

Do You Know What You're Missing?

Find out fast with voice recording solutions: record, retrieve and replay.

By HigherGround

Introduction

By now you may have seen the name HigherGround, Inc. listed as a new Premium Partner Member of NECSI and you are probably wondering just who is HigherGround, what do they offer and why you should care?

So let's start with the "who". HigherGround is a premier software developer of data collection and reporting tools coupled with voice recording and quality assurance solutions for call centers and the public safety marketplace. The company's call recording, monitoring and reporting tools are designed to empower clients with knowledge and insight to monitor and verify phone and data transactions and radio transmissions, improve agent performance, optimize communications resources and provide a comprehensive view of a contact center's performance. At the core of the HigherGround solution is the Praetorian Voice Recorder that allows recording of voice conversations as well as agents' window titles or actual desktop activities through the Screen Capture feature. Additional data elements may be attached to the recording record to enhance the reporting function.

What is voice recording and how it works. Full Time Recording is the most comprehensive type of recording, providing recordings of all conversations by all agents. This allows the call center supervisor access to all conversations. Random Recording or Quality Monitoring (QM) provides records of a small percentage of conversations; usually 5-10%. QM uses a technique called Service Observe to record, using the supervisor monitoring functions of the phone system. Record-on-Demand allows an agent or anyone with a recording tap, to activate recording from their desktop. Agents who are required to record only a portion of a call, or need to review a call later can use this.

Audio Connectivity.

There are several connectivity methods for recording voice conversations: station-side, trunkside and handset tap.

- The most common method is **Station-Side**. For station-side recording, a port on the HigherGround recorder is half-tapped to the station cross-connect. Both analog and digital station sets can be connected this way—depending on the port cards in the recorder. For VoIP and SoftPhone applications, the recorder is connected to the voice network via an Ethernet connection. Data packets are sniffed and decoded by the recorder.

- **Trunk-Side Taps** are very similar to station-side taps. The advantage of trunk-side taps is that there are generally fewer trunks than stations, so fewer ports are required in the recorder. The disadvantage is that real-time monitoring is not feasible because a

contact center supervisor has no way of knowing what trunk a particular agent is using at any given time.

■ For a **Handset Tap**, a handset (logger) patch is installed between the telephone and handset. The audio from the patch is fed to the sound card of the agent's workstation. Telephone conversations are recorded directly to the workstation or a network file server. Handset taps can be cost effective for organizations wishing to record less than eight phones. Additional support and maintenance is generally required, however, because the hardware and software are distributed across multiple workstations instead of to a centralized recorder.

Screen Capture

Screen Capture is an optional applet that is launched on the agent's workstation. The applet can be launched automatically and hidden so it will be transparent to the agent. When recording, the applet takes "snapshots" of the agent's screen at predefined increments (from once every 5 seconds to once every second), as defined by the system administrator. These snapshots are combined into an AVI file for playback with the captured audio.

Data Retrieval

All audio and screen recordings are indexed with the date, time, station and other information. When SMDR data is also collected, these recordings can be associated with actual call records. This allows users to generate searches and reports, and to hear and see the actual events associated with an individual call.

Agent Evaluation

Agent evaluation provides managers the opportunity to listen to recordings and grade the agent. The manager can customize the grading forms and store them for historical review. The evaluations are attached to the recording for review at a later date.

Why companies record voice conversations: Performance CPR.

Most organizations record voice conversations for one or more of three reasons—**C**ompliance, **P**erformance and **R**isk management: We call it CPR for the call center.

Compliance

Most organizations have a need to comply either with internal corporate mandates or with external regulatory requirements. Compliance users would typically employ a full-time or continuous recording environment, where the recordings are saved for a pre-determined period of time.

Performance

Organizations are becoming more and more concerned about improving agent/employee performance and productivity throughout the enterprise. As a

result, they are particularly interested in Quality assurance (QA)—agent evaluations and screen capture capabilities. They also find a need to incorporate collection and measurement of KPIs (Key Performance Indicators—metrics) for identifying agents who require specific coaching, training and/or handling.

Voice recording solutions for performance purposes help the users to identify why customers leave by pinpointing service, response time or quality issues. They also aid in the resolution of customer account or billing issues and help identify other potential causes of a customer's departure such as lack of perceived value of the product, factors outside the organization or agent's control or even competitors who are offering special incentives.

With voice recording, companies interested in performance **can track and trend their agents' progress**. They can maintain a history of call statistics, call & screen recordings, QA scores & evaluations, as well as summary reports to complement the existing agent performance review process. Voice recording also allows them to identify agent and training trends from initial hiring to present needs, pinpoint what skill or agent groups take longer to meet the acceptable standards and determine which training programs or trainers are more efficient. In addition, they can identify the effect that reaching a specific level within a specific period of time has on overall service levels, budget and hiring decisions. Perhaps best of all, they can incorporate feedback from initial and recurring training programs to create higher agent and customer retention.

Risk Management

In the risk management scenario, companies have a need to reduce their exposure to liability from customers and employee interactions. This need is typically addressed in a full-time or selective recording environment, where the recordings are saved for a predetermined period of time. Additional data analysis is provided to formulate patterns, trends and profiles used in risk management.

Conclusion

HigherGround is thrilled to be a new Platinum Partner Member of NECSI. We hope we have answered your questions:

1. Who is HigherGround?

A premier software developer of data collection and recording solutions.

2. What does HigherGround offer?

Recording and data collection solutions to provide imperative business intelligence for sound decision making and bottom-line control for organizational CPR—Compliance monitoring, Performance improvement and Risk management.

3. Who Cares?

Virtually all types of businesses from four phones to multiple thousands of phones. Whether you are working with an insurance company, a hospital, a bank, a collections agency, a transportation provider, a credit organization, a utility, a manufacturer or retail entity or an emergency service provider; they probably have a need to record.

We Look Forward to Working With You!