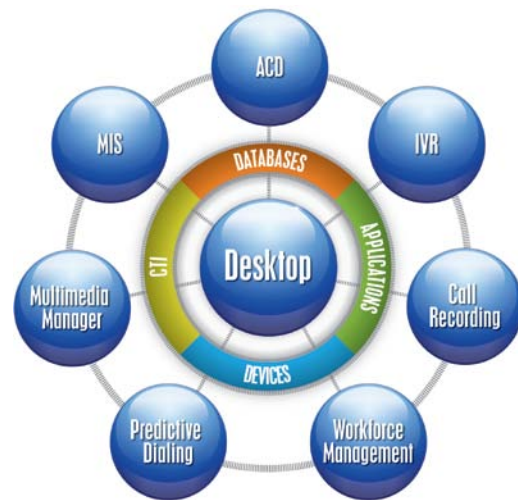


Custom Announce

Abandoned calls equate to lost business. Playing the same boring messages over and over to waiting customers will not only annoy them – it may drive them to hang up and dial the competition. Use Custom Announce to quickly and easily customize greetings and progress announcements across all your queues and media types. With Auto Attendant and Audiotext you can put your callers in charge, giving them immediate access to information as well as the ability to direct their own calls without having to wait for an agent.



Introduction

Let the proven, advanced functionality of Custom Announce help you to reduce abandonment rates, lower agent talk times and improve customer service levels – making a positive impact on your contact center’s bottom line.

Custom Announce is a sophisticated announcement module that has been proven to significantly reduce abandonment rates in contact center environments.

Abandoned calls often equate to lost business and contact centers that replay the same announcements over and over to waiting callers are very likely to annoy them, often to the point that the customer hangs up.

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Overview

With Custom Announce, managers can create customized announcements on a per-queue basis – ensuring that announcements are relevant to the callers. Callers can be presented with constantly changing information relating to their position in queue, new products, promotions, business hours, locations, contact details and so on.

Custom Announce also includes Audio Text and Auto Attendant functionality which give callers the ability to access information and direct their calls without requiring the assistance of an agent. Audio Text plays pre-recorded responses to frequently asked questions, freeing up your agents to handle more complex queries. An Auto Attendant can significantly improve agent efficiency and customer satisfaction by directing callers to the right area of the organization, without requiring them to wait for operator assistance.

The Caller Query feature allows the system to ask callers for their PIN or customer number and redirect them, based on the information entered, to a more appropriate queue or increase their priority in the queue. When the call is delivered, any information entered by the caller is presented to the agent, reducing talk time and enhancing customer service levels.

Features

Custom Announce provides contact center managers with the following functionality:

- A virtually unlimited number of different announcements on a per queue basis are available.
- Queue announcements can vary based on the time of day/day of week and can be automatically scheduled or activated manually.
- Voice or text announcements (depending on the medium) can be configured for phone, email, Web chat and Web callbacks.
- Callers do not hear ringing between announcements.
- Callers can be forced to listen to an announcement before the call is considered for delivery to an agent.

- Calls can be delivered the instant an agent is free, cutting through a lengthy announcement – or else only calls not being played announcements can be available for delivery; the choice is yours.
- Callers can be provided with information on their current position in queue or the estimated time (calculated by the system) to answer.
- A fully multi-level Auto Attendant is available, with varying options depending on the Caller ID (CLI), customer number and status, queue name, time of day and day of week.
- Audio text functionality provides callers with answers to commonly asked questions.
- Callers can be redirected to another queue, given a higher priority or delivered to a specific agent based on caller query results.
- Callers can be offered the option of leaving the current queue for another destination such as the operator, or another queue.
- Announce groups allow supervisors to create sets of progress announcements that can be unique, or else shared among multiple queues.
- Text fields are attached to each announcement, allowing on the spot scripting of each recording.
- Reporting is available on Announce usage, and exceptions and Auto Attendant options selected by callers.
- Administrators have a real-time view of the status of the system announcement ports.
- Multilingual capabilities are available on a per-queue basis for Auto Attendants, progress announcements, queries and callback.
- The Administrator application makes it simple to configure custom Announce features and functionality.
- Context sensitive and keyword search online help is available for every field and option in Administrator.

Benefits

Custom Announce delivers the following benefits:

- Ensure that the messages and options given to callers are relevant and encourage them to stay on the line.
- Maintain a consistently high level of service by controlling and standardizing announcements across multiple media types.
- Caller abandonment rates are reduced by keeping customers informed of their queue position and/or the estimated time to answer.
- An intuitive administration interface makes it simple to configure announcements, auto attendants and other Announce features without requiring specialist expertise.
- Pre-set schedules automatically change announcements through the day, saving managers' time and eliminating the potential for error.
- Managers have the ability to override scheduled announcements, allowing them to immediately adjust announcements to address service-affecting situations.
- Displaying caller query data to agents assists them to offer a more personalized service and reduces talk time on each call.
- Callers can be routed to the most appropriate agent to handle their request, streamlining call handling time and improving customer service.
- Using an Auto Attendant can lower telecommunications costs and customer confusion by reducing the number of inbound phone numbers required to handle calls to different queues.
- Prompting callers to have specific information ready before their call is answered reduces agent talk time and improves first-time call resolution rates.
- Audio text provides callers with immediate access to the information they need, without keeping them waiting in the queue or utilizing valuable agent time.
- Multilingual capabilities ensure that callers' language preferences are catered for in a simple and intuitive manner.
- Administration of multilingual systems is simplified as there is no need to create unique

