



Writing Sample

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THE FIVE STEPS TO SUCCESSFUL SPEECH APPLICATIONS

A Structured Process For Repeatable Results

[inside cover]

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Regardless of business and market conditions, a few enduring principles shape the nature and extent of technology investments:

- Customer-facing applications and services form a competitive differentiator.
- Productivity-enhancing technologies provide increased efficiency.
- Return on investment is a mandatory yardstick.

Now more than ever, your company is demanding a thorough and careful analysis of the impact that a proposed technology investment will have on your business, and the return on investment that your company can expect. For many companies, speech solutions continue to emerge as a compelling strategic opportunity – one that conforms to these principles. In Book 6 of the Speech 101 Series, you'll learn the proven practices, programs and steps involved in implementing and launching a successful speech service.

[spread 1 – pp. 2-3 - Intro]

[spread count: 230]

ENSURING YOUR SUCCESS

With so many potential areas where you can apply the power of speech recognition, the possibilities, decisions, and processes might seem overwhelming at first. What areas of your organization offer the greatest potential ROI? Will it work in your business model with your employees, partners, and customers? How long will the payback period be? What vendors and partners need to be assembled in order to succeed with speech? How can you encourage caller adoption? Ultimately, the question boils down to: ***How can my company do speech right?***

For virtually any company, the heart of the answer lies in the process you use. With the right partners and with a sensible, simple process that reduces your risk, you can implement powerful speech solutions across your organization that deliver breakthrough results *and* a compelling ROI. The following pages will outline the steps you should take – in sequential or modular – from application discovery and analysis to implementation planning and launch in order to do speech right.

[sidebar]

SpeechWorks Here™ S.T.E.P.™

The practical steps in this book are based on SpeechWorks' "Speech Technology Evaluation Process" (S.T.E.P.), a simple – and *proven* -- five-step program specifically designed to address your issues and questions about speech implementation. With pragmatic insights, practical information, and helpful business modeling and analysis tools, S.T.E.P. guides you through every important analysis and decision point in the speech deployment process.

[spread 2 – pp. 4-5 – App Discovery]

[spread count 355]

CHOOSING THE RIGHT SPEECH APPLICATION

Before you kickoff your speech implementation, carefully analyze the various “speech-appropriate” opportunities that exist in your company. Why is getting off on the right foot so essential? Because you need to generate significant, measurable returns as soon as possible – without jeopardizing customer service at any juncture. Selecting the area of your organization with the best fit for a speech solution is a necessary first step. Here’s how you can best determine which application should be your first or next choice.

Assemble A Speech Team

With adoption and usability playing such a crucial role in speech implementations, be sure you get the inside opinions of the *real* experts – the people who will be using your system regularly. Form a committed cross-functional “Speech Team,” a sensible framework for exploring the possibilities, and the right vendor with expertise and insight on companies like yours that are achieving excellence with speech.

Analyze Industry Drivers

Consider the external factors that can influence your application decision. How are other companies implementing speech – and how can you leapfrog those applications?

Support Key Company Goals

How can speech conform to and support your company’s top-priority objectives and mission? What major programs are in place and how can speech address customer challenges facing your organization? Look at your various communication channels -- the Web, your call center, and other interactions.

Check Your Infrastructure

What automation/call processing solutions do you have in place today? What is the process and call flow currently? What vendors do you work with?

Whether you’re new to speech applications or you’re looking to expand to new speech solutions, up-front planning and analysis will pay large dividends as you proceed. Once you ask the right questions and get the right answers, you’re on your way to a successful deployment.

[sidebar]

S.T.E.P. #1: SpeechWorks Here Application Discovery

The SpeechWorks Here Application Discovery provides a unique process designed specifically to help you quickly identify and analyze speech-activated application opportunities in your organization. We'll help you focus on high-level business requirements and deliver a comprehensive report that describes your company's speech readiness, prioritized list of applications, and recommended next-steps.

[spread 3 – pp. 6-7 – ROI]

[spread count: 262]

DERIVING – AND DRIVING – THE BUSINESS CASE

You know that speech has the power to lower operating costs, strengthen revenue streams, increase customer satisfaction, and differentiate your business from the competition. However, as compelling, engaging, and useful as speech-recognition technology is, financially justifying your prospective speech solution is a non-negotiable requirement.

By looking closely at ROI, with specific industry benchmarks, both you and your partner will have consistent expectations and goals. In addition, you will both have a better understanding of what it takes to succeed. Perhaps it's a carefully scripted introductory prompt that deflects routine calls away from your trained operators. Maybe executive buy-in is a driving issue, calling for an application with a faster ROI. Or the key challenge might be agent buy-in, suggesting that caller education materials will play a key role. Regardless of what factors are imperative, this analysis starts you all off right by focusing on results.

The Impact of Speech

Consider the following important metrics when you're evaluating the ROI for speech in your organization.

