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**Creating Professional Auto**

**Attendants & Voicemail Greetings**

As you prepare to prepare the setup of your Auto Attendant and Greetings, you first need to do some planning. It is very helpful if you initially prepare a flow chart of your Auto Attendant menu and its various options. The next step would be to come up with all the scripts you want to record. When creating your company greetings, keep them short and to the point. Here are some guidelines to help you.

**Welcome Message**

Here is an example of your Welcome message:

Thank you for calling The ACME Company, where ‘Widgets Are Our Specialty’. Visit us on the web at www.ACME.com. If you know the extension of the person you wish to reach, you may dial it at any time or press ‘\*‘for our company directory. Otherwise, please choose from one of the following options. For sales, press ‘1’. For customer service, press ‘2’. For technical support, press ‘3’. For accounting, press ‘4’ or if you would like company information such as hours of operation and location, press ‘5’. Otherwise, press ‘0’, or stay on the line and a member of our staff will assist you shortly. Thank you for calling.

***Some suggestions to consider:***

• Use formats that people are familiar with, like ‘0’ for the operator.

• Avoid saying "please" before every menu choice (‘please press 1’, ‘please press 2’, etc.). This can sound repetitious.

• Try to limit your menus to no more than 5 options at each level; otherwise it is too difficult to remember all the choices. If you need to offer many options, consider organizing them into logical groups and use more than one Auto Attendant.

• You may want to use certain digits for special functions in each menu such as “press ‘\*’ to return to the previous menu”.

• Let callers know they can make a choice at any time. They should not have to wait for the messages to finish playing before they enter the extension or menu choice they want.

• Consider people who may not have a touch-tone phone. Those callers should default to an operator from the welcome message.

• Remember that frequent callers will usually prefer to bypass your system by entering the extension they want right away.

• Including your slogan or tag line is a great way to build brand awareness.

**After-Hours Auto Attendants**

Consider using a separate announcement that plays when you are closed:

Thank you for calling The ACME Company, where ‘Widgets Are Our Specialty’. Our offices are presently closed. Our normal business hours are 8 am to 5 pm Eastern Time Monday through Friday, and 9 am to 12 pm on Saturday. We are closed Sundays and on National holidays. Please visit us on the web at www.ACME.com. You may leave a message for the party you are trying to reach by dialing their extension now or press ‘\*‘for the company directory. Otherwise, press ‘1’ to leave a message in our general voice mailbox, and we will contact you as soon as we return to the office. Thank you for calling The ACME Company.

***Some suggestions to consider:***

• Let your customers know when you are open and taking calls. If you do business nationally, make sure to include your time zone.

• When you are closed, directing callers to your website.

• Offer your callers the option of leaving a message, and assure them you will return their call. You may set up a general mailbox, direct them to dial by extension of the person for whom they wish to leave a message, or both.

**Multi-Tiered Auto Attendants and Voicemail Greetings**

You can set up an Auto Attendant such that pressing a menu choice leads to another Auto Attendant or to a voicemail box. Here are a few examples of scripts that branch from the Welcome Auto Attendant:

(Auto Attendant) You have reached The ACME Company’s Sales department. For Widgets for the home, press ‘1’. For Widgets for your business, press ‘2’. For bulk Widgets sales, press ‘3’. To locate an authorized Widget dealer in your area, press ‘4’. To return to the previous menu, press ‘#’.

(Auto Attendant) You have reached The ACME Company’s Technical Support department. Technical support is also available on the web 24 hours a day, 7 days a week at www.ACME.com/support. All of our technicians are currently assisting other callers. Please stay on the line, and your call will be answered by the next available technician. If you prefer, you may press ‘1’ to leave a message, and a technician will return your call as soon as possible. To return to the previous menu, press ‘#’.

(Voicemail Greeting) Thank you for calling The ACME Company’s Customer Service department. All of our customer service representatives are currently assisting other callers. Please leave your name, telephone number, and a brief message after the tone, and a representative will return your call as soon as possible. When you have finished, you may press ‘#’ for more options.

***Some suggestions to consider:***

• If you set up a multi-tiered Auto Attendant or Voicemail system like this, you may want to give callers the option of returning to the previous menu.

• If you are using call distribution features such as call queuing, you can offer them the option of waiting on hold for an available staff member.

• You can also route callers directly to voicemail if you wish.

**General / Personal Voicemail Greetings**

Do not forget to consider how you will set up your voicemail boxes:

(Departmental Voicemail Greeting) If you are looking for the best Widgets available anywhere, you have made the right call! All of our sales representatives are currently helping other callers. Rather than having us leave you on hold, please leave a message at the tone, and a sales representative will return your call as soon as we are available. When you have finished, you may press ‘#’ for further options. For full descriptions and current pricing information on our customized Widgets, you may also visit our web site at www.ACME.com. Thank you for calling The ACME Company.

(General Voicemail Greeting) You have reached The ACME Company’s general voice mailbox. Please leave a message after the tone, and one of our staff will contact you as soon as possible. When you have finished, you may press ‘#’ for further options. To return to the previous menu, press ‘\*’. Thank you for calling the ACME Company.

(Personal Voicemail Greeting) You have reached the voicemail box of John Doe. Mr. Doe is unable to take your call at this time. Please leave a message after the tone, and he will return your call as soon as possible. When you have finished, you may press ‘#’ for further options. If you call is urgent, you may dial ext. ‘111’ now to be connected to Mr. Doe’s assistant. Thanks for calling, and have a great day.

***Some suggestions to consider:***

• A Departmental Voicemail Greeting can handle calls when the staff in that department is otherwise occupied. It is a good idea to present such an option as a desirable alternative to waiting on hold. Do not forget to point them to other sources of information as well, such as your website.