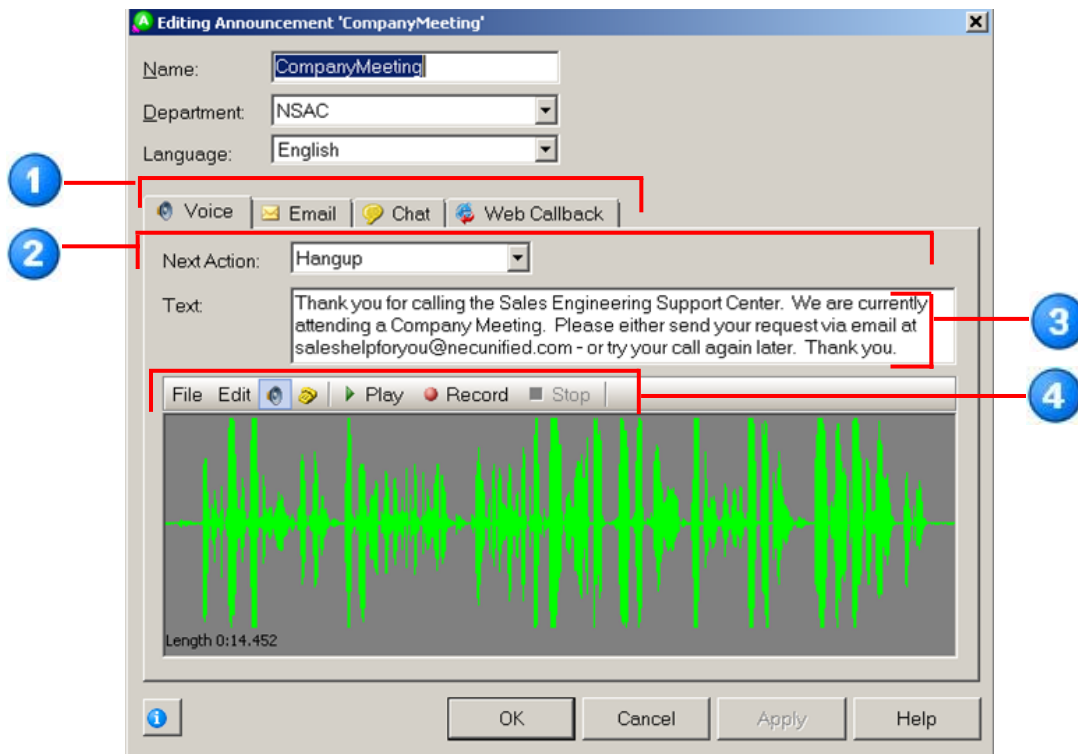
queues for each language. A specific language is played based on the number dialed.

- Announce reports and Port Status viewer keep administrators and managers informed on how the system's announcement ports are being used, both historically and in real-time.
- Text fields containing announcement scripts make it easy to identify what is contained in each announcement rather than having to listen to the recordings.

Figure 1. Announcement

Example

Announcements are available for all media types (see Text Announcements). For phone media the announcements are voice or other sound recordings. For other media the announcements are text. The parameters for each media type are specified in separate tabs of the announcement.



- 1 Select the media type for the announcement
- 2 Choose the next action type and where the call is to be directed after the announcement is played to the caller
- 3 Administrators can enter the appropriate text alongside voice announcements so that just a glance tells them content of the announcement.
- 4 The announcement can either be played or recorded either from the telephone extension or the user's PC.

System Settings Affecting Custom Announce

Initial Delay

In most cases, when callers enter a queue they want to talk to an agent immediately. NEC's UC for Business (UCB) can be configured to wait an initial delay period before the queue announcement is played while CT Control searches for available agents. If UCB finds an available agent, the call is delivered immediately.

Subsequent Delay

Subsequent delay settings dictate how often a queue announcement is played to the caller while they are waiting in the queue. Each announcement can be timed to play a pre-set number of seconds after the previous one, giving contact center managers the flexibility to play these announcements at the most suitable times. For example, delay announcements can be set so that they coincide with peak abandonment times based on report data.

Delay Groups

Delay Groups are used to calculate a caller's 'Position in Queue' relative to a group of queues, not just the one they are in. Managers can group together queues that are answered by the same agents, reflecting the caller's position in relation to calls from *all* the queues in the group. While the calls may be handled by the same group of agents, contact center managers have chosen to keep the queues separate for reporting purposes.

Queue modes

Managers use Queue modes to configure the way calls to a queue are handled at any time. Modes determine if the call requires any form of announcement and if so, which type of announcement to play. All media can have announcements; media such as email, Web chat and Web callback use text announcements. These are created using text templates and are dynamic based on the caller, queue and email information.

Queue modes allow contact center managers to vary the announcements offered to callers based on criteria such as:

- Time of day
- Day of week
- Date
- How the call should be directed
- What information agents require when the call is delivered
- Current queue status (for a 'Position in Queue' or an 'Estimated Time to Answer' announcement)

Schedules can be configured to change queue modes automatically on a per queue basis, and if necessary managers can override the schedule. This may be required in the event of an emergency evacuation or when a spike in call volumes temporarily overwhelms the contact center.

Queue Modes ensure that callers are kept informed and offered the most appropriate announcements and options possible based on available information. This in turn enhances service levels and improves customer satisfaction.

Change the Queue Mode Announcement Remotely

Queue Modes can be changed from a remote location by calling into the system and following a simple voice menu. This is useful during emergencies when calling into the contact center may not be possible.

Changing queue modes is a supervisory function and these changes can be configured to automatically reset to default settings at the next scheduled change, or at midnight.

Mode	Custom Announce Action	Example	Phone	Email	Web Chat	Web Callback	Fax
Normal Queuing	The caller will be played progress announcements while waiting in the queue.		√	√	√	√	√
Force Callback	Caller is asked to leave a Callback message.	After Hours announcement	√				
Auto Attendant	The caller is redirected to an Auto Attendant.		√				
Play Announcement	Play an announcement that is not the progress announcement.	Prior to transferring the caller to a new destination.	√	√	√	√	
Hang-up	Play announcement and then hang up on the caller.	Emergency announcement	√		√		
Query Call	Play a Customer Query announcement requesting the caller to enter information via their phone	Ask the caller to enter their customer number.	√				

Table 1: Mode Actions

The table above demonstrates the way Custom Announce is used across media

Forced Announcement

Forced announcements are used to play announcements to callers in the queue before they reach an agent. For example, the Accounts department may force an announcement asking them to 'Please have your customer number

ready' as a way of reducing agent talk time. "Forcing" an announcement simply means the call won't be available for delivery until the announcement has finished playing.

