

Financial services AI, Authentication & fraud prevention, Customer engagement

Compelling Conversations, part 2: National Australia Bank creates compelling customer and banker experiences

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For busy banks, protecting customers' private banking information is essential; but manual and SMS/text authentication can get in the way of a compelling customer experience. I recently sat down (virtually) with Chris Barnes, Head of Direct Channel Development at National Australia Bank (NAB), to discuss how Nuance voice biometrics helped his organization overcome that challenge. Today, as customers build their voiceprints, which can't be replicated by fraudsters, NAB is realizing significant improvements and efficiencies for their authentication processes.

As one of Australia's "big four" financial institutions, National Australia Bank (NAB) serves more than 6 million customers across the country with around 2,000 frontline bankers handling more 8 million inbound calls every year. That's a lot of phone interactions, making it difficult to deliver exceptional customer service, especially when time-consuming – and sometimes confusing – manual security authentication can get in the way.

I recently sat down, virtually, with Chris Barnes, Head of Direct Channel Development at NAB as [part of our "Compelling Conversations" web series](#), and he shared that this manual authentication was taking agents about two minutes under the very best circumstances, and often up to 15-20 minutes per call. "Sometimes we would not be able to authenticate the customers, and they'd have to go to a branch location. It was a challenge," said Barnes.

Not only did the manual authentication process present a challenge in terms of the customer experience, Barnes explained that it also created a high-stress environment that had a negative effect on employee satisfaction and turnover. It became clear that NAB needed to balance the criticality of keeping customers and their banking information safe and secure with the need for convenience and frictionless experiences.

So what did they land on for that solution? Voice biometrics.



A compelling customer and banker experience

NAB determined to partner with Nuance to implement voice identification into the authentication process, rolling out NAB Voice ID. With [Nuance's voice biometrics technology](#) in place, NAB Voice ID uses unique characteristics from a customers' natural speech to create a voiceprint for the authentication process—a voiceprint that cannot be replicated by fraudsters. According to Barnes, the new solution "is far exceeding expectations." He noted in our discussion that time savings for biometric authentication are in the range of 30-60 seconds per call, and trending toward 90 seconds, as compared to manual or even SMS/text messaging authentication.

To hear our whole discussion and learn how voice biometrics is playing a key role in the NAB customer experience, and the entire "Compelling Conversations" web series click [here](#).

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About Brett Beranek

Brett Beranek is responsible for overseeing the security and biometric line of business at Nuance, a Microsoft company. In this role for the past 12 years, Beranek has brought Nuance to a leadership position in the biometric authentication and biometric fraud prevention space. A thought leader in the field of biometrics, Beranek is a frequent contributor in industry events and the media on the topic of AI technology and its use by the fraud community, and how society can mitigate against these evolving threats. Prior to Nuance, he held various leadership positions in the biometrics and security industry. He has earned a Bachelor of Commerce, Information Systems Major, from McGill University as well as an Executive Marketing certificate from Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Sloan School of Management. Beranek is also a certified Master Fraud Prevention Black Belt professional.



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