

Cyara Tutorial

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What Is IVR System And How To Perform IVR Testing

Updated: June 28, 2023


What is Interactive Voice Response IVR System and How to Perform IVR Testing:

I have divided the "IVR Testing tutorial" into two different parts. This part will cover the basic IVR details such as an Overview of the IVR system, the Architecture of IVR, and different technology used within IVR.

We will also learn the basic call flow of the IVR system which in turn will show how the actual IVR system works. We will see the different menu options which are available almost within every IVR system.

In part 2, we will check some of the most popular IVR test tools.

Let us start with the Basics of IVR systems and testing.



INTRODUCTION TO INTERACTIVE VOICE RESPONSE (IVR) TESTING
A Complete Overview

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What is IVR System?

Interactive Voice Response (IVR) is an automated technology that allows interaction with a human being (caller) with the help of voice input and DTMF input (Dual-tone multi-frequency) using the keyboard.

IVR system is used for multiple purposes like processing of customer's phone call, providing transaction details, taking customer's requests, providing information on new products, transferring calls to agents based on customer request, etc.

Nowadays the IVR system is developed for almost all the industries and their respective applications such as banking, Insurance, Telecom and they can also be used for travel information, retail orders, utilities, etc. IVR system provides information to all the users or customers based on their requests.

The IVR system consists of different menus, sub-menu, and options based on the application.

The end-user then chooses the appropriate option and routes through the IVR system to complete their transaction. If an end-user is unable to find a suitable option or solution then there is a provision to transfer a call to the live agent who will actually help the customer by talking over the phone.

There is no human interaction with the customer until the user transfers his/her call to the call center agent (customer care agent). All menus, sub-menus, and options are pre-recorded messages in the IVR system, and all these messages are played as per the customer's requests. These pre-recorded messages are called "prompts" in the IVR system.

For Example, for any banking application, if a user wants to know his latest account balance or the last 5 transactions, then IVR provides this information without talking to a customer. The customer only needs to provide DTMF inputs using the keyboard to route to the appropriate menu option.

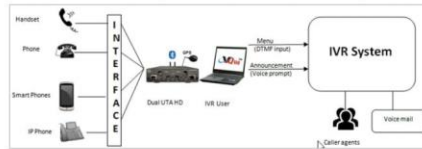
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01:05

IVR System Architecture

During the end-to-end flow of IVR testing, there are multiple components that are involved in the mobile phone, landline, DTMF inputs, voice input, etc.

The below diagram shows the architecture of the IVR system:



Technology Used in IVR System

The pointers given below explain to you the technology that is used in the IVR System.

- Anyone can question how a phone can be connected to the computer system. And the answer is – using **DTMF**. Using the **tone of every key** on a telephone keypad, the phones are connected to a computer system. These are known as **"Dual-tone multi-frequency (DTMF)" signals**. DTMF tones are entered using a telephone keypad.
- There is another way to communicate which is nothing but using **"Speech Recognition"**. Here, the caller provides **input to the IVR** system using his clear voice so that **IVR can interpret** the input correctly and provide accurate information.
- IVR system provides an appropriate **voice response** to the caller's DTMF input that is called as **"Audio Response Unit (ARU)"**. It is a device which provides information to the caller based on the input received from the caller and the information received from the database.

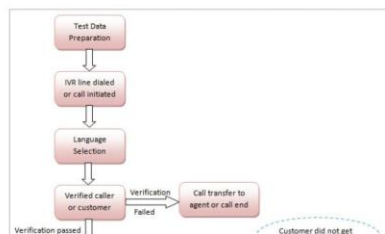


- input correctly and provide accurate information.
- IVR system provides an appropriate voice response to the caller's DTMF input that is called as **"Audio Response Unit (ARU)"**. It is a device which provides information to the caller based on the input received from the caller and the information received from the database.
- "Automatic Call Distributor (ACD)"** is a technology that distributes customer calls, in the order they arrive, to the **next available appropriate agent**.
- IVR application is a **tree structure** just like the folders and files structure in the Windows system. And this structure in the IVR is called a **call flow diagram**.
- Text To Speech (TTS)** is a system that converts normal language text into speech. TTS is a computer generator speech that **speaks information** like news, email, etc.

Testing Flow of IVR Application

The below diagram explains the basic details that are followed in the IVR call flow.