Forced announcements are an effective way to minimize call handling and agent talk time. Agents are no longer required to spend time relaying standard information when forced announcements guarantee both the delivery and accuracy of the information.

Progress Announcements

What is a Progress Announcement?

Progress announcements are played to callers while they are waiting in the queue. Each queue can have its own set of progress announcements, allowing contact centers to tailor these to best meet the needs of each queue.

UCB progress announcements are totally flexible, allowing administrators quite simply to create the greeting that they want their callers to hear at every step of their progress within your business.

Typically the greeting that a caller hears is in reality made up of several individual announcements that are concatenated by the system to sound like one announcement. By recording the statements individually, the administrator can reuse separate parts any number of times, expanding the flexibility of the system and allowing one-off recordings to cater for any amount of future adjustment and fine tuning.

Examples

Table 2: Example of "First Progress Announcement" (Voice)

Announcement type	Sample
Intro 1	Welcome to NEC Unified Solutions. All our agents are engaged on other calls.
Position in Queue (PIQ)	You are <i><third></i> in the queue. [Custom Announce automatically inserts the appropriate ordinal based on CT Control's calculations and the queue configuration]
Estimated Time to Answer (ETA)	We expect your call to be answered in <i><3 minutes></i> [as above]
Outro 1	An agent will answer your call as soon as possible.

The group of announcements ultimately played to the caller depends on how many previous announcements they have heard, their position in the queue, and the queue that they are in.

Some announcements, such as position in queue, are re-used regularly while others, such as the Welcome announcement (Intro one from previous page) will never play a second time.

Table 3: Example of "Second Progress Announcement" (Voice)

Announcement type	Sample
Intro 2	Thank you for holding. Our agents are still busy, however...
Callback ¹	<p>...if you no longer wish to wait you may request a Callback. Your call will retain its place in the queue and when it reaches the front of the queue an agent will return your call. To request a Callback press the * key now.</p> <p>However if you would like to continue waiting, please stay on the line.</p>
Outro 1	An agent will answer your call as soon as possible.

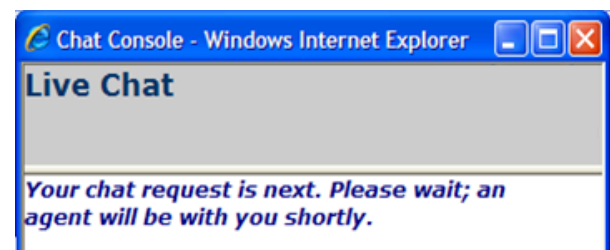


Figure 2. Progress announcement for Web Chat request

¹ Callback is only available if the Callback module has been purchase.

Position in Queue and Estimated Time to Answer

These can be configured for phone, email, Web chat and Web callback media², providing callers with their current position in the queue (PIQ) and/or the estimated time to answer (ETA) while they are waiting. These statements change as the caller progresses through the queue. PIQ and ETA statements can be customized for an individual queue, giving callers an accurate assessment of how long they may have to wait. Callers then have the information they need to decide whether to wait on the line, place a callback or hang up and call back later.

Customer friendly Position in Queue

PIQ statements advise the caller where they are in the queue (first, second, etc.), “first in the queue” being the next call to be answered. Position statements can be customized on a per queue basis. With PIQ functionality callers hear progression up the queue and are more likely to continue waiting instead of abandoning the call.

Position in Queue information can be manipulated based on individual contact center needs.

In some situations calls may regress in the queue when a higher priority call arrives in the same queue. For example, if a call was fourth and a higher priority call enters the queue, the original call is pushed back to position five. The caller will not be told the however, they will simply continue to be told they are fourth until they advance to being third.

Relative Position in Queue

Relative PIQ is useful when there is a large number of calls waiting in the queue as it ensures that the caller is not advised of their position if the information is discouraging, e.g., “You are 35th in the queue”.

The Relative PIQ setting determines the caller’s position based on the number of currently active ‘primary agents’. With this option set, Custom Announce will determine the caller’s relative PIQ

based on the number of callers, divided either by a (configurable) fixed number, or by the number of available primary agents.

Example

A company has 10 primary agents. The PIQ that the caller hears is their actual PIQ divided by 10. This means that:

- The first 10 people (their PIQ is 1 - 10) are announced as being first in the queue.
- Callers 11 - 20 will be announced as being second, and so on.

Estimated Time to Answer

In some situations, contact centers may wish to advise callers waiting in the queue of their ‘Estimated Time to Answer’ rather than their ‘Position in Queue’. The standard ETA prompt is: “We estimate that your call will be answered in...” with the actual estimated wait time value in minutes being automatically inserted at the end of the standard ETA prompt. ETA prompts are queue-specific, allowing each queue to have a unique recording if required. If caller wait time is greater than the original ETA announcement, an automatic apology announcement will play, but no further ETA announcements.

A minimum estimated wait time is configurable by the system administrator. For example: A contact center manager may decide that callers entering the queue with just 10 seconds to wait for an answer should not be played an ETA announcement. This feature can be configured on a per-queue basis.

“Outros”

‘Outros’ are the parting statement associated with a progress announcement, for example, “Thank you for calling NEC Unified Solutions”.

² Web Chat and Web Callback Progress Announcements appear as text information in the browser (what about emails?)

Automated Attendant

What is an Auto Attendant?

The Automated or “Auto” Attendant answers callers and offers a menu of options that they can select from using their telephone keypad. By keying in an option, callers can direct themselves to specific departments or queues without requiring the assistance of an operator or agent.

A full range of extension numbers to be used, regardless of whether they conflict with the digit options available in the Auto Attendant.

Steering callers to the correct queue via an Auto Attendant streamlines contact center answering points and is a great customer service tool if used correctly. The operational benefits to contact centers are also significant. One in-dial number can be used to deliver calls to multiple areas within the contact center, reducing telecommunications advertising costs. Agent productivity is also improved by giving callers direct access to information and ensuring that those callers who need human assistance are directed to the most appropriately skilled agent.

