



# SUCCESS

## **Knight Ridder's Business Challenge:**

**Knight Ridder** is a Communications Company engaged primarily in newspaper and Internet publishing. The second largest newspaper publisher in the United States, it owns 31 dailies and operates the Real Cities Network of local news Web sites in more than 100 markets worldwide.

Knight Ridder operates two Contact Centers on the East Coast that service 26 newspapers. The Knight Ridder Management team estimated that over 40% of the Contact Centers calls were for basic account status/payment, subscription fulfillment and service complaints. The challenge was to address an increasing volume of these types of calls without increasing staff and facilities overhead.

## **Key Components of Computer Instruments Solution:**

To meet Knight Ridder's challenge, Computer Instruments positioned an e-IVR Enterprise Solution with Custom Applications to add Self Service Automation for callers. The e-IVR Enterprise system seamlessly integrated with Knight Ridder's existing Avaya Definity PBX. Key components of the Solution included the e-IVR Enterprise Application Server, Enhanced Natural Language Speech Recognition (English and Spanish), some Custom Database Integration, and four 48-port RAID servers (servers in two separate locations).

## **Key Functionality of Computer Instruments Solution:**

e-IVR Enterprise gave Knight Ridder the Self Service Technology to accommodate escalating call volumes without having to add additional resources. When Knight Ridder customers call the automated system, they are greeted with the following four options. They can (1) register a complaint, (2) restart interrupted paper delivery, (3) interrupt delivery, or (4) review their account status/make a payment. The e-IVR server distinguishes between English and Spanish speaking callers by 1) providing dedicated 800 numbers for each language and/or 2) matching the caller ID (ANI) to the language designated on the customer's account. Callers have the choice of either touch-tone entry or speech. The customer issue of a "late or missed paper" (the most common complaint) demonstrates how e-IVR performs. A database of real-time delivery information can be accessed by e-IVR and relayed to the caller (i.e. "a delivery truck is delayed by the weather") and a re-delivery can be scheduled.

## **Benefits for Knight Ridder:**

The e-IVR Enterprise Self Service Automation not only maximized Knight Ridder's call volume capacity, it maximized their overall level of Customer Service by providing customers quick response on a 24/7 basis. Each Contact Center employs two e-IVR servers, which handle an average of 7000 calls every 24 hours. The e-IVR system let Knight Ridder off-load an estimated 40% of a growing number of inbound calls, while allowing their call center agents to focus on more non-routine calls, for a higher level of customer care.

Besides maximizing service to their customer base, Knight Ridder has leveraged their increased call capacity into an added revenue generating opportunity. Knight Ridder not only services over 25 of their own newspaper publications, they are able to outsource their Contact Center services to other newspapers across the country. Needless to say, Knight Ridder's prospects for "return on investment" were relatively short term.

- Maximized Customer Service – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- Agents focused on more demanding customer service issues
- Framework for additional revenue generation (selling Call Center services to other publications)
- Designed to scale with Knight Ridder's growth
- Quick "return on investment"

## **Conclusion:**

Knight Ridder has historically been a trendsetter in the newspaper business. Now many of its 10 million daily readers, from 31 daily publications in 28 markets (including the Miami Herald and The Kansas City Star), have 24/7 access to a higher level of Customer Service, provided in an innovative and cost effective manner by e-IVR.



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