

Scripting: Making Every Agent... ...Your Best Agent

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Sample Scripting RFI

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As call center technology evolves, companies must not overlook the advantages an advanced software or web-based product can contribute to overall efficiency, effectiveness and productivity. Far from a rigid call guide, scripting software can act as a transaction manager, can furnish critical information and can provide a team of agents with the ability to professionally respond to virtually any objection, question or response while simultaneously handling all aspects of phone work. Before deciding what type of scripting product meets your organizational goals, consider the following.

What makes a superior script? What are the components of a comprehensive script?

A guided call flow rather than a word-to-word responses enables the call to flow more smoothly. The script must act as a transaction management solution, facilitating efficient data transfers. Furthermore, immediately providing critical information to agents is vital.

What is a call guide? What are the tradeoffs between a call guide and a script?

A call guide leads an agent through a call via a general introduction, information and close statements. A script should be more than a simple guide through a phone call - it should be a tool to manage phone transactions, integrating related call center information and ensuring the proper data is entered and validated

BEFORE the call terminates. Integrating call center information means that all pertinent call center resources should be made available to the agent, enabling him/her to speak on a personal level to the customer.

What functionality should be included in a best-of-class scripting solution?

Scripts should be easy to create and edit on the fly, so changes and corrections can occur quickly. Scripts should be modifiable by call center managers without requiring MIS involvement. Scripts should pass integrated call center information directly to the agent, and be able to write changes back to the database. Additionally, agents should be equipped to handle objections, questions, information requests and more. A quality package should make it easy to flag fields and manipulate data so information is validated and corrected before the call is completed. Finally, a

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scripting package should easily handle complex logic, branching and call flows.

What are the measures of a "good" script? What criteria should be used?

What is considered a proper test?

It is difficult to apply quantitative measurements to the script alone, as it is only one component of the overall project. Initially, look at the number of calls per hour your call center yields and how quickly information is disseminated to waiting agents. Next, determine if a smooth call flow increases the number of calls being dialed or answered to management's satisfaction. Determine if fewer objections or problems are being passed to supervisors. Analyze conversion rates (sales/contact). Have they increased, decreased or remained constant? Compare an agent using an automated system to a manual agent or compare an agent with the latest script to an agent with the prior version, analyzing the above criteria.

What are above average design techniques when developing a script?

Is it a good idea to develop a flow chart as a starting point?

Absolutely. The best way to design a script is to start with an outline of the call flow. Then develop a flow chart with all expected branching patterns. This can be done either by hand if it is simple or using flow-charts on a computer, if complicated. Finally, when the flow of the script is finalized, create the script. Try to keep the script positive and end with an action item when appropriate.

Should a 'page down' approach or 'point and click' method be used?

Each has benefits and drawbacks. Using a page down approach, agent training is reduced and each call is identical. However, customization is minimal and calls often sound unnatural or 'scripted'. A typical outbound sales call is a perfect example. The point and click method provides extensive capability for customization. However, the agent requires additional training to become proficient in learning the campaign. For experienced agents who handle inbound service calls, this is often better.

When is contact management software a more viable solution than scripting software?

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When the objective is to keep track of contacts and callbacks, and agent needs only a simple call guide, use a contact manager. However, if more complicated transactions are required, branching and integration to other data or applications is necessary, or real-time information on the scripts is essential, then a scripting package would be appropriate.

What is considered a smooth integration with a predictive dialer? Why is this important?

A suitable implementation easily takes the data from the dialer and inserts it into the appropriate location in the script. It then looks-up the information in the database associated with the script and inserts it properly. Data management is the key. Scripting solutions utilizing COM+ or other generic communication methods can help make this process quick and seamless. If a predictive dialer is the dialing engine, and call transactions that scripts facilitate are required, a smooth integration between the two is vital to effectively operate a productive call center.

What is the proper length of a script? How can a long, cumbersome script be avoided?

It depends on the application. The script may contain many different paths or branches, in which case the actual agent time spent in the script may be minimal as compared to the total length of the script. However, scripts should be written modularly. Meaning, each section of the script should be kept separately, to maintain proper organization. If the scripting package permits, break the script down into smaller scripts, and 'call' the appropriate 'mini' script from the main one. This will help keep scripts systematic and will make it easier to see which components are becoming cumbersome. Finally, this will make it easier to reuse components of your scripts in other projects.

What is the main benefit of web-based scripting?

The most obvious benefit is the ability to house remote agents anywhere an Internet connection exists, greatly increasing the agent talent pool. Additionally, web scripting provides central control and data access when agents are scattered in multiple locations. From a supervisors perspective, managing your agents shifts and campaign assignments in addition to viewing reports, can be performed on-line.

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Optimally, how should a web-based scripting application be designed?

Speed is crucial. When working over the Internet, the ability to quickly develop and post a script on-line should be built into the design. Furthermore, when an agent accesses the script, it should download completely, avoiding the hassle of having to constantly transfer new information over the web.

Should a scripting package include reports and if so, what reports are most important?

Reporting capabilities are vital to the success of any campaign. Both real-time

and regular reports that monitor individual agents and campaigns should be included. Additionally, the ability to create custom reports enables you to customize the reports to your exact specifications.

What is the relationship between scripting software and order fulfillment?

Ideally, you want direct integration with MS Office, enabling you to link directly to MS Word for document merges and MS Outlook for email. Furthermore, using standard MAPI (Microsoft Application Protocol Interface) calls, an application can link to e-mail or fax servers, seamlessly sending the data to be merged into the designated form letter.



Digisoft develops leading call center and CRM software solutions. Digisoft's *Telescript™* was first released in December 1989 and currently supports call centers in twenty-three countries on four continents. With more than fifteen industry-bestowed awards, Telescript is widely known as a flexible, robust system designed to immediately increase call center productivity. For additional information, please contact us at 212-687-1810, sales@digisoft.com or visit www.digisoft.com.