Auto Attendant Options

Auto Attendant options can be used to direct callers to the most appropriate queue by offering them a series of options, for example “Press 1 for Sales, Press 2 for Support”. Options can be scheduled to change automatically depending on the time of day, day of week or date.

Options are also available to handle user problems or errors. After invalid or failed attempts managers can choose a path for the user from a range of actions. For example, if the caller does not press any key, UCB can transfer them to an operator or if a caller selects an option that doesn’t exist, UCB can replay the available menu options.

Auto Attendant Groups

Groups are used to link Auto Attendant prompts together, with each group representing a menu level of the Auto Attendant. When linked together these form the basis of the Auto Attendant tree.

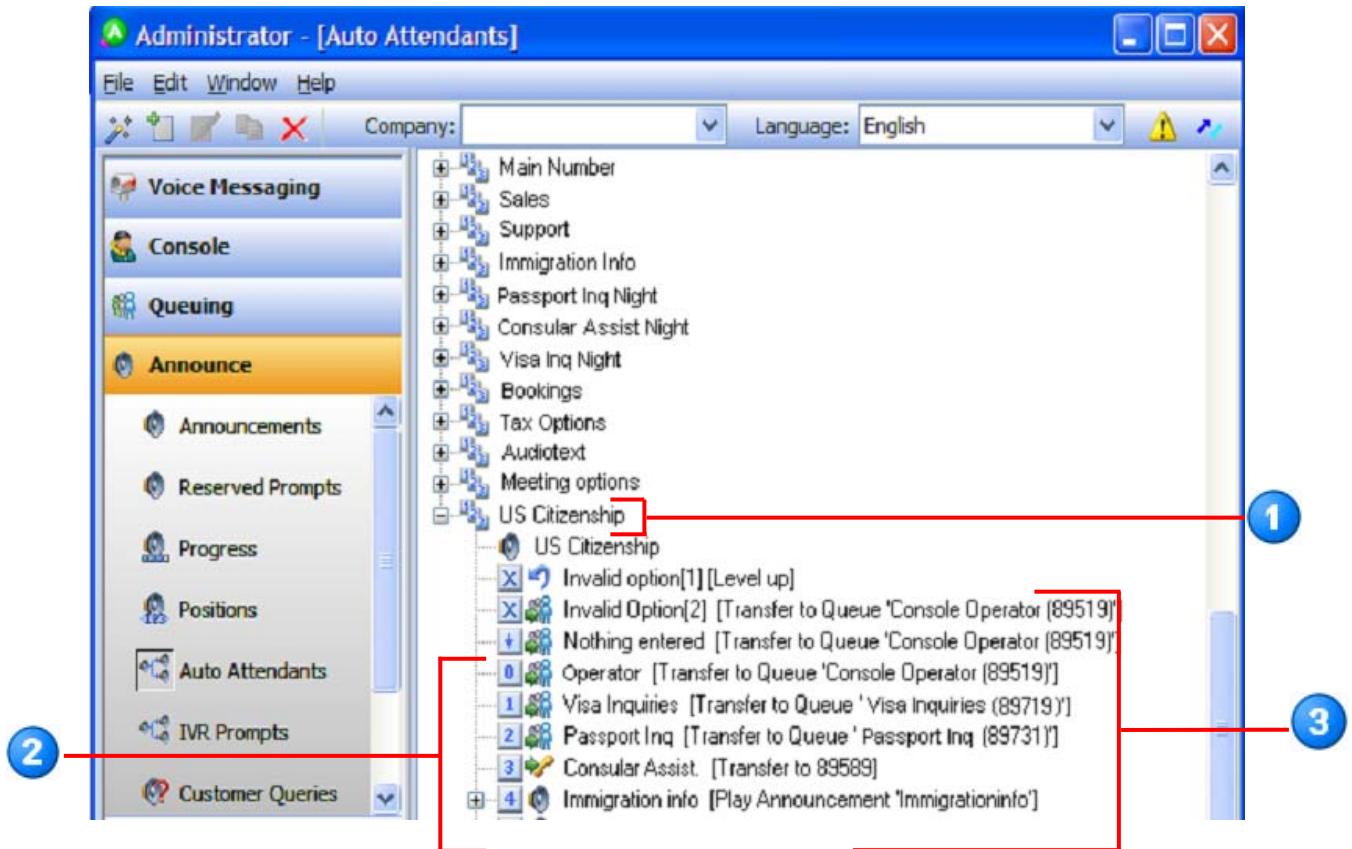
The Auto Attendant can perform the following actions. Announcements can be recorded against each action as shown in the table below to be played after the key is pressed.

Table 4: Auto Attendant options

Option	Announcement	Action
Transfer	“Thank you. Transferring you now”	Caller will be transferred to a queue or a telephone number, internal or external
Hang up	“Thank you, goodbye”	Caller will automatically be disconnected
Queue	“Thank you. Transferring you now”	Caller will be transferred to a new queue
Auto Attendant	“Thank you. Transferring you now”	Caller will be transferred to another Auto Attendant
Query	N/A	Caller will be asked to enter information, such as a Customer Number, using their telephone keypad
Direct Dial	“Thank you. Transferring you now”	Callers are able to enter an extension number to speak to an internal staff member
Play announcement	E.g., Today’s specials	Caller will hear an announcement before the next action takes place
Callback	N/A	Caller will be offered Callback

Auto Attendant Groups make it easy to organize the call flows associated with the Auto Attendant.

Figure 3. Configuring an Auto Attendant



- 1 Record an introduction message (e.g. Welcome to NEC Unified Solutions Sales). This introduction will only ever be played once to a caller (in some cases the menu options may need to be repeated to a caller).
- 2 All the options that will be offered to the caller
- 3 The action type and destination for the call once the caller selects an option

Audiotext

Audiotext is a feature of the Auto Attendant and is used to provide callers with information without involving an agent. The Audiotext is setup in the same way as an Auto Attendant, using levels and options to create an Auto Attendant tree. Each option can have up to two and half minutes of information recorded against it. Once the announcement has been played, the caller is normally offered the option of going back to the main menu or hanging up.

