS is headquartered in Des Moines, Iowa.

[www.cdsfulfillment.com](http://www.cdsfulfillment.com)

### Summary

**Customer:** CDS Global



**Headquarters:** Des Moines, IA

**Industry:** Data Management

**Challenge:** Replace existing outsourced IVR and own auto-attendant feature with a unique self-service option via speech recognition to effectively compete for new business, while increasing client retention.

**Solution:** *Customer Interaction Center*® (CIC) is an all-in-one communications software suite that provides multi-channel contact center automation and enterprise IP telephony functionality for mid-size to large customer-focused and interaction-intensive organizations.

**Benefits:**

- Call handle time reduced by 20-30 seconds per call
- Increased revenue
- 92% average speech recognition completion rate

### The Challenge

By early 2003, CDS Global (CDS) was facing increased competition from offshore outsourcing firms, and needed to find a way to more effectively compete for new business, while increasing client retention.

To see where improvements could make the most impact, CDS reviewed customer service offerings already in place, including its basic interactive voice response (IVR), which it had been outsourcing on behalf of a small percentage of its clients. CDS also reviewed its own auto-attendant feature, used to route calls to the right "class" of customer service representatives (CSRs) by matching specific types of inquiries with CSRs who had the most appropriate skill-set or experience level. The system did a basic look-up to back-end data for screen pop, but was not used to provide any speech recognition functionality.

After a careful review, CDS decided that adding a unique self-service option via speech recognition would be the most effective way to increase competitive differentiation, while offering clients more convenient service.

"We had a number of calls we were taking on behalf of clients that were pretty routine in nature, such as requests for address changes, which amounted to nearly 30% of all calls," said CDS senior product manager for customer service systems, Marc Francisco. "We believed that these types of interactions were ideal for a speech recognition application due to their relative consistency and simplicity."

### The Solution

CDS considered the option of outsourcing speech recognition functionality to reduce start-up time and more adequately handle spikes in call volume by offering a larger pool of IVR ports. However, start-up and maintenance costs proved higher, thus the ultimate return on investment was not as favorable.

CDS also reviewed in-house speech solutions, but instead, chose to look for a platform that, in addition to meeting its IVR and speech needs, would also include technology that could benefit its contact center. Ultimately, CDS selected *Customer Interaction Center*® (CIC) from Interactive Intelligence. As a standards-based, all-in-one IP communications software suite, CIC offered built-in IVR with support for multiple speech recognition vendors, as well as contact center automation functionality.



"We chose CIC based on its cost-effective, non-proprietary architecture, as well as its ability to provide features beyond speech, such as automatic call distribution," Francisco said.

Using natural language speech recognition, CDS automated a variety of transactions, including:

- Change of address requests
- Subscription renewal and cancellation
- Subscription status
- Credit card payments
- Payment verification
- Report missed/damaged issues

Other unique options that were added included the following:

**Dynamic prompting:** The system receives calls from customers for multiple publishers and magazines. Based on DNIS information, the system uses appropriate prompts for each magazine.

**Dynamic main menu:** Based on account information and application logic, callers are presented with options tailored to their profile. For example, if a caller's subscription is nearing its expiration date, the caller is presented with the option to renew.

**State specific error and help prompts:** As callers navigate the IVR, the error and help prompts are specific to the state they are in and provide examples of allowable phrases.

**Pause:** If a caller needs time to find a magazine or account number, the caller can ask the system to wait by saying, "hang on." The system will wait for the caller until hears, "I'm back," and the call continues.

"Using CIC's speech recognition and screen pop technology to reduce call handling time enabled us to provide unique upsell programs for clients that have resulted in significant increases in revenue."

## The Benefits

CIC tracks a caller's progress, and if the system cannot automatically process the transaction, the caller is transferred to a CSR. The CSR receives a screen pop with the caller's account information and the details captured up to that point identifying the reason for the call. This feature dramatically reduces call duration times and increases customer satisfaction because callers are not asked to repeat information they have already provided. This has saved CDS 20 to 30 seconds per call in call handle time. CDS has used this time to incorporate lucrative up-sell programs.

"Using CIC's speech recognition and screen pop technology to reduce call handling time enabled us to provide unique up-sell programs for clients that have resulted in significant increases in revenue," said Francisco. "Its speech capability has also reduced spikes in call volume, which has helped us to maintain more consistent service levels."

CDS also reported high speech recognition success rates. "CIC's speech recognition capabilities have resulted in an average 92% completion rate, which compares with prior completion rates of only 15% based on touchtone," said Francisco.

Completion rates for specific speech applications today are as follows:

- |                              |                        |                              |
|------------------------------|------------------------|------------------------------|
| -Change of Address: 89.8%    | -Make A Payment: 94.7% | -Already Renewed: 89.8%      |
| -Cancel Subscription: 95.7%  | -Already Paid: 81.4%   | -Check Expiration Date: 100% |
| -Subscription Renewal: 87.5% | -Missed Issue: 99.7%   | -Damaged Issue: 93.8%        |

According to Francisco, in addition to its speech capabilities, CIC's comprehensive interaction management features and all-in-one architecture have been of significant benefit: "CIC's tightly integrated ACD and IVR, which both run on a single, standards-based server, plus its intuitive GUI-based customization tool, have eliminated costs associated with computer telephony integration, and given us the ability to more quickly respond to client requests.

"These benefits, combined with the benefits of our speech recognition capabilities, have resulted in significant differentiation, which has enabled us to remain competitive amidst increasing offshore outsourcing options."

## INTERACTIVE INTELLIGENCE™

Interactive Intelligence Inc. (Nasdaq: ININ) is a global provider of unified business communications solutions for contact center automation, enterprise IP telephony, and enterprise messaging. The company's innovative standards-based, all-in-one communications software suite was designed to eliminate the cost and complexity introduced by multi-point vendors. Founded in 1994 and backed by more than 3,000 customers worldwide, Interactive Intelligence is an experienced leader delivering maximum customer value through its comprehensive solution-set comprised of premise-based and hosted offerings, including software, hardware, consulting, support, education and implementation.

### World Headquarters

7601 Interactive Way  
Indianapolis, IN 46278 USA  
+1 317 872 3000 voice and fax

### EMEA

Thames Central, Hatfield Road  
Slough, Berkshire, SL1 1QE  
United Kingdom  
+44 (0)1753 418800 voice and fax

### Asia Pacific

Suite 24.5 Level 24 Menara IMC  
8 Jalan Sultan Ismail  
50250 Kuala Lumpur  
Malaysia  
+603 2776 3333 voice  
+603 2776 3343 fax