



EMPOWERING
TELECOM
INNOVATORS

Answering Machine Detection: PIKA Answers the Call

Smart Solutions has been providing pharmacies across North America affordable, innovative, customizable IVR and messaging technology since 1995. The company continues to innovate by investing R&D resources in creating features not found anywhere else in the pharmacy IVR market.



smart
SOLUTIONS

Located in Salt Lake City, Utah, Smart Solutions prides itself on a corporate philosophy of providing reliable, quality products and guaranteed customer satisfaction. Smart's customers include some of the largest chain stores and most recognized hospital institutions in the healthcare industry, as well as mail order and independent pharmacy owners.

VOIP, SIP AND ANSWER MACHINE DETECTION

With the advent of SIP-based communication, Smart customers benefit from a variety of end-user features never seen before, however this also brings technology challenges which did not exist in the past. In the area of outbound messaging, good clean answering machine detection (AMD) technology is critical. Not only must the software detect an answering machine vs. a live person, it is mandatory that the message is left immediately without a long silence delay.

As an original equipment manufacturer (OEM) of telephony software/hardware, PIKA's expertise in software architecture, in particular high level APIs became very useful for Smart. PIKA's high level API (Grandprix) answering machine detection algorithm, using HMP X technology, delivers a measured success rate of over 80% and was developed against a test database of endpoints.

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Craig Swett, CEO Smart Solutions



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Smart had previously deployed a competitor's AMD technology when the healthcare market first wanted to make outbound calls to remind patients to pick up or fill their prescriptions. After migrating to a SIP-based system, customers began having issues with answering machine detection functionality. It was then that Smart's CEO, Craig Swett, began looking for a new solution.

THE SEARCH FOR OUT-OF-THE-BOX SOLUTIONS

Smart had already been working with PIKA's HMP SIP product in their SmartCall IVR and had a very good experience working with PIKA's API and support team. With that in mind, they decided to explore the idea of using PIKA's HMP X technology as a solution for their outbound messaging platform.

With a growing base of customers that require the attention of Smart staff, and a limited amount of time to work on customizing solutions, Smart were looking for a solution that would work exactly as advertised.

"The two leading choices were really between Dialogic and PIKA Technologies," says Swett. "For us, PIKA's straight out of the box API covers 90% of our customer needs. We just turn on AMD and it works, and our customers are satisfied with the improved detection rates. It's so nice to work with AMD technology that just works, verses us having to worry about having to tax our resources tweaking code, which is what it was like working with the previous solution that we deployed. PIKA definitely does it better than anyone else out there that we have seen."

"Our HMP X software has many possible API settings for answer machine detection," says Wojciech Tryc, PIKA's CTO. "Generally these settings do not need any modification as the default values assure good results. The only time we typically see them being modified is when there is a need to accommodate different destinations - for example, residential answering machine or cell phone may differ from commercial answering machines. In this case, we have specific settings to accommodate these scenarios which are well documented."

OUTPERFORMING THE COMPETITION

Since deploying PIKA's HMP X solution for all their new outbound calling customers, Smart has found a significant improvement in its answering machine detection rates. Smart's older customer base was still running off the old equipment, which was costing the company time and money. After closely examining the overall cost, risk, functionality and performance between PIKA and the competitive solution, Smart decided to remove all the competitors' licenses and replace them with PIKA's. Smart found that retrofitting PIKA's standard call progress analysis code back into its old base of customers to build their call progress analysis was the most efficient and effective way of keeping their customers happy and keeping Smart's costs under control.

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Craig Swett has a lot to say about how PIKA stands out from its competitors. "As a company, their API design is well implemented," he explains. "The PIKA team has been great to work with. We don't need to rely on PIKA support very often because of our technical in-house strength, but when we do need to talk to someone about a technical requirement, we are able to get a response quickly from a very knowledgeable support person."



A LONG TERM RELATIONSHIP

Smart's relationship with PIKA holds much promise for the future. In fact, Smart is already looking to increase the level of integration with PIKA solutions, including the use of VOIP recording. "We certainly don't want to spend the time, money and effort to support multiple providers," says Swett. "So as we move forward, we will use PIKA and will stay with PIKA as the primary player in the market."

"PIKA works with many clients like Smart," says Wojciech Tryc. "It is our primary focus to continue delivering innovative solutions that help our customers streamline their costs. We design and develop with the mindset that you should be able to simply deploy with high level function calls which are well documented, to speed your time to market."

Working with a company like PIKA that understands the market and is willing to provide high quality, quick support without requiring expensive support contracts has put PIKA on the path to a good long working relationship with Smart Solutions. This, in turn, has allowed Smart to focus on the task at hand and continue moving forward as a leader in the healthcare communications market.

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