

GUIDE — IP TELEPHONY

Designing your virtual receptionist (IVR)

Understand, plan and write your phone greeting menu

What is an IVR?

The IVR (Interactive Voice Response) is your company's virtual receptionist: it answers automatically, greets your callers with a professional message and routes them to the right person through a menu — "For sales, press 2".

- **Professional image** — from the very first ring, whatever the size of your business.
- **No lost calls** — every caller is greeted and routed, day and night.
- **Fewer interruptions** — calls reach the right person on the first try.

When is your message heard? You decide:

- A) Before your phones ring. B) After a number of rings you choose.
C) Any combination is possible — for example, one IVR by day and another at night.

A call's journey with an IVR



Planning your menu: best practices

- 1 Keep it short**
Aim for 20 to 30 seconds. An endless menu makes callers hang up.
- 2 Four or five options maximum**
Beyond that, callers forget the first options before hearing the last ones.
- 3 Most requested option first**
Most of your callers will hear their destination within seconds.
- 4 Always offer 0**
Some callers want a human right away — never trap them in the menu.
- 5 Plan for both languages**
Greet in one language first, then the other's instructions — or use a dedicated key for each language.
- 6 Temporary news first — temporarily**
A move, holiday hours, a promotion: put the announcement at the start of the message... and remember to remove it afterwards!
- 7 Plan for hours and vacations**
A daytime menu, an after-hours message, and a vacation IVR scheduled in advance (see our "Vacation IVR" guide).

Write it: the template to adapt

Replace the items in brackets with your information, and remove what does not apply.

“You have reached [YOUR BUSINESS NAME].

[Temporary announcement: new address, special hours, etc. — if needed]

Des instructions en français suivront. (if needed)

If you know the extension of the person you wish to reach, dial it now.

For administration, press 1.

For sales, press 2.

For the dial-by-name directory, press pound (#).

For immediate assistance, press 0.”

« Bonjour, vous avez bien joint [NOM DE VOTRE ENTREPRISE].

Si vous connaissez le poste de la personne à joindre, composez-le maintenant.

Pour l'administration, faites le 1. Pour les ventes, faites le 2.

Pour le répertoire des noms, faites le carré (#). Pour une assistance immédiate, faites le 0. »

Your worksheet

KEY	DESTINATION (extension, queue, voicemail)	WHO ANSWERS
1		
2		
3		
0		
#		

From your text to going live

1 Write your script

Use the template and worksheet on page 3.

2 Send it to us

Email your text to service@rntcanada.com — we produce the audio file (professional narration, bilingual if needed).

3 We set everything up

Menu, routing, schedules: your IVR is configured and lab-tested.

4 Test it with us

Before going live, call your number and try every option.

Tip: listen to yourself again in six months

Your business evolves — so should your options. Listen to your IVR twice a year and make sure every option still leads to the right person.

Need help designing your menu? We'll do it with you.

Phone: 1 855-547-9393 · Email: service@rntcanada.com