If after accessing the Audiotext information the caller still wishes to talk with an agent, Custom Announce takes into consideration the total time the caller has been connected and counts this towards queued time when positioning the caller in the queue. This means the caller is still advancing in the queue while listening to information.

Audiotext allows companies to provide basic information to callers, such as frequently asked questions, without requiring agent resources that can be better utilized on more complex calls.

Example

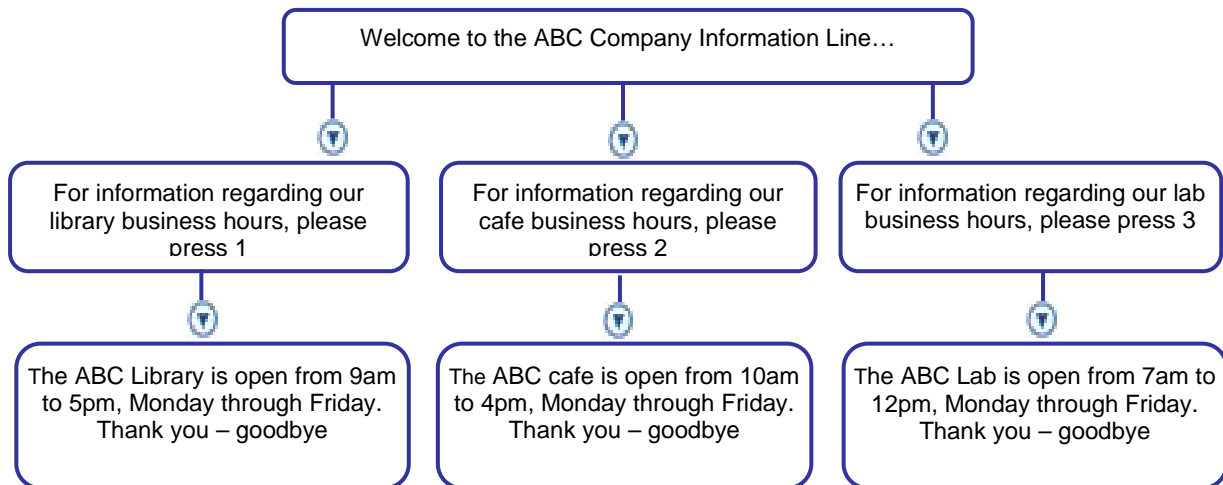


Figure 4. Auto Attendant Audiotext Menu (WP-A-003)

Caller Query

What is Query?

The Caller Query feature is used to obtain information from callers by prompting them to enter data using their telephone keypad. This information is matched against a local query database within UCB and used to identify who is calling. The name and preferred contact number of the caller is presented as a screen pop on the agent's Desktop (or on the LCD of a digital phone) as the call is delivered to the extension.

If no match is found, then the number entered by the caller is displayed. Based on the data entered, the call can also be sent to another queue, delivered to a specific agent, or the priority of the call can be changed. The Caller Query feature allows agents to provide a higher level of service and reduces the average talk time.

As an alternative to a local database, the digits entered by the caller can be verified against the customer's CRM database using one of NEC's 'off the shelf' CRM Plug-ins or a customized integration.

Example

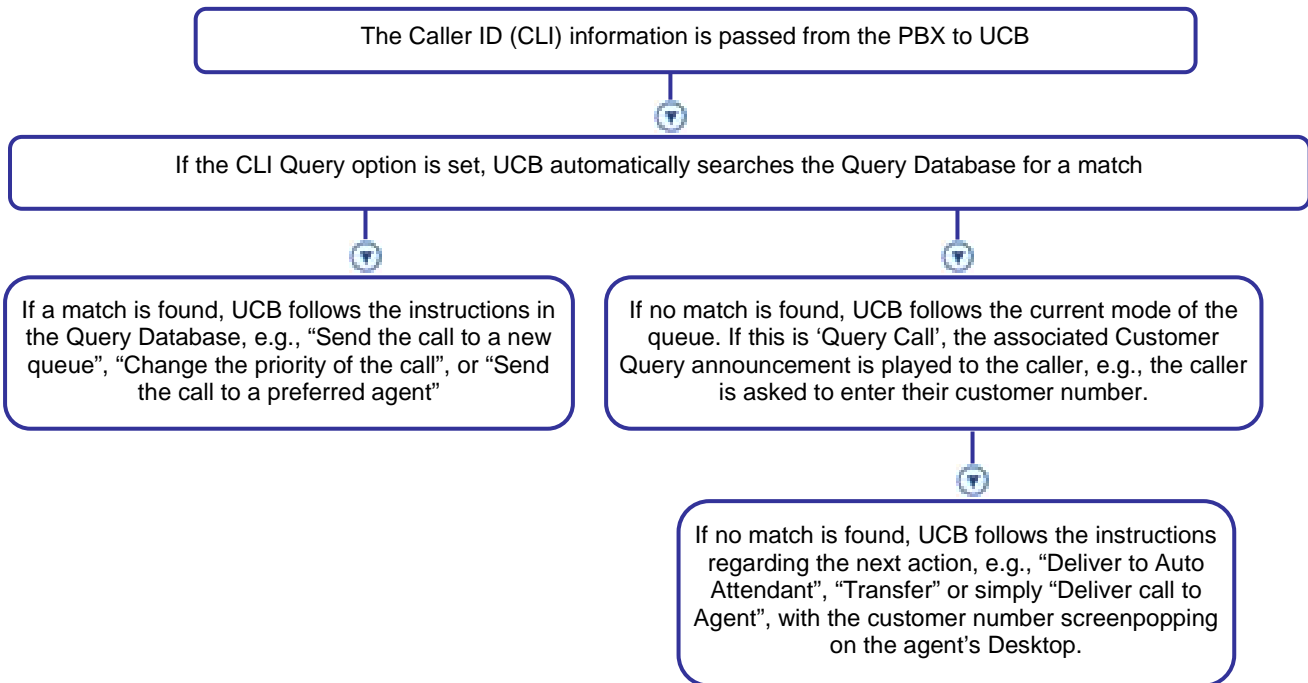


Figure 5. Example – Process (WP-A-004)

Text Announcements

What is a Text Announcement?