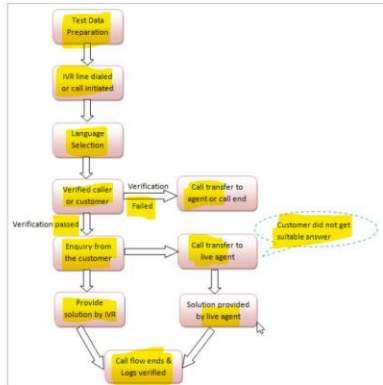
Mentioned below are the different menu options played by an IVR system based on the user or caller's input:



Testing Flow of IVR Application

The below diagram explains the basic details that are followed in the IVR call flow.

Mentioned below are the different menu options played by an IVR system based on the user or caller's input:



Points to be Considered while Performing IVR Testing

Using the IVR system one can reduce the cost and improve the quality of service by resolving the customer's queries without interacting with the actual agent. If the caller is not able to find a suitable solution only then does his call gets transferred to the actual agent so that the agent can provide an appropriate solution.

IVR system mainly consists of complex infrastructure, different kinds of telephony equipment (like a telephone cable, USB telephone board, etc), database, network, etc.

In order to test an IVR application, the following features need to be considered:

#1) Verification Process:

Due to emerging technology, there is always a chance of fraud to happen. So it is imperative to test if the IVR application is free from any vulnerabilities. IVR application always verifies the caller by asking security questions like "Date of Birth", 4-digit PIN code number, etc. This verification process varies based on the IVR application that is in use.

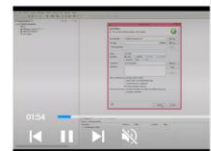


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For Example: for any banking application security is a crucial part of testing as this is the industry



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For Example, for any banking application, security is a crucial part of testing as this is the industry where most of the fraud can happen and the customers can have a major financial loss.

The verification process is completed based on the PIN set by the caller and the IVR system verifies this PIN with the PIN stored in the IVR database.

In case the caller does not remember the PIN or it got compromised then there is an alternative security check that is asked by the IVR system such as "Customer's Date of Birth", "Account opening date", "Mother's maiden name" or "registered email ID" etc.

Also in some of the IVR system, only limited menu options are provided to a customer who has compromised PIN but verified by other options (E.g. Date of Birth). For such a customer, in order to get full access to the system, they need to set a PIN using the method available in the application.

#2) Call Transfer or Call Routing:

In the IVR system, it is very important to test whether the call is transferred to the correct agent or not. There are different agents available for different areas and they are experts in their area only.

For Example, for one IVR system, there are thousands of IVR calls daily for different kind of inquiries, queries/problems, etc., and not necessarily all the problems are resolved by the IVR system. Out of those problems, unresolved problems are transferred to the live agent so that the agent can verify their data and resolve the caller's problem.

Hence it is necessary to test that when a caller is calling regarding insurance policy problems, then the call should be transferred to the appropriate agent and not to a different department (Example: the credit card department). If this is not tested thoroughly then it will mess up the entire system.

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02:20

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#3) Dual-tone Multi-frequency (DTMF) Input:

It is the most significant method to provide input to the IVR system. DTMF inputs are given using the digits 0 to 9 and sometimes * and # from the phone keypad. For every menu and sub-menu, a caller has to provide different DTMF inputs and it is a tedious task to test each and every input in each menu and sub-menu.

For Example, If IVR says "Press 1 to know your account balance" and the caller also enter 1 on the keypad, but the IVR system wrongly recognizes it and provide information about the last 5 transactions then it does not solve the purpose of the call.

For testing an IVR application, it is essential to test if the IVR system recognizes all the DTMF inputs properly and according to the DTMF input the IVR system is providing information to the caller or not and if correct prompts are being played in IVR system.

#4) Retry option in the IVR System:

Many a time it happens that the caller is not able to recognize or does not follow the message or prompt played by the IVR system. Then the caller becomes silent as he is not sure about the options being given by the IVR application.

Hence there should be a facility to repeat the same prompt again if a caller is not providing his next option to go further or if the caller remains silent.

In most the IVR system, it is the case that the IVR will repeat the prompt three times i.e. if the same prompt is played three times and still if the caller remains inactive or he/she has not provided any input to the IVR system then the call will automatically get disconnected or transferred to the agent for general inquiry.

#5) Accent and Pronunciation:

AD (95) Gana con Envios de Dinero (Recibe tu dinero de Estado Unidos y gana con Bon-Capital) Conoce más

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#5) Accent and Pronunciation:

As all the IVR prompts are pre-recorded in the voice, these prompts should be clear and audible to the caller. Also, the caller's accent and language pronunciation should be accurate so that the automated IVR system can recognize the input from the caller.

