

A1

## CASE STUDY

**PREPARED FOR THE FUTURE:  
SPEECH RECOGNITION AND  
MOBILE CALL RECORDING**



## INTELLIGENT IVR SOLUTIONS HELP CORPORATE CUSTOMERS

It stands to reason that A1 would also let their corporate customers benefit from CreaLog's long-term, in-depth IVR experience. This offering extends from intelligent network (IN) routing to date dependent routing on to alerting services for technical field forces. In all cases, A1 will develop custom solutions for corporate customers, enabling them to streamline their services in an efficient and cost effective way.

## SENDING SPECIALISTS OFF TO THEIR ASSIGNMENTS

The A1 alarm server's job is to brief a corporate customer's previously defined field force team and send them off to an assignment. A typical example: Late in the evening, a regional power utility receives a message informing them of a power outage in the 2nd City district. The employee receiving this message then triggers an alert to that effect. The IVR system immediately informs selected staff members on duty by smartphone and accepts a confirmation SMS. The alerted employees set out immediately to resolve the malfunction as rapidly as possible — by order of their employer but first and foremost for the benefit of the affected power customers.

## DIRECTORY INQUIRY STILL IN DEMAND

The directory inquiry service line was introduced a decade ago and still enjoys great popularity among A1 users. Mostly, national telephone numbers are easy to find on the internet but this is not always the case with international numbers. Sometimes, the first area code digit after the country code needs to be omitted and sometimes it doesn't. In consequence, this telephone service, which comes at a cost, still enjoys high user numbers, particularly for international calls.

## THE SPEAKING CLOCK — STILL SURPRISINGLY POPULAR

"At the third stroke, it will be 12, 26, and 10 seconds. Beep, beep, beep". Especially around the summer and winter time changeovers, the Speaking Clock is still surprisingly popular. An average of 45,000 local calls per month were a good reason for A1 officials to incorporate this service, which had been outsourced for many years, again into the organization's IVR in 2016.

*"Many callers take advantage of the convenient option to have their call put through to the desired party directly", Robert Raab explains. "This is done not by the customer care agent the caller has been talking to but rather by the voice portal: First, it identifies the desired call destination number in our data base. Then, on pressing a key, the IVR will connect the call — with all the right prefixes, of course. This service works day in, day out, stable and robust."*

ROBERT RAAB  
HEAD OF SERVICE NETWORK  
PLANNING



## INNOVATION AND PARTNERSHIP

"We are the only communication provider in Austria that is consistently using state-of-the-art speech recognition. For A1 is an innovative enterprise, committed to offer our customers modern-day services on the phone." This is how Robert Raab, head of Service Network Planning at A1, outlines a current development in his organization. "By deploying speech recognition, we are continuing a more than ten years' stretch of well-tried collaboration with our system partner, CreaLog, in a logical way — and, at the same time, are making a great stride into the technological future", Raab adds.

On the following pages, this report expands on the details of A1's powerful and versatile IVR services and on what the new mobile Mobile Call Recording solution means for Austrian banks in particular.

## THE VOICE PORTAL – A DOORWAY TO THE SERVICE CENTER

At A1, the term, Voice Portal, is right on the mark: IVR (Interactive Voice Response) is the

doorway to Austria's leading telecommunication provider for all customers and prospects interested in utilizing the range of available telephone, Web, TV, and data services.

Through this door, callers enter one of A1's service centers scattered across all of Austria. This is where you, as a rule, can find the right person to talk to when topics or issues such as these are on the agenda:

- Charging issues
- Service interruption reports
- Questions about (new) products and pricing
- Seeking general advice

## SPEECH RECOGNITION – STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY

When our customers called the A1 service number, they had to choose their desired menu item by pressing a key ("For questions about your invoice, please press 3"). Since 3rd May 2017, DTMF tone selection is a thing of the past and this day hallmarks an ambitious objective of Austria's leading communications provider.

## USER FRIENDLINESS SIGNIFICANTLY INCREASED

This type of accessibility is also very much appreciated by visually impaired citizens: for them, speech recognition and voice control represent a clear relief, as they can now present their issues or questions on the phone using nothing but their voices.

User friendliness generally increased for smartphone users as well, for instead of first activating their phone's key pad as required for the DTMF tone menu, they can now use voice control in a much easier way.