Text announcements can be configured for non-phone media types within the contact center, such as email, web chat and web callback, using the same administrative interface utilized for voice announcements. Just like voice announcements, text announcements are used to keep 'callers' informed and reduce abandonment rates.

- Email announcements contain an email subject, and body text that are returned to the sender of the email.
- Web chat announcements contain pre-formatted text that is returned to the web chat sender as a chat message.
- Web callback announcements add text to the existing callback status response. This information is sent to the sender of the Web callback when they request a status update or when the sender requests a history of the Web callback.

Example

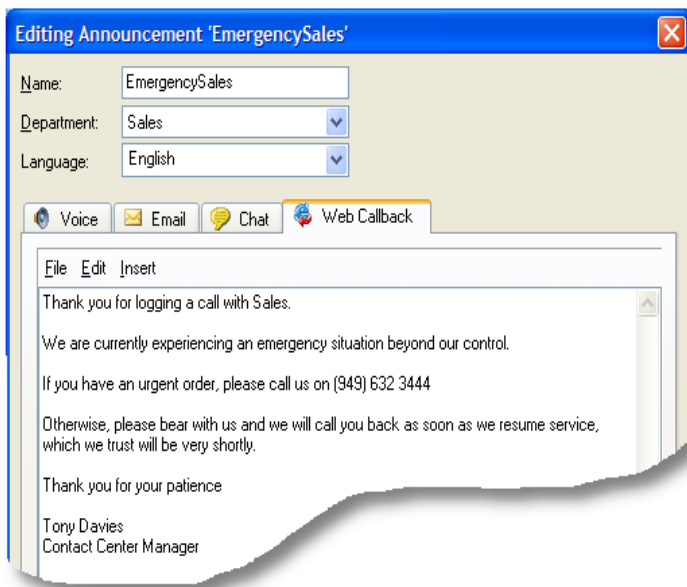


Figure 6. Web Callback

Multilingual Announcements

How do multilingual announcements work?

The multilingual capabilities of Custom Announce enhance the level of customer service offered to callers by playing all announcements in the caller's language of choice. Custom Announce can accommodate up to 24 different language types and offers the following functionality:

- If a caller dials the 'Spanish' In-dial number, all subsequent Auto Attendant options and queue announcements from that point on will be played in Spanish.
- If the same caller is offered the callback option, then the callback prompts are played in Spanish.
- Callers to the 'English' In-dial number will be sent to the same Auto Attendant and queues as Spanish-speaking callers but all prompts will be played in English, simplifying administration by eliminating the need to create unique queues for each language.

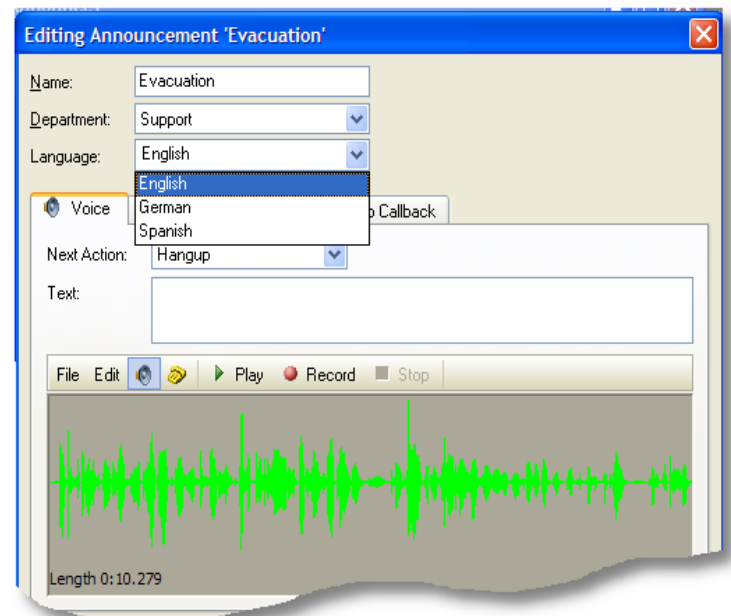


Figure 7. Multilingual options

Announce Reports

Announce Usage

Announce usage reports offer an hourly breakdown of how announce ports are being utilized, showing:

- Number of announcements played (by type)
- Number of voice messages left
- Number of callbacks left
- Number of outbound notifications sent
- Average number of ports in use
- Total amount of time ports are in use
- Periods when no voice ports were available and their recurrence
- Maximum delay that a call due to receive an announcement has to wait

Managers and supervisors can use these reports to view announce port activity and to diagnose issues, e.g., whether there are enough ports available to handle the traffic.

Auto Attendant Option Report

The Auto Attendant Option Report provides statistics on how many times each Auto Attendant key option was selected by callers on a per queue basis, allowing managers to review resource as well as auto attendant wording and advertising.

Auto Attendant Option Report

For Queue(s) 'Operator (0), Sales (89730), Support (89523)'
For the period (17/05/2007 - 7/06/2007), (0:00:00-23:59:59), Report Interval '60', Detail 'All Details'

Date	From	To	Attempt	Option	Action	Destination	Total
AH 8:30 and 5:6							
18/05/2007	8:00:00	8:59:59		1	Leave message	89523	
18/05/2007	8:00:00	8:59:59		1	Leave message	89523	
18/05/200	8:00:00	8:59:59		1	Leave message	89523	2
18/05/200							2
22/05/2007	8:00:00	8:59:59		1	Transfer	89523	
22/05/200	8:00:00	8:59:59		1	Transfer	89523	1
22/05/200							1
23/05/2007	17:00:00	17:59:59		2	NameSearch		
23/05/200	17:00:00	17:59:59		2	NameSearch		1
23/05/200							1

Figure 8. Auto Attendant Option Report

Announce Port Status Viewer

The Announce Port Status Viewer is a valuable diagnostic tool giving technical support staff a real-time view of the system announcement ports and their status. The Announce Port Status viewer displays the type of activity currently taking place on each port (e.g., Voice Messaging, Callback, Progress Announcement) and also provides detailed information such as the actual announcement in progress or the name of the user calling into Voice Messaging.