For Example, if a caller requires information about a new product "Credit Card" and the IVR system played all the messages without any use of punctuation marks that too in a high speed, then the caller will not be able to understand anything related to the product. This, in turn, will lose the customer and have a huge impact on the business.

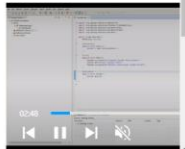
Hence testing should be performed carefully to validate if all the prompts are clear and audible and if pronunciation marks are used appropriately.

#6) Choice of Correct Language:

Once the IVR call starts the first option asked by the IVR system would be to choose a language. Based on the language chosen, the subsequent prompts are played in the selected language. In this global market, it is important for IVR to work in the local language as well.

For Example, if one of the companies is headquartered in the U.S. and there are branches in China, Russia, France, etc., and as their IVR application is quite famous in the U.S. and if it supports only the English language then it is obviously difficult to work in countries like Russia or China where the English language is secondary in their market.

Testing should perform for all the menu, sub-menu, choices, etc., and ensure that all the selected prompts are played in the selected language. Here, the above-mentioned accent, pronunciation, and clarity of the prompts also need to be tested for the chosen language.



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#7) Workflow of IVR system:

After setting up all the required infrastructure, language, prompts, etc., it is now necessary to test the end-to-end flow of the IVR application.

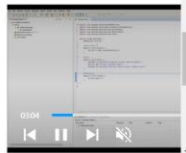

For Example, suppose a user lost his debit card and wants to block it by calling the IVR system.

The user has selected the appropriate language and has chosen the option to block the debit card, but instead of blocking the debit card if the IVR plays the prompts regarding the "request a new checkbook" flow then imagine how critical would be the situation of the customer and as a result, it will adversely have a great impact on the business.

So in-depth testing is required for all flows in the system and we need to validate that all prompts are associated with the correct flow.

Conclusion

In today's world, there are various companies that are using the IVR system to assist their customers 24/7. This assistance can be of any type, even from a single small transaction like account balance, Funds Transfer to another account, paying a utility bill, etc.



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Testing such an IVR application is a tedious task as it requires deep knowledge of the application and requires detailed end-to-end testing for all the IVR call flows. There are various tools that are available in the market for IVR application testing which in turn will ease the job of a tester.

Our upcoming tutorial will give you a great insight on the automation tools used for IVR system.

Recommended Reading

- Best Software Testing Tools 2023 [QA Test Automation Tools]
- Best IVR Testing Tools: CYARA and HAMMER Test Tutorial
- Testing Primer eBook Download
- Business Testing or AI: Data Testing Tutorial with Tools and Examples

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Best IVR Testing Tools: CYARA And HAMMER Test Tutorial
Updated: June 29, 2023

Conoce a Samuel García, El Nuevo
Abrir

Overview of Automation Tools used for IVR System Testing:

In our previous tutorial on Introduction to Interactive Voice Response IVR Testing, we learned about the Architecture & technology used in IVR basic, IVR call flows, etc.

Here in this tutorial, we will focus on why automation is required for IVR testing and what are the various IVR tools that are used for IVR automation in a detailed manner along with the concerned examples for your easy understanding.

Let's explore the IVR testing tools!?

WHAT ARE AUTOMATION TOOLS USED FOR IVR TESTING?

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Performance Testing of IVR Application

In this modern era of technology, for any technical difficulty, each customer wishes to get the solution by sitting at home or during travel or while rushing to the meeting.

A customer does not wish to visit any branch or office for a solution to the problem. This will be possible with the help of IVR system as it is an automated system which provides a required solution to the end user.

For Example, in case of a mobile operator, if a user has an issue in the monthly billing then with the help of IVR system they can raise a complaint and get the solution without visiting the branch or office. This will result in thousands of call to the call centers for different problems. Hence, it is necessary to test the performance of IVR application to remain in the competition.

In **load testing**, in order to emulate the behavior of call center, different scripts are generated. It is necessary to test the behavior of the IVR application under heavy load of calls. This ensures if the system is configured in such a way to handle peak load and responses appropriate to the caller.

This emulation is similar to call center environment i.e. while running a call all the features like call pick-up, call hold, call transfer, tone dialing etc are available.