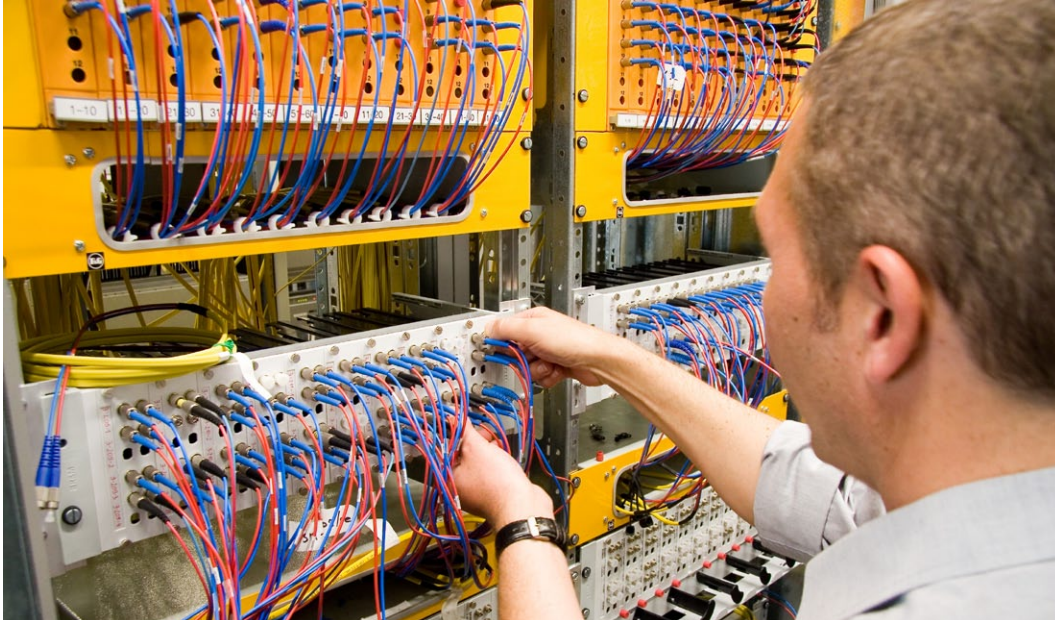
Speech recognition is not the only feature embraced by A1 customers. The same holds for the modern style of the announcements when conversing with the voice portal. It is different from what it was before, with a cool, lively, and humorous note. All in all, A1 recorded around 1,000 announcements anew in a studio.

*"We want to strengthen our role as an innovative organization. This implies offering our customers modern-day telephone dialog capabilities using state-of-the-art speech recognition. Since the beginning of May, callers can forget about key pressing routines and ask the voice-enabled computer questions in free text. The positive reactions — not only from smartphone users — show we have made the right decision."*



DIR. ELKE SCHAFFER,  
DIRECTOR CUSTOMER  
SERVICE & SALES





## MOBILE CALL RECORDING WITH A1 AND CREALOG: MORE SAFETY FOR MOBILE BANK TRANSACTIONS

Time was running out: Starting on 3rd January 2018, all consulting telephone calls conducted between banks and their clients in EU and EWR countries needed to be recorded — and this applied to both land line and mobile networks. This resulted from tightened financial market regulations (MiFID II) enacted in May of 2014 by the European Parliament to provide improved protection for bank customers. In Austria, A1 is the only telecommunications provider that has been capable of offering this service to the country's banks since September 2017. This was preceded by a call for tenders that CreaLog was able to win with their well-tried solution, Mobile Call Recording.

### LONG TERM STORAGE — SECURE ACCESS

Working with CreaLog, A1 implemented law-compliant recording of mobile telephone calls and SMS messages along with their call information, which all need to be retained unaltered for a period of at least two years: for better consumer protection, to combat money laundering, and to prevent insider

trading and collusion. Mobile Call Recording works with all mobile endpoint devices and on all platforms and it does not need an app of any kind or additional deployments to be made. First, an announcement is made informing about the legal requirement to record the present call. The call parties' communication is then captured in two separate data streams and stored in the two sound channels of a stereo audio file. The financial institute has exclusive access to the stored, encrypted data.