Example

Figure 9. Announce Port Status Viewer

Port Number	Type of Announcement	Call Duration/Idle Time	Announcement Name	Location
89770	Leave Callback	0:16	From: +1 (949) 6234664	CTI Server
89771	Port is Idle	1:13		CTI Server
89772	Voice Messaging Login	0:43	0:14 Barbara Shaw	CTI Server
89773	Progress Announcement	0:23	Position:1, Repeat:1	CTI Server
89774	Port is Idle	0:58		CTI Server
89775	Voice Messaging Caller	0:10	Mailbox: Paula Moore +1 (949) 623...	CTI Server
89776	Port is Idle	1:16		CTI Server
89777	Port is Idle	1:44		CTI Server

- 1 The CLI of the caller who is currently leaving a callback
- 2 Barbara Shaw has logged into her mailbox
- 3 The announcement name that is being played and how many times the caller has been played this particular announcement
- 4 The owner of the mailbox is displayed along with the CLI of the caller leaving the voice message

Administration

Creating and Editing Announcements

UCB makes it simple to create announcements and auto attendants using wizards, bulk editing and a graphical user interface.

All the features and functionality of Custom Announce can be administered with a click of the mouse. And UCB's single administration interface is used to manage all announcements and scripts, making it quick and easy to record, edit, locate and file prompts.

Auto Attendant Wizard

The Auto Attendant wizard guides the system administrator through each step in the configuration process, from creating the name of the Auto Attendant through to recording the announcements for each key option.

Online Help

Assistance and information is always available by clicking the Help button from within any UCB application and selecting from the contents, index or search tabs.

Clicking the desired topic or feature takes the user to the corresponding lesson. The search tab allows users to find information by keying in a word or phrase. The search can be further refined by selecting options such as similar word matches, a previous results list or searching topic titles only.

UCB also offers context-sensitive help from within each screen. Detailed information relating to the current screen can be accessed by clicking on the Help button.

- 1 Should calls to this queue be played Progress Announcements?
- 2 Should callers hear their position in queue?
How many seconds should a caller wait in the queue before hearing the first progress announcement and then subsequent announcements?
- 3 Call center managers are able to configure how the Position is to be calculated

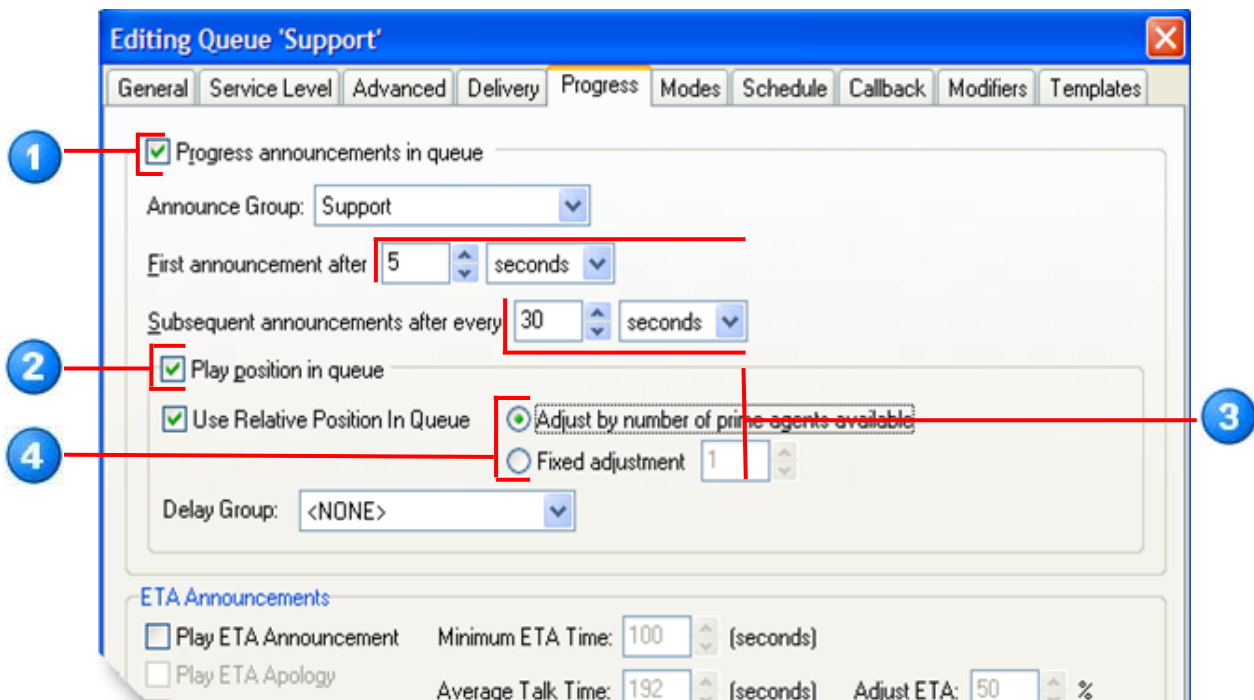
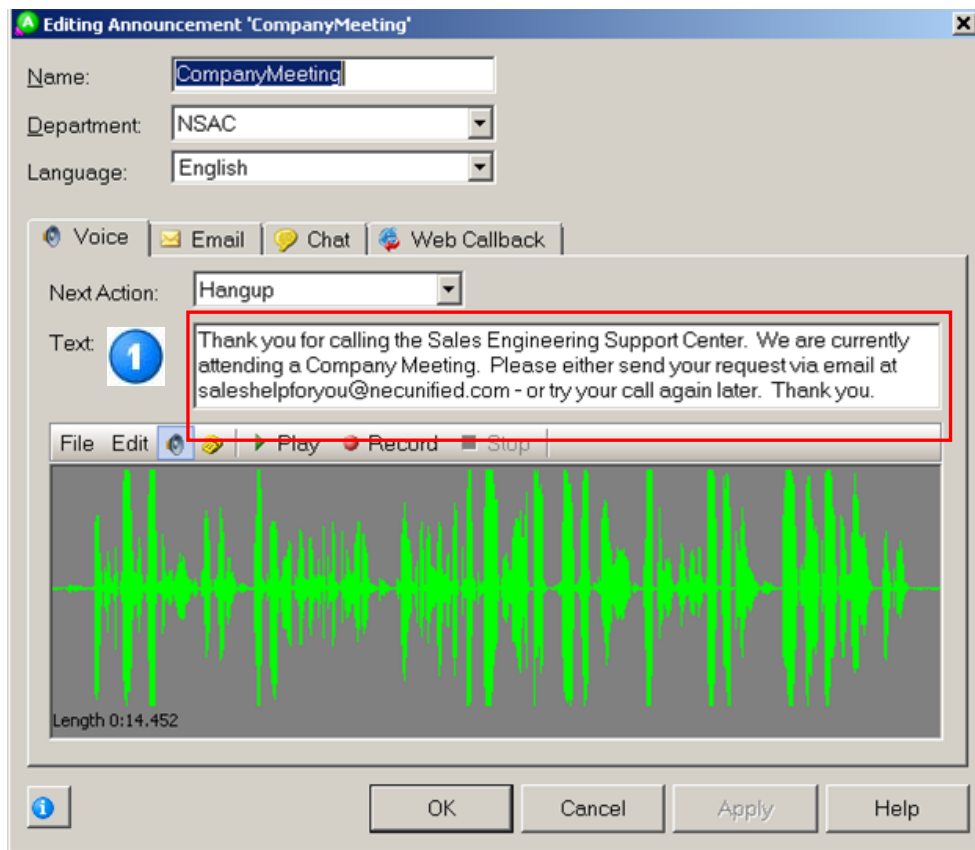