Automation Tools used for IVR Testing

In this tutorial, we will be focusing on two main tools which are used for IVR testing and they are:

- CYARA
- HAMMER

Before proceeding with automation in IVR, let's first understand why automation is required in Interactive Voice Response (IVR):

Manual Errors:



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MyHCL

TSMS

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Inbox

MyHCL

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In this tutorial, we will be focusing on two main tools which are used for IVR testing and they are:

- CYARA
- HAMMER

Before proceeding with automation in IVR, let's first understand why automation is required in Interactive Voice Response (IVR):

Manual Errors:

Testing of IVR system is a monotonous job and this repetitive task may cause a manual error too. In order to test the end to end flow of IVR system, a tester needs to dial the same number and route through different menu options which become more complex as the tester goes deeper into testing.

This, in turn, may be a boring job for the tester, as they have to listen to the prompts played by the IVR and need to provide input based on the prompt. So there are chances for the testers make a mistake during testing.

Time-consuming process:

Testing of IVR application involves multiple menus, sub-menus, and their related options.


A tester needs to test each and every option carefully and it is quite a tedious task. As each menu can have multiple sub-menus and each sub-menu have multiple options, a tester has to test all positive, negative and error-prone scenarios thoroughly. This entire process is a time-consuming one and it involves high costs for the organization.


Due to all the above reasons, it is necessary to automate IVR application testing. There are several automation tools available which impersonate the human effort to dial an IVR specific telephone number and can provide DTMF inputs to the IVR system. Nowadays large companies are using an automation tool to test their IVR application.

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Steps on how to import, edit and then execute the test case using Cyara tool have been explained below:

1) The below screen shows the Cyara tool and the different options on the LHS:

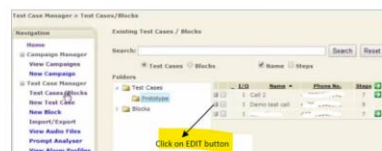


2) Test Case imported successfully in Cyara.



3) Click on the LHS menu item "TestCases/Blocks" and it opens the test case in Cyara which was imported successfully.

Given below is the screenshot:



4) Click on the "edit" button (as shown in the above figure) and the test case will be executed in the EDIT mode.



4) Click on the "edit" button (as shown in the above figure) and the test case will be executed in the EDIT mode.

5) Existing associated steps with the test cases are shown below:

Step	Description	Expect to Hear	Reply With	Reply Type	Min / Max / Pass / Fail / PST	
1	Time to Connect	(Language en-US) Hi, thank you for calling. Hello Shree, powered by Cyara AI.		Speech	0/0 0/10 0 0	U
2	Message 1	(Language en-US) It is a pleasure to be speaking with you today. Demand Hello.		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U
3	Message 2	(Language en-US) My name is Amy. I am your simulated agent today. I want to thank you for...		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U

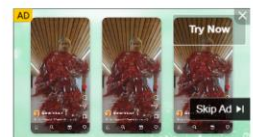
Click on Edit



5) Existing associated steps with the test cases are shown below:

Step	Description	Expect to Hear	Reply With	Reply Type	Min / Max / Pass / Fail / PST	
1	Time to Connect	(Language en-US) Hi, thank you for calling. Hello Shree, powered by Cyara AI.		Speech	0/0 0/10 0 0	U
2	Message 1	(Language en-US) It is a pleasure to be speaking with you today. Demand Hello.		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U
3	Message 2	(Language en-US) My name is Amy. I am your simulated agent today. I want to thank you for...		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U
4	Message 3	(Language en-US) I see you are calling about...		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U
5	Message 4	(Language en-US) I am going to send a short message to your phone, we would be grateful if you could take a few moments to take a photo. Thanking you for your time. Good bye.		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U
6	Message 5	(Language en-US) Sorry, there is a technical problem.		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U
7	Message 6	(Language en-US) One moment please while I transfer message and you through to an advisor.		Speech	0/0 0/10 70 0	A U

6) Once you click on the edit mode, the corresponding step will be available for editing on the screen immediately. If you want to add the new step in the existing test case using Cyara then scroll down and the below screen will be displayed.



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6) Once you click on the edit mode, the corresponding step will be available for editing on the screen immediately. If you want to add the new step in the existing test case using Cyara then scroll down and the below screen will be displayed.

7) The above image shows that you can add a new step and if you do not want to add any step, then you can execute the test case with Cyara using "Save and Execute" button as shown above. Once you click on the "Save and Execute" button the result will be displayed on the screen.

