



## IVR Providers Dial Up Innovation

*New services enhance systems integration and VOIP to enable links to transaction platforms, databases and CRM*

Bank Technology News | July, 2011

By [John Adams](#)

The growth of mobile and web financial services has providers of interactive voice response scrambling to offer new technology in an attempt to infuse usability into the traditional contact center.

For example, Nuance Communications, which counts Bank Leumi and Scotiabank among its clients, has developed new software that integrates inbound interactive voice response (IVR) with outbound messages and transactional capabilities in an effort to reduce follow up calls by the customer.

As such, a customer making a late payment using an inbound IVR could be directed to schedule an outbound payment reminder for the next billing cycle via email, text or phone call. These alerts are also designed to be integrated with payments or other transaction platforms at the financial institution, so the payment could actually be executed at the time of the alert if the customer desires.

“These outbound reminders and transactions used to be siloed from the inbound IVR,” says Christy Murfitt, a senior manager at Nuance, who says the firm has constructed an architecture that enables it to integrate with the client’s host payments or transaction systems to execute transactions that are tied to the inbound calls or outbound alerts, so the product does not require a specific payments platform.

Murfitt did not discuss bank adoption or the deployment plans of clients such as Scotiabank, but did say it was available for deployment on premise or on a hosted basis.

Nuance faces stiff competition in the IVR tech provider market from firms that have also embarked on recent initiatives that further tie the phone systems to the bank’s host IT environment.

Harland Financial Solutions is using VOIP to move IVR calls seamlessly between areas of the bank, and has embarked on a project to extend its IVR to out-of-band communication, enabling voice to be tied to mobile channels for text and voice alerts. And Fiserv has integrated IVR technology with its own core banking and CRM platforms—and has also tapped VOIP to move callers and customer data between departments at the bank.

In an earlier interview with BTN, Aite senior analyst Ron Shevlin said the technology moves are designed to meet a focus by banks on providing an easy user experience for customers, adding if customers can’t get what they want, the perception is the bank isn’t easy to do business with.