MIDDLESEX COUNTY COLLEGE

spōk

THE CHALLENGE

A busy commuter college with 13,000 students, Middlesex had only one full-time operator to direct all calls coming into the college. Callers often experienced long waits. The operator couldn't spend enough time answering questions because of the call volume, so instead transferred calls to other departments for resolution.

THE SOLUTION

Spok showed it could handle the required call volume successfully with the Spok® speech recognition system. This solution offloads a portion of routine calls with a user-friendly experience that enables callers to speak their requests instead of keying in responses. An important consideration for the college was the speech recognition solution's ability to give callers detailed options for busy departments. For example, they wanted choices such as registration and financial aid that would answer basic questions about the hours of operation, how to apply to the school, and the date to file for graduation. Middlesex also wanted to have a number available on campus for people to call and say the name of the person or department they wanted to be connected to, further reducing demands on the operator.

OVERVIEW

Located in Edison, N.J., Middlesex County College partners with students to make their college experience exciting and rewarding. They offer small classes, leading-edge studies, valuable resources such as numerous computer labs, a wide variety of student activities, and dedicated faculty who are there when students need them to open new worlds. Middlesex County College is a two-year public county college with a student body of 13,000 commuters.

BUSINESS DRIVERS

- Long wait times for callers
- Difficult for the operator and department staff to keep up with call volumes
- Students struggled to reach the right departments to register for classes and pay their bills

SOLUTION

Spok's automated speech recognition solution

RESULTS

- More than 90 percent of calls are successfully directed automatically
- Paper directories are no longer printed, saving $5,000 per year
- On average, 55 percent of caller questions are answered by menus (such as hours of operation and dates to file for graduation)

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Lynn Somers
Manager - IT Support Services

THE RESULTS

After implementing Spok's speech recognition solution, call processing is far more efficient, and a large percentage of basic questions are now answered by the system.

"The head of our Registrar's Office is thrilled," said Lynn Somers, Manager, IT Support Services at Middlesex County College. "For departments like registration, system menus save them from answering lots of basic questions such as hours of operation, allowing staff to respond to more extensive questions. Our operator is also freed up and can answer questions for about 10 percent of the calls she takes without having to transfer those people." Somers reports that the operator also receives far fewer unhappy callers.

Another benefit of Spok's solution is a program Middlesex created called Dial 50. Dial 50 helps direct calls from on campus without needing to involve the operator, and it pulls information from the up-to-date phone directory maintained online. "It was a nightmare before with different departments maintaining different paper directories and us trying to collate everything. Now we don't have to maintain the paper directories. People can access the information online or dial '50' for voice assistance. It's been a very successful transition and people have gotten used to calling 50. We save about $5,000 per year not printing paper copies, and everyone has access to the latest information."

Overall, the biggest benefit is being able to better assist students. "Our motto is 'SUCCESS STARTS HERE'. Ensuring our students can reach registration or the financial aid office when they need to is tantamount to enabling success. We're definitely happy with the Spok solution and the improvements for our students and staff."

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