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Benefits of Cyara:

- End to End testing solution:** Cyara platform automates functional testing and provides an end to end solution to the IVR system.
- Reduction in Cost:** Cyara platform provides a solution to the organization at a low price, no manual intervention, call flows are reusable across the testing lifecycle.
- Easy to use and customize:** Configuration of a system within Cyara platform is easy and Cyara tool is customizable based on the organization need.
- Customer satisfaction:** Nowadays, customers are satisfied with the Cyara performance due to its low cost, reduced error prone functionality in a live environment, easy to use feature etc.
- Minimal time for testing:** Functional tests are performed earlier in the project and time required for thorough regression test is minimal due to automation.
- Lower probability of releasing critical defects into production.**

Check out the **official website** for more details.

#2) HAMMER:

Hammer is an **automation testing tool** for IVR which was developed by Empirix System. It identifies and corrects the experience related problems before any system goes into production. Hammer tool measures the performance issues, configuration problems, issues related to the IVR prompt or IVR response time.

Using Hammer tool, a tester can emulate **live like environment**. We can dial IVR line and can verify customer and proceed with a **further transaction**. DTMF and voice inputs are possible using Hammer and it ensures that appropriate IVR responses are received to the caller. For each call, it measures the response time for IVR database and the response time for the IVR host system.

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Hammer CallMaster is a sophisticated tool that is used for test development, debug and reporting during the entire testing lifecycle. As we have seen that for IVR functionality, there is call flow diagram available which is like a user manual and using this call flow diagram, Hammer CallMaster automatically generates Hammer Visual Basic (HVB) test scripts.

Hammer CallMaster tool covers the testing phase of the call flow analysis, test execution using generated scripts, and report generation after test execution.



Hammer CallMaster automates the testing of voice and speech applications which will help an organization to launch higher quality IVR applications. Hammer CallMaster simplifies the testing process which in turn will reduce the cost for the organization and generate the quality output with minimum cost and less time.

Benefits of Hammer:

- Provide exponentially greater application coverage with less effort.
- It enables a non-technical team to participate in test case designing.
- An application is tested thoroughly and ensures that it meets all the performance requirements.
- Hammer Test System helps to detect and measure the configuration issues, performance problems, database response time, IVR prompt error etc..
- It identifies a problem early during testing so that it gives time to fix the issue.
- Hammer Test System provides error-free software to the customer so that it improves the customer experience.

Check the [official link](#) for more details of Hammer tool.

Given below is a basic sample image of Empirix Hammer which will give a basic end to end flow of IVR system using Hammer tool:

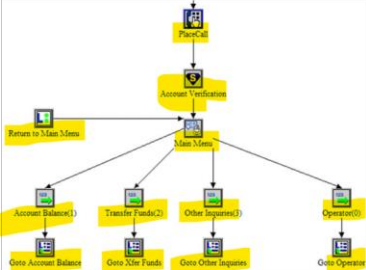



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Check the [official link](#) for more details of Hammer tool.



Given below is a basic sample image of Empirix Hammer which will give a basic end to end flow of IVR system using Hammer tool:



[image source]

Sample Test Case for IVR flow (Account Balance)

Step No	Caller or User Action	Expected Result or IVR behavior
Step	Caller dials IVR	IVR play: Esteemed to the ABC company. Press 1 for English, 2 for Hindi

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TSMS: My...

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Sample Test Case for IVR flow (Account Balance)


Step No	Caller or User Action	Expected Result or IVR behavior
Step 1	Caller dials IVR line 0800 800 1234	IVR play: Esteemed to the ABC company: Press 1 for English, 2 for Hindi
Step 2	Caller press 1	IVR Play: Thank you, Press 1 for Banking, 2 for Credit Card, 3 for information on new product
Step 3	Caller Press 1	IVR Plays: Thank you, Press 1 for a new customer and 2 for existing customer
Step 4	Caller Press 2	IVR plays: Thank you, to know your account balance, press 1, to know your last three transactions press 2, press 3 for any other information
Step 5	Caller press 1	Your account balance is Rs. 123, press 1 for more information, press 2 to go back to previous menu or press 3 to go back to main menu or press 4 to end the call
Step 6	Caller Press 2	IVR plays: Thank you, to know your account balance, press 1, to know your last five transactions press 2, press 3 for any other information
Step 7	Caller Press 2	Thank you, our last five transactions are: XXXX XXXXXX XX IVR waits for two seconds and then played - Press 1 for more information, press 2 to go back to previous menu or press 3 to go back to main menu or press 4 to end the call Sorry, we have not received your input, please try again.