### EVEN AVAILABLE ON-PREMISE

A1 customers in Austria benefit from a particularly interesting feature, as Robert Raab explains: "We offer banks to store the encrypted data on-premise — keeping in mind that as a rule, the required infrastructure is already in place in those banks. After all, the financial institutes have been recording certain landline calls with customers or investment advisors for some time already. So it's not so far fetched to integrate the encrypted call recordings from mobile networks as well. Also, these customers can then easily employ their own search algorithms as required."

## BETTER SERVICES INCREASE CUSTOMER LOYALTY

When using a service center to communicate with customers, executives face the same crucial question time and again: How should I act when call volumes significantly exceed my service staff's capacity? Should I accept the fact that (annoyed) customers will have to wait for longer in the call queue? Or can I resolve the issue by forwarding callers to a "standby service center" at peak times? This routing option is easily done using a service number in A1's intelligent network and ensures that customers will not be annoyed after all.

## INTELLIGENT IVR SERVICES

This multitenant IVR solution is a basic module, and A1 only needs to customize it for the particular corporate customer. The same holds for the system's intelligent date dependent routing feature. This involves call forwarding to alternative service centers depending on weekday and time of day: between 8am and 8pm to Linz or Graz and to New York during the following night. Calls can be generally routed to another service center outside office hours as well as on Sundays and holidays.

"These intelligent IVR services help ensure that our customers' clients will almost certainly reach a contact person or receive self-service advice at any time of day or night every day of the year", Director Elke Schaffer summarizes.

## THE GREAT CHALLENGE: RECOGNIZE TERMS AND DIALECTS

As mentioned before, speech recognition is in live operation since 3rd May. However, the conversion process is not quite complete as yet. The main reason for this is that working with A1, IVR specialist, CreaLog, had to overcome a particular challenge: First, there is the usage of multiple terms, and second, the overly large number of around 20 different dialects spoken in Austria. Robert Raab gives a typical example: Over the phone, our product name, A1 TV, comes across as 'TV', 'Fernsehen' or 'Fernschauen' (both meaning 'watch television'). And then, these different terms are additionally tinted by the various dialects. You may well imagine how difficult it is for the IVR solution to identify certain key words correctly. But working together, we mastered this task successfully as well."

*"IN routing is already in use at several of our customers. It unburdens the customer's own service center when needed by forwarding a previously defined percentage of incoming calls to one or more external service centers. We provide users with a Web-based user interface that allows them to control the details of this routing by themselves. Our customers are also in control of the related reporting functionality."*

ROBERT RAAB  
HEAD OF SERVICE NETWORK  
PLANNING



## STATE-OF-THE-ART TECHNOLOGY IN ACTION

- 1,140 channels integrated with Genesys
- State-of-the-art Speech Recognition
- State-of-the-art Text to Speech
- Geo redundant architecture
- 100 channel development platform

## ABOUT A1

A1 is Austria's leading communications provider, encompassing almost 6 million mobile communications customers and over 2.2 million fixed access lines. The customers benefit from a comprehensive package offer from one source: voice telephony, Internet access, digital cable television, data and IT solutions, wholesale services, and mobile business and payment solutions. The product brands, A1, bob, Red Bull MOBILE, and Yesss!, represent quality and smart services. As a responsible company, A1 integrates socially relevant and environmental concerns into its core business.

Source: [www.a1.net/ueber-a1/unternehmen/s/unternehmen](http://www.a1.net/ueber-a1/unternehmen/s/unternehmen)

## ABOUT CREALOG

CreaLog is a leading supplier of voice portal systems in Europe with reference deployments in 30 countries. The CreaLog Platform features full web administration and is used by more than 400 customers in over 30 different market segments, operating around 60,000 installed lines. Reference deployments include telecommunications providers and value added suppliers such as Deutsche Telekom, Vodafone, Swisscom and A1 Telekom Austria, Unitel from Angola, Post Luxemburg as well as many other renowned network operators across Europe. Furthermore, many corporate customers including PAYBACK (AmericanExpress Group), HypoVereinsbank (UniCredit Group) and other financial institutes, power utilities, TV stations such as 1-2-3.tv and Sky count among our long-standing clientele.

For more information, please visit [www.crealog.com](http://www.crealog.com)

Picture credits: all A1 Telekom Austria AG

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