

Vistra Energy improves call containment by 18%

Vistra Energy is one of the ten largest electric companies in the US. The Texas-based utility wanted a more efficient and customer-friendly way to handle millions of calls each year. So Vistra worked with Interactions to create Ivy, a Virtual Assistant solution that contains nearly 20% more calls while reducing operating and IT costs.

THE PROBLEM

Vistra Energy receives more than 10 million calls each year. Delivering exceptional service on these calls is essential to retaining customers, since customers can choose their own provider in the deregulated Texas market.

To manage large operating costs for its most used channel, Vistra implemented a self-service system based on a Touch-Tone and directed-dialogue solution. Caller tasks varied from the simple (reporting an outage) to the more complex (resolving a billing issue). Eventually, self-service rates plateaued as the system's natural language implementation met its limit.

Vistra had a good solution, but they wanted a great one. A solution that could enhance the customer experience and increase self-service completions rates without increasing operating costs. Vistra's specific goals included:

- Increasing call purity and improving routing accuracy
- Reducing operations and maintenance costs
- Reducing customer frustration to enhance customer experience

THE SOLUTION

After careful evaluation, Vistra Energy chose Interactions to fully replace their existing IVR. While other vendors offered a rigid solution that limits callers to a specific path, Interactions was the only automated customer care solution that engages customers in truly free-form dialogue.

Interactions built a hosted conversational solution that expands Vistra's self-service capabilities to include:

- Greeting callers with an open-ended, "Thank you for calling Vistra Energy. How can I help you?"
- Providing 14 self-service transactions, such as making payments, setting up recurring payments, moving service, or reporting an outage.
- Enabling fully unstructured conversations with an automated solution that applies business rules.
- Gauging intent with unprecedented accuracy, with Interactions Adaptive Understanding Technology™ that seamlessly combines artificial and human intelligence.

As a result of this new cloud-based solution, Vistra was able to streamline operations, increase contact center efficiency, and eliminate the need to deploy expensive onsite equipment during peak seasons.

THE RESULTS

Customer satisfaction: Supporting Vistra Energy's exceptional service goal, their Customer Satisfaction Score (CSAT) rose by 11%.

Seamless language transitions: Capture rates for Spanish speakers is up, as the Virtual Agent responds in the language the customer uses during the call.

Call containment: Vistra successfully completes 18% more calls without the need for an expensive live agent.

Additional savings: Beyond call center savings, Vistra saves more than \$750,000 in IT costs and more than \$200,000 in cost avoidance.

Accelerated run rate: Vistra reached their payback goals in just 40 days.

Expanded use: Vistra plans to bring new self-service scenarios online—in just a few weeks, compared to several months' lead time with their previous solution.



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“Customers will go through an entire self-service transaction, conversing with the system, and never realize they are talking to a machine.”

—ED ANDERSON

Senior Manager of Call Center Technology

Vistra Energy is a market-leading competitive retail electricity provider, powering the lives of more Texans than any other retailer. Vistra Energy offers a variety of innovative products and solutions for residential and business customers, including exceptional customer service, competitively priced electricity service plans, and renewable energy programs.



ABOUT INTERACTIONS

Interactions provides Intelligent Virtual Assistants that seamlessly combine artificial intelligence and human understanding to enable businesses and consumers to engage in productive conversations. With flexible products and solutions designed to meet the growing demand for unified, omnichannel customer care, Interactions is delivering significant cost savings and unprecedented customer experiences for some of the largest brands in the world. Founded in 2004, Interactions is headquartered in Franklin, Massachusetts with additional offices worldwide.

For more information about Interactions, please visit interactions.com

