

Customer engagement, Retail AI

Finding the right tools for DIY IVR

[Nuance Communications](#)

January 23, 2018



Organizations can now do more themselves to make changes and develop their IVR with powerful new tools spanning all phases of the IVR lifecycle. They do this in hopes of accelerating development time, increasing business agility and reducing contact center costs—with less reliance on external vendors. If you're one of these companies, consider the different types of tools to make your staff DIY experts.

Home improvement is big business for a simple reason that every homeowner knows well – every home ALWAYS needs something done. Whether they enjoy doing the work or loathe it, there's no getting around it – continuing maintenance is always necessary. Homeowners have a choice with every fix – do it themselves or hire professionals. As countless TV shows illustrate, many people don't want outside help and prefer to unleash their inner Chip Gaines and install their own shiplap (Oh yeah, I've seen [Fixer Upper!](#))

This desire to do more themselves is also popping up in business when it comes to IVR improvement. More and more companies don't want to hire vendors for changes. They see value in taking on the more everyday updates and fixes themselves. And regardless if it's home improvement or IVR maintenance, both require the right tools for the job. **Organizations must get the right gear for their enthusiastic DIY staff.**

Opening the toolbox

Picking the right tool for any job is critical as one tool doesn't fit all. Sure, you can pound a nail with the back of a screwdriver, but experience shows that typically results in bruised fingers. Consider choosing a mix of tools best suited to the IVR job.

IVR design – At the start of any job is planning and design work. IVRs need to be well planned out and then tested thoroughly. Design applications are like the ruler you use to measure twice and cut once for error-free design. Be sure to find a design application that offers automated code and test case generation. And ideally it will be platform-independent, which allows you to deploy with multiple vendors and platforms.

Testing – Everything that's built must be tested. For homeowners the most common testing instrument is a spirit level. If the bubble isn't in the middle, that shelf isn't level and it doesn't matter what your spouse says. IVR developers must also test their work and should look for tools that allow them to rapidly create and iterate IVR regression test cases and then automatically track that testing coverage based on revisions.

Menu updates – After go-live, there will be changes to IVR menus and prompts. Consider a tool with a simple, user-friendly interface that allows users of all skill levels to quickly and easily make immediate changes to their production IVR, including prompt updates, emergency broadcasts, or seasonal messaging. Software that easily adjusts menus is like a good screwdriver that is easy to grab and fix that loose chair – you go to it quickly, and everyone knows how to use it. And it just does its job.

NLU development and tuning – Using Natural Language Understanding (NLU) in your IVR offers the highest possible experience for callers. The system recognizes what they ask for and provides intelligent responses. Building and updating NLU models requires tools that are easy to use, always at the ready, and perfectly suited for that job – like the reliable hammer. Hammers are great for hitting nails and they are versatile in that you can use them on wood, metal, or sheetrock. A great NLU tool must also support versatility. It must allow users to build and maintain one NLU model that works across IVR and digital channels—eliminating the need to maintain multiple NLUs. As an added bonus, if it's easy to use, like the hammer, people will continuously choose it for everyday IVR improvements.

IVR maintenance and check-up – Appliances in our homes need monitoring and check-ups to ensure they are functioning properly. It's the annual maintenance check on your furnace or water heater. IVRs need the same thing to test if menus are working properly and ensure customers aren't getting bogged down in certain areas. To perform this type of check-up, companies must get a robust reporting and analysis solution that works continuously on the IVR. The solution can't tell you they can't come because they are booked solid for the next two months. It must provide a data-driven understanding of your IVR, highlight answers to important questions including where and why calls are being misdirected, and flag issues impacting containment rates, routing, handle time and satisfaction.

Filling the toolbox

Wow! That's a lot of tools for organizations to add to a toolbox. Each one supports a different part of the IVR lifecycle for full coverage. When considering options, be sure to check out [Nuance's IVR Tooling Suite](#) and see if it meets your needs. Any of these tools will empower employees and staff across the organization from IT to development to business analysts will unleash their inner DIY skills. Perhaps there is a Tim "The Tool Man" Taylor lurking in your company!

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More Information

Fill your toolbox with DIY IVR tools

Do you want to learn more about Nuance's IVR Tooling Suite? Click for more information.

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