	Before Speech	After Speech
Percentage of calls handled by automation		
Network toll charges		
Agent training costs		
Average cost per call		
New customers revenue		
Commerce/transaction fees		
Potential for up selling and cross-selling		
Churn rate		
Customer satisfaction index		
Customer growth rate		

Brand strength		
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[call out box]

S.T.E.P. #2: SpeechWorks Here Monetization

Working closely with your Speech Team, SpeechWorks applies complex financial models to help you drive your business case. In addition to your customized ROI models, SpeechWorks provides “how to” guides to help you determine your company’s demonstrable, significant and sustainable ROI from speech.

[spread 4 and half of spread 5 – pp. 8-9-10 – Connections]

[spread-and-a-half count: 516]

PLANNING YOUR SPEECH DEPLOYMENT

Once you've identified your high-priority speech applications and carefully quantified the tangible and intangible returns you expect, start planning the implementation your new speech solution. There's lots to consider, so partner with an expert who can skillfully orchestrate all aspects of the process.

What Speech Recognition Technologies Will You Need?

Telephone speech-recognition technology is the foundation of any solution, handling the core speech-recognition functionality. Depending on your application, you may also need to evaluate text-to-speech software that converts text into audio output for e-mail, driving directions, or other specific, voluminous information. If security is an issue, speaker verification can authenticate a caller based on his voice pattern and characteristics.

What About Your Interactive Voice Response (IVR)?

Speech recognition software often runs on an IVR platform that provides the telephone interfaces for speech, processes your callers' requests, and accesses the information they need from an enterprise or Web database. What is your existing IVR system and what are its strengths and limitations? Knowing what's currently in place today, what's automated, and how business transactions flow will help you determine whether you'll need an IVR platform provider or not.

Should you consider VoiceXML?

Will your application access a data source to retrieve information or execute transitions? What types of databases will the speech service need to access? You'll want to determine whether VoiceXML -- an emerging markup language standard for speech services -- should play a role in your implementation. VoiceXML uses tags to describe an interaction between a telephone caller and a server -- that is, how the dialog proceeds between a caller and the automated system.

In-Source or Out-Source?

Speech applications present numerous "build vs. buy" strategies to explore. Your deployment plan should cover the merits of in-house systems vs. outsourcing, hosted models, or transaction-based fee structures. The key factors: Do you have telephony and speech application development expertise in-house and can you roll out a solution in an appropriate timeframe? Are you equipped to support and maintain the infrastructure internally? By answering these questions you can

determine whether or not you'll need to work with an outsourcing partner. A complete speech solution often involves a number of components and partner types, including:

- ASP
- Application developer
- Complementary technology vendor
- IVR platform
- Interface card manufacturer
- OEM
- Portals
- Reseller
- Service bureau
- Systems integrator

Sound Good?

At this point in your implementation planning phase, you might need some proof points or upper-management buy-in. It's appropriate to ask your partner for implementation options, samples of how your speech service will sound, and even a free specification requirement that puts the whole plan down on paper.

[Sidebar]

S.T.E.P. #3: SpeechWorks Here Connections™

With the SpeechWorks Here Connections, you can call on expert consultants to help you further define your solution components and validate cost assumptions. We'll lead you through the technical requirements and help you engage with the right partners for the right solution. Aside from orchestrating the partners, SpeechWorks delivery a free "spec" and a "vision clip" that demonstrates how your speech service will sound.

[Spread 5 (a half-spread) – page 11 – Guarantee]

[half-spread count: 249]

CALLER SATISFACTION: YOUR KEY TO ROI

Without happy callers willing to use and re-use your speech system, your ROI is impossible to achieve. Most experts agree that achieving caller satisfaction starts with the initial design of your system – the quality and satisfaction are “designed-in” from the start. That means planning the call experience, offering multiple navigation options, and creating a voice and style of your own.

Although there are many ways to measure customer satisfaction – including caller surveys and focus groups – the one quantifiable metric is transaction completion rate (TCR). TCR measures the percentage of callers using a particular speech service that accomplish their goals without “zeroing out” for human intervention and assistance.

Some vendors, such as SpeechWorks, have crafted proven methodologies for designing and deploying successful speech services and will guarantee caller satisfaction in writing. Make sure your partner not only can deliver results -- but that they guarantee it. While the structure of a guarantee largely depends on your unique business and application, find out whether your partner will guarantee a TCR or some other concrete deliverable. For example, if time-to-market is essential for your speech application, get a guarantee on the deployment date.

[Sidebar]

S.T.E.P. #4: SpeechWorks Here Guarantee

The SpeechWorks Here Guarantee is a money-back, result-assurance commitment to customers. Through this unique program, SpeechWorks and its qualified partners ensure a highly successful implementation and fulfilling caller experiences (as measured by TCR), while meeting customers' time to market requirements (as quantified through scheduled deployment dates).

