Removing Roadblocks to Seamless Customer Interaction

IVR Automation Testing Delivers Vast Efficiency Upgrades for a Global Bank

With offices in 15 countries and 180 billion euros in assets under management, one of the largest banks in the Netherlands operates retail banking branches throughout Europe, along with private, commercial and merchant banking divisions serving customers across the globe.

For this organisation's customers — which include high-net-worth clients and companies in the energy, commodities and transportation markets — convenient, seamless access to the bank's financial expertise is critical for success. That's why their team developed a strategy for reinventing the customer experience by going digital by design.

The goal was to transition customers to a system that provides seamless interaction across call-in and digital channels. To do this, however, they had to overcome significant hurdles in the process of testing and launching IVR software.

Industry: Banking & Finance

Location: EMEA (Amsterdam)

Company Size: 32,000 employees, offices in 15 countries, third-largest bank in the Netherlands

Challenges:

- Drive efficiency and reduce costs of IVR testing
- Increase productivity and reduce time for changes and deployment

Solutions:

- Cyara Velocity
- Cyara Pulse

> "I haven't seen that many companies being so interactive. Cyara is a role model for putting customers first."
>
> —IT Engineering Lead Customer Interaction, Leading Global Bank

A Cumbersome Process for Improvements

When they approached Cyara, the bank was battling inefficiencies in their procedures for making updates and improvements to call routing processes and their IVR system.

To test local language IVR paths, the bank's onshore and offshore development teams needed to contract native speakers to perform manual testing whenever changes were made to the IVR. This process slowed release cycles and limited their ability to respond promptly with necessary fixes for the customer experience.

Given the goal of increasing the speed, quality and efficiency of their customer service, the bank needed a more efficient way to test updates and improvements. They embarked on a journey to DevOps that centered on automation. Their initial objective was to automate and expand their existing testing scripts and then to integrate automated testing into their release cycle pipeline. This would reduce manual testing and free up resources for more important projects.

Automating for Efficiency and Agility

Achieving these goals meant integrating Cyara Velocity into their existing processes and technology. Lengthy release cycles, a bloated manual testing process and self-sufficiency for the test team all needed to be addressed within a framework that could be fully automated.
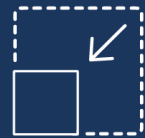
The first goal for Velocity was to reduce the manual testing headcount by the equivalent of two full-time employees. In the process, the bank sought to move as much testing as possible offshore. This would require a significant reduction in reliance on Dutch native speakers to validate prompts and test IVR pathways.

Supporting this first goal was a second: Move toward a fully automated build-test-configure process in order to achieve a long-term target of daily builds and releases. As a stepping stone, the team aimed for an initial one-week reduction in release cycles.

BENEFITS ACHIEVED

25%
Reduced release cycles from 4 weeks to 3 weeks

Reduced manual testing headcount by 2 FTEs

Removed all reliance on native Dutch speakers, giving testing team full self-sufficiency

Cut regression testing process from 1 day to 1 hour

CYARA

Cyara Pulse would also be essential to the migration process. It would provide secure monitoring between carrier and contact centre and raise early warnings of any defects in the system in order to accelerate resolution time.

"[The Cyara Platform] is really part of our process now. We are probably not able to do it without it anymore."

A Retooled Testing Process Drives Faster Results

By adopting Velocity into their testing processes, the bank achieved and surpassed all of their initial target outcomes. Within just six months of adopting the Cyara Platform, they were able to fully automate their CI/CD process as well as eliminate manual testing from 70% of their IVR regression testing suite.

This resulted in significant labor savings and reallocation. Reliance on Pulse and Velocity reduced manual testing headcount by two full-time employees, one of whom was reassigned to a broader quality assurance-oriented role in design work. This represents not only labor savings but a higher return on investment in labor resources.

Additionally, none of the bank's testers are native Dutch speakers anymore. Thanks to Velocity's language capabilities, all testing — both onshore and offshore — can be done by non-Dutch speakers anywhere in the world.

Perhaps the greatest sign of success is the testing and release process itself. Not only did they achieve their initial goal of reducing release cycles by a week, but they also saw a four-to-six-week reduction in implementing system changes. Vast improvements in testing efficiency mean that a process that used to take up to eight weeks now happens in just two.

"The people who were doing these repeatable tasks — these menial testing tasks — are now shifting their attention to other areas."

—IT Engineering Lead Customer Interaction, Leading Global Bank

The Right Mindset

The reasons for the bank's success go beyond specific tools and software solutions. At the heart of it lies a strong partnership between two like-minded organisations. When they approached Cyara, the commitment to Agile and DevOps was already there. As their IT engineer describes it, they were committed to "continuous improvement and an automate-everything culture."

The bank's team quickly identified key players who would become Cyara experts and lead in the adoption process. They shared knowledge quickly and effectively, resulting in a high level of competence across the organisation. They also approached Cyara with clearly articulated goals and an existing scaffolding of software into which Cyara solutions could be easily integrated.

That enabled the Cyara team to get right to work tailoring a success plan that would support and exceed the bank's expectations. Velocity and Pulse work seamlessly with third-party platforms, which in this case included Genesys, ServiceNow, Jenkins and Inprod, so they were able to provide a solution that complimented not only the bank's existing mindset but their technology and practices, as well.

"I'm really happy with the approach to making feature requests to get ServiceNow working. We don't always see other vendors doing that."

—Product Owner, Leading Global Bank

Toward a Better CX

Looking ahead, the bank plans to continue pushing toward full automation and efficiency.

"What it showed was that we were able to manage 100% of our automating our test cases," said the organisation's lead customer interaction engineer. "And it has been one of the ingredients with which we were able to reduce the time to market for making changes to the IVR, or anything in our contact centre application in that space, from six to within two weeks. And we're even further improving that."

Within the next year, the bank plans to will have a fully cloud-based contact solution with as many as 4,000 users. With Cyara fully integrated into the CI/CD pipeline, the team can continue to work toward the ultimate goal of daily builds and releases.

Ultimately, the Cyara Platform is removing roadblocks to seamless customer interaction. All of this helps one of the financial industry's top-performing organisations accomplish their most important objective: to move closer to customers and provide them an effective digital experience so they get the service they need for success.

Customer Smiles. **Delivered at Scale.**

As the world's leading Automated CX Assurance platform provider, Cyara helps you deliver better CX with less effort, cost, and risk. Cyara supports the entire CX software development lifecycle, ensuring enterprises can build flawless customer journeys across digital and voice channels while reducing the risk of customer-facing defects. Every day, the most recognizable brands trust Cyara to help them build better customer experiences faster.

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