• You should have at least one company-wide General Voicemail Greeting to take messages when a caller does not have a particular department or person in mind. Assign one of your staff the responsibility of retrieving and forwarding these messages to the appropriate destination for further action.

• A professionally produced Personal Voicemail Greeting is a great way to impress your callers. You may include a way to reach a different person who can handle urgent matters immediately.

**Informational Auto Attendants**

An Auto Attendant can be set up to make outgoing announcements, impart detailed information, or to give a sales message:

You may press ‘1’ to return to the previous menu at any time. The ACME Company is your source for Widgets of every size and color! We would like to take this opportunity to tell you a little more about our exclusive line of quality Widgets... [continue with information about product or service features and benefits]

You may press ‘#’ to return to the previous menu at any time. The ACME Company is located between A Street and B Avenue, near the entrance of C Store, at exit 1 off of I-123. Our postal address is 123 Widgets Street, Suite 1A, Anywhere, State, 12345. Our normal business hours are 8 am to 5 pm Eastern Time Monday through Friday, and 9 am to 12 pm on Saturday. We are closed Sundays and on National holidays. Our website address is www.ACME.com. Our fax number is 123-456-7890. To reach a sales representative now, press ‘0’. To return to the previous menu, press ‘#’.

***Some suggestions to consider:***

• Informational Auto Attendants are a great way to present frequently requested information, such as your open hours, address, fax number, and directions to your facility, so that valuable staff time isn’t consumed by these types of calls.

• Check your documentation to find out the time limit for Auto Attendants or Voicemail Greetings on your system. Most systems allow at least 5 minutes -- plenty of time for most purposes.

• Don’t forget to allow a way to "escape" the message, like pressing ‘#’ to return to the previous menu, or pressing ‘0’ for a live person. If your message is somewhat lengthy, mention this option both at the beginning and again near the end.

**Promotional, Holiday, and Extended Absence Auto Attendants and Voicemail Greetings**

From time to time, you may wish to load a special Auto Attendant or Voicemail Greeting, such as when you are having a special promotion that you want every caller to hear about, or you are closed for an extended period, or just want to "get into the holiday spirit!"

Thank you for calling The ACME Company. Be sure to ask about our Annual Widget Clearance, going on now. For a limited time, all Widgets are 50% off. This is your chance to save big! If you know the extension of the person you wish to reach, you may dial it at any time or press ‘\*’ for our company directory. For sales, press ‘1’. For customer service, press ‘2’. For purchasing or accounting, press ‘3’. For technical support, press ‘4’. If you would like company information such as hours of operation and location, press ‘5’. Otherwise, press ‘0’, or stay on the line, and a member of our staff will assist you shortly.

Thank you for calling The ACME Company. All of us here at the ACME Company wish you and yours a joyous holiday season and a happy and prosperous new year. If you know the extension of the person you wish to reach, you may dial it at any time or press ‘\*’ for our company directory. For sales, press ‘1’. For customer service, press ‘2’. For purchasing or accounting, press ‘3’. For technical support, press ‘4’. If you would like company information such as hours of operation and location, press ‘5’. Otherwise, press ‘0’, or stay on the line, and a member of our staff will assist you shortly.

Thank you for calling The ACME Company. Our offices are presently closed for Winter Holidays. Our offices will reopen on Monday, January 2nd. You may leave a message for your party by dialing their extension now. Otherwise, please leave a message in our general mailbox, and we will contact you as soon as we return. If your call is of an urgent nature, please press ‘1’ now to have your call forwarded to our Emergency Support Center. All of us here at the ACME Company wish you and yours a joyous holiday season and a happy and prosperous new year.

***Some suggestions to consider:***

• Mentioning your current promotion is a great marketing tool that could pay for itself in a single sale!

• Loading a special Auto Attendant or Voicemail Greeting is quick and easy -- and you can easily replace it with your regular announcement just as quickly.

• Consider having these recorded in a different voice, so that frequent callers will recognize right away that this differs from your ‘normal’ announcement.

**Setting Your Company Directory**

Try using an Auto Attendant to create a Company Directory, such as:

You have reached the Widgets Company directory. To reach your party, you may enter their three-digit extension at any time or press ‘\*’ for our company directory. For the Accounting department, press 1...

[add additional options here]. To reach an operator, press ‘0’. To repeat this message, press ‘5’. To return to the main menu, press ‘1’.

***Some suggestions to consider:***

• You can turn on the extension announcement on the company directory menu to let callers know that the extension of the person they are calling. They can make a note of it and use it the next time they call.

• People and departments that are called frequently should be put at the front of the list if possible. This will reduce the amount of time callers have to wait.

• At the end of the message, some callers may still not know whom they want to contact, so make sure they can still get a human operator or a general voicemail box. You may also want to give them the option of having the menu repeated, or to return to the main menu.

**Using Background Music with Auto Attendants**

For a unique touch that is sure to impress your callers, consider having music play underneath your Auto Attendant messages! When you place your order online with us, you can choose music as an option. Many royalty free musical samples are available on the web to choose from. You can have music with all of your messages, or individually select which ones should have music.

**Planning and Testing**

Before you compose your announcements, take some time to decide how you want it to sound, and how you plan to navigate callers through your system. Imagine calling the system yourself and pretend you know nothing about your system or your company. Can you find what you are looking for? Where might you get frustrated? Does the system inadvertently hang up on you? Are you left at any dead ends?

It’s a good idea to set up and test your desired configuration by calling into your system from an outside line, making sure everything works as expected. Once all of your Auto Attendants and Voicemail Greetings are loaded, test your configuration again.

**If you need any assistance or have questions, please do not hesitate to contact our friendly**

**Customer Support by email** [**support@envoi.com**](mailto:support@envoi.com) **or call 877-495-9604 opt. 2**