Figure 10. Configuring Announcements for a Queue

Configuring Voice Prompts

The UCB Administrator offers a range of familiar recording options to allow managers to record via the phone or a PC microphone, to play back, trim, edit, copy, cut and paste recordings from one announcement to another.

Text notes can be added against each voice prompt, identifying the content of the announcement that is recorded against the prompt without requiring administrators to listen to the recorded message.



1 Administrators can enter the appropriate text alongside voice announcements so that just a glance tells them content of the announcement. This is also useful for the person carrying out the recording as they can read straight from the screen.

Figure 11. Configuring Voice Prompts

Bulk Editing

The bulk editing facilities of UCB allow multiple changes to be made in a matter of seconds.

Example

A group of announcements are “bulk” edited, allowing the administrator to adjust common parameters in once, leaving unique settings untouched.

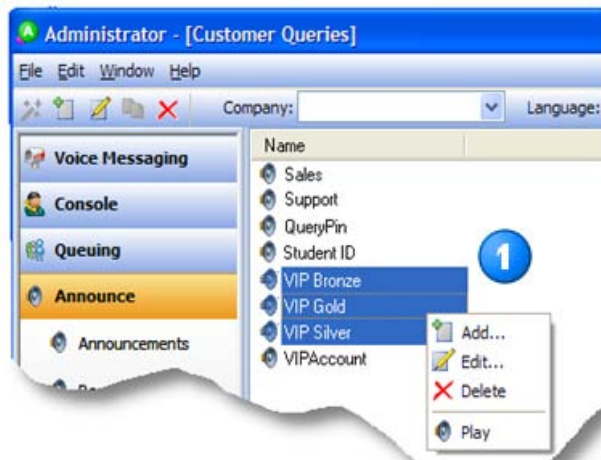


Figure 12. Bulk Editing Customer Queries

- 1 Highlight all announcements to be edited together, right click and select edit.
- 2 Each announcement name must be unique; therefore the field is unavailable for the bulk edit.
- 3 Fields that have the same value in all announcements are shown with a white background.
- 4 Fields that are unique in each announcement and shown in bold/grey background but can be edited as a group (all edited fields change to the new value entered).

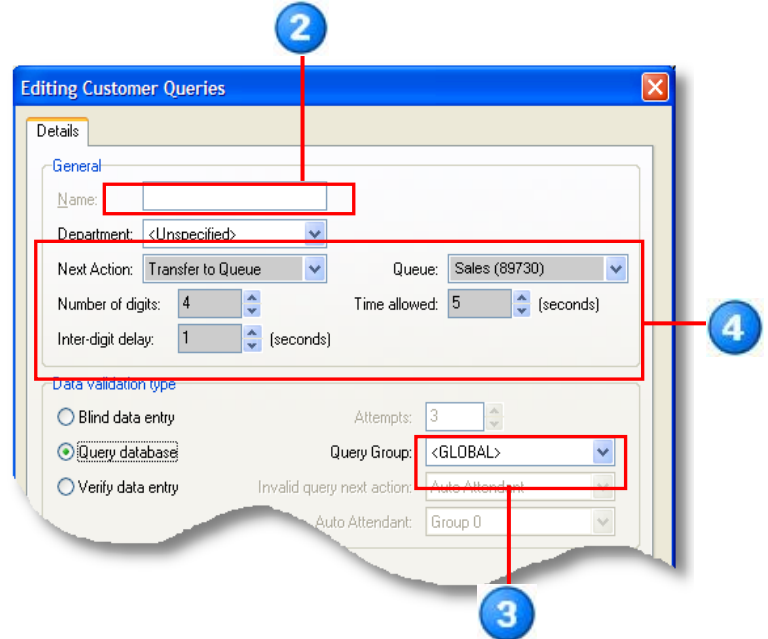


Figure 13. Bulk Editing - Customer Queries Edit Window

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