[spread 6 – pp. 12-13-14 – MAP]

[spread-and-a-half count: 462]

READY FOR LAUNCH? PUSH FOR BROAD ADOPTION

As with any organization-wide application, you need to carefully plan how you roll out your speech service. Don't wait until you've completed the development before addressing your "adoption marketing" programs. Invest time and effort to plan the internal and external marketing of your speech service and to educate your user population. This drives up system adoption, which is the key to a larger, faster ROI. Depending on your resources, requirements, and application scope, you'll want to take action in these areas.

- **Create or Expand your Speech Team** – Start with your Speech Team – the cross-functional, coordinated group of with representatives from corporate marketing, management, customer service, information technology, and the technical project team. With their individual skills and resources, your Speech Team can make valuable contributions to the overall marketing effort in different and important ways.
- **Involve Key Stakeholders** -- Formulate a campaign that involves all internal constituencies, such as call-center agents. That helps you gain clear feedback and generate goodwill by involving them in the new speech service. These stakeholders can also answer any questions or concerns your customers have and promote the speech alternative.
- **Branding Your Speech Service** – Should your speech service be a new brand, a sub-brand or not branded at all? Are there umbrella themes or branding strategies that predetermine the name of your service? The voice talent, sounds effects -- even the specific words used to ask questions and deliver information -- can all convey and reinforce your brand.
- **Target Messages To Caller Segments** -- By analyzing each customer segment in various ways – such as caller demographics, usage patterns, and attitudes -- you can better position your "speech" marketing messages.
- **Educate Callers** -- Even though the speech interface is extremely intuitive, there's still some basic education that callers need in order to change their behavior. Aside from building awareness, marketing can also help to inspire customers' confidence in speech and explain the new and improved functionality.
- **Generate "Buzz" For The Service** -- The launch of your speech service provides an ideal opportunity to generate "buzz" for your new and innovative approach to self-service and customer care service. Focus your communications and messaging around a target date that your speech system is officially "live."

[Call out]

SpeechWorks Here Market Accelerator Program (MAP)

SpeechWorks Here MAP is the no-charge marketing consulting service that provides a compelling process and series of tools to help you launch and promote your speech services in the most effective ways possible. This “hands-on” program involves SpeechWorks’ marketing experts facilitating discussions and conducting brainstorming exercises around speech at your facility. Delivery includes a customized marketing optimization report and a personalized list of your company’s top 10 go-to-market initiatives.

[Spread 7 – p. 15 – SpeechWorks Here S.T.E.P.]

[half-spread count: 276]

SPEECHWORKS HERE S.T.E.P.

SpeechWorks helps you at every turn to ensure your investment delivers the returns you demand – from satisfied customers to bottom-line impact. The unique five-step program -- *SpeechWorks Here S.T.E.P.* (Speech Technology Evaluation Process) -- uses market-proven techniques and a customized consultative approach that's been refined over hundreds of successful customer engagements to answer your questions and move you along a proven pathway to success.

S.T.E.P. helps you choose the speech application that offers the greatest return, measure the benefits, build it efficiently, deliver it on time, and launch it successfully to your market. S.T.E.P. is modular in its framework, designed to help organizations when and where they need help most.

- **Application Discovery**
- **Monetization**
- **Connections**
- **Guarantee**
- **Market Accelerator Program (MAP)**

[Call out]

Doing Speech Right in Five Simple S.T.E.P.s

From discovery through deployment, SpeechWorks Here S.T.E.P. is based on proven customer programs that have been rigorously test by Fortune 500 companies. Here's a sample of what they are saying...

I'm just so impressed with your whole approach [in Application Discovery]. You came in and talked about our business and our customers and developed the speech strategy with us.

- Leading Catalog Retailer

The SpeechWorks Here MAP was informative. The session forced our cross-functional team to step back and consider the rollout from our customers'

perspectives. And, the “Getting the Word Out” CD was full of valuable tools that have helped with both our internal and external marketing activities.

- Online Brokerage Firm

With its deployment and transaction completion guarantees it has raised the bar for solutions providers, lowered the anxiety level for customers, and accelerated time to market”

Analyst

[p. 16]

HOW DO YOU FIND THE RIGHT SPEECH PARTNER?

Here are some things to look for:

	Company A	Company B	Company C
Focus on speech-based telephony services			
Dialog development tools and sophisticated tuning tools			
High-level accuracy and self-training speech recognition			
Large vocabulary support			
Natural Language capabilities			
Barge-in capability actually deployed with customers			
High-quality text-to-speech capabilities			
Speaker verification capabilities			
Open standards-based (e.g.,VoiceXML browsers) technologies			
Scalable architecture			
Rigorous user interface design process			
Professional services with proven expertise			
Results-assurance customer programs			
ROI accelerator programs			

With a partner who can deliver these capabilities, you can be sure to achieve the full benefits of speech.

[p.17/inside back cover]

WHERE DO I GO FROM HERE?

For more information, talk to your local SpeechWorks representative. You can find contact listings and a wealth of educational materials on our Web site at www.Speechworks.com.

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