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Stan

Caller remain

Change starts with you



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Today's Agenda

Functions

00:23 13:23

Mail - Vik...

MyHCLTe...

TSMS: My...

WhatsApp

Inbox - vi...

MyHCLTe...

wf5.myhcl...

Feed | Lin...

What is IV...

Best IVR T...

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Gmail

My HCLTech

HCL - Mail - Vikram...

WhatsApp

slidesgo - Google S...

ChatGPT

LinkedIn

Tricentis-qtest

YouTube

Instagram

usid to inr

Telegram Web

QA Roadmap: Learn...

press 3 to go back to main menu or press 4 to end the call


Step 8	Caller remain silent	Sorry, we have not received your input, please try again. Press 1 for more information, press 2 to go back to previous menu or press 3 to go back to main menu or press 4 to end the call
Step 9	Caller Press 4	Thank you for calling ABC company.
Step 10	Call Ends	

Waiting for capi.connatix.com...

Stan

Caller remain

Change starts with you



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AD - Cyber Coppe

Hasta 50% de descuento

Cyber Coppe

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Dial 1 for statement and balance related service for your saving account,

Dial 2 for Credit Card Pin, Debit card PIN related queries,

Dial 3 for Credit card related queries,

Dial 4 for loan related queries

Step 5 Caller Dials 2

IVR Plays: Thank you,

Dial 1 to generate Debit Card pin,

Dial 2 to generate Credit Card pin

Dial 9 to speak to an advisor

To go back to the main menu, dial 8

To go back to previous menu dial 0

Step 6 Caller remain silent

IVR play: Sorry, we have not received your input, please try again.

Dial 1 to generate Debit Card pin,

Dial 2 to generate Credit Card pin

Dial 9 to speak to an advisor

To go back to the main menu, dial 8

To go back to previous menu dial 0

Change starts with you

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¡Cyber Coppel está aquí!

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Step 7 Caller Dials 8

IVR plays: Thank you.

Dial 1 for statement and balance related service for your saving account,

Dial 2 for Credit Card Pin, Debit card PIN related queries,

Dial 3 for Credit card related queries,

Dial 4 for loan related queries

Step 8 Caller Dials 4

IVR play: Sorry we are open from Monday to Friday between 9 am to 5 pm, please try again.

Dial 1 for statement and balance related service for your saving account,

Dial 2 for Credit Card Pin, Debit card PIN related queries,

Dial 3 for Credit card related queries,

Dial 4 for loan related queries

Step 9 Caller Dials 3

IVR play: Thank you,

Dial 1 to verify with Credit Card number and credit card PIN

Dial 2 to verify with Credit Card and Tele-pin

Dial 9 to speak to an advisor

To go back to the main menu, dial 8



Naturella

6 ZONAS DE PROTECCIÓN QUE AGUANTAN MÁS

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Step	Caller	IVR play:
10	Caller dials 0	Thank you, Dial 1 for statement and balance related service for your saving account, Dial 2 for Credit Card Pin, Debit card PIN related queries, Dial 3 for Credit card related queries, Dial 4 for loan related queries
11	Caller dials *	Sorry that is an invalid option, please try again. Dial 1 for statement and balance related service for your saving account, Dial 2 for Credit Card Pin, Debit card PIN related queries, Dial 3 for Credit card related queries, Dial 4 for loan related queries
12	Caller Dials 3	Thank you, Dial 1 to verify with Credit Card number and credit card PIN Dial 2 to verify with Credit Card and Tele-pin Dial 9 to speak to an advisor To go back to the main menu, dial 8



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Step	Caller	IVR play:
13	Caller dials 9	Please wait while we transfer your call to our customer care officer. For quality purpose, this call may get recorded.
14	Caller wait for few moment	Call gets transferred to customer care officer.
15	Caller speaks to an adviser and call ends	

Conclusion

IVR automation is very cost effective as it gives a clear and concise output to the customer. Manual testing of IVR system become boring as the tester has to listen to the same prompts repeatedly and also same repetitive input needs to be given to the IVR system, which in turn may cause failure in the system.

With the help of automation tool, this possibility can be completely removed. Any change can be tested quickly and new call flows can be developed using such tools.

Customer satisfaction is very important to every organization. Considering the investment in business and customer satisfaction, IVR automation has the ability to meet the required expectation from the customer.

Hope you would have got a clear idea of which IVR tool to opt for!!

