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Telefónica uses voice biometrics to personalize CX for seniors

Telefónica

95%
accuracy recognizing callers over 65

25+
million calls processed by Gatekeeper since launch

↓60%
reduction in calls trying to impersonate seniors

CHALLENGE: To ensure its most vulnerable customers could access the support they needed during the COVID-19 pandemic, Telefónica looked for a way to quickly identify callers over the age of 65 and route them to priority customer service.

SOLUTION: Nuance Gatekeeper was implemented in a matter of weeks to allow Telefónica to identify seniors using only the sound of their voice, and fast-track them to priority assistance.

RESULTS: Telefónica quickly adapted its services to prioritize and protect seniors, helping its most at-risk customers access vital support, easily and securely. Only requiring the nature of the query, the system was able to verify the age of the clients in less than 3 seconds, with an accuracy of more than 95%.

In the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, Telefónica, a leading global telco serving 365 million customers across 12 countries, moved quickly to provide a simple, personalized, secure way to prioritize calls from seniors—one of the groups most at risk. The company became the first to roll out new voice biometrics capabilities to help its most vulnerable customers easily access priority service using only their voice.

"Partnering with Nuance on Gatekeeper, we could serve this group by prioritizing their calls and getting their issues resolved during the pandemic."

— Emilio Gayo, President of Telefónica Spain

Providing outstanding service during a crisis
The disruption of the pandemic meant that seniors had to rely on telecommunications for everything, from speaking to a doctor to staying in touch with friends and family.

"When a senior has a connectivity problem, it's very serious," says Pedro Serrahima, Head of Customer Experience at Telefónica. "They need to connect to the outside world, so we put them to the front of the customer service queue and prioritized all Telefónica's resources to fix the situation."

At the time, the only way for the company to prioritize support was to ask callers if they were over 65. However, some customers were dishonestly identifying as seniors to get ahead in the queue, taking the place of vulnerable people who really needed priority support.

When the company saw what was happening, it knew that biometrics technology could help, and it acted fast to fix the situation.

A rapid solution to prioritize and personalize customer service
Telefónica had been working with Nuance to implement Nuance Gatekeeper to enhance its fraud detection capabilities. The company knew that biometrics

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> "We've been working with Nuance for years, and as soon as we spoke to them about this, the solution was implemented in just two weeks. I've never seen anything like it—either at Telefónica or elsewhere—the project was done so quickly.
>
> Having implemented Nuance Gatekeeper, we provided seniors with the priority service they needed."
>
> — Pedro Serrahima, Head of Customer Experience, Telefónica

could identify individuals by their voice, but was interested to see if it could be used to identify an entire age group.

Nuance was confident Gatekeeper could help and took just two weeks to implement a new first-of-its-kind detection layer to accurately determine the age group of a caller and to direct seniors to priority service queues.

Gatekeeper identifies people over the age of 65 through their voice characteristics, immediately transferring seniors to priority service. Meanwhile, callers under 65 who claim to be seniors remain in the standard queue.

And it's proving successful—since its launch, Nuance Gatekeeper has processed more than 25 million calls, and calls from non-seniors attended by agents has been reduced by 60%. Also, 16% of calls have been classified as belonging to senior users, with a 95% accuracy rate.

"The results were very good in the first two weeks, and over time that's increased to almost 100% as the AI has become more intelligent," says Pedro. "We weren't expecting such fantastic results so quickly. Having implemented Nuance Gatekeeper, we provided seniors with the priority service they needed."

Frictionless, secure customer experiences
After the success of its age detection service, Telefónica has partnered with Nuance to develop fraud detection systems that will remove the friction of authentication for customers and help keep them protected from fraud.

Embracing advanced biometrics capabilities, Telefónica is creating a future of secure, frictionless experiences for its customers, whatever their age.

LEARN MORE
Discover what you could achieve by emailing us at cxexperts@nuance.com or visit nuance.com/enterprise to learn more.