

The correct programming of your phone voice prompts and voice mail messages, with well thought out prompts text, can move your callers quickly through to their desired extension, provide essential knowledge or promotional information during the routing procedure and streamline the inbound call process.

This guide will assist you in composing your Auto Attendant prompts. In addition to providing general best practices for prompt creation, it also provides a variety of example prompts from which you can model your own.



In addition, we offer a standardized, Excel-based form called a Voice Prompt Template. This form is that our customers use to submit the text for their Auto Attendant prompts (also known as “scripts”) that help us record in a consistent, clear, and high accurate manner.

We also offer a version with a number of the example prompts in this document pre-populated for your convenience. This version includes tabs for:

- Generic prompts (commonly used)
- Specialty prompts (ones you might not think of)
- A variety of industry-oriented prompts (e.g., banking/finance, energy, hospitality).

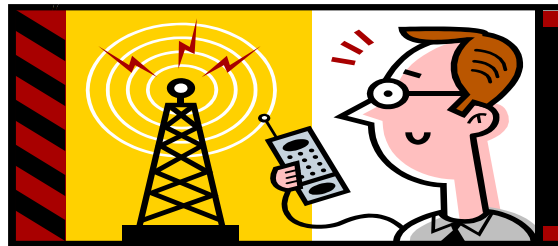
## WHAT IS AN AUTO ATTENDANT?

A traditional Auto Attendant greets callers and distributes calls to various departments. However, it can also provide useful information such as:

- Directions to your location
- Hours of operation
- List of contacts and their extensions
- Sales and service information
- Seasonal or unexpected closures OR alternate methods of contact
- Disclosures and other terms of business

You can also use your Auto Attendant to direct customers to specials, communicate special product promotions, help schedule appointments, and dispense other helpful information (such as “flu” hotlines for hospitals, tips and tricks for software companies, etc. ),

**USE** your prompts to occasionally promote your business (with a slogan or credo) OR to subtly promote a current or new product or service.



## THINGS TO FIND OUT ABOUT BEFORE CONSTRUCTING YOUR AUTO ATTENDANT PROMPTS

Marketing Messages can provide you with high quality, professional voice recordings using contemporary voices, formatted specifically for your brand of phone answering technology. We can assist with scripting review, proofing and verification, as well as grammar, punctuation and sentence flow checking to give your clients and customers a “first impression” of your business that will be compelling and lasting.

HOWEVER, phone systems do differ and we urge our clients to check with their phone technician or IT department regarding the type of voice prompts needed, format for the recorded files, programming and precise routing, capacity of the system and any other unique technical information that is applicable to your particular telephone set up before planning and writing your prompts

**AND.....**Would it be useful to your business to have your voice prompts in **Spanish, French, Brazilian Portuguese OR any of the other 70+ languages** that Marketing Messages has to offer?

**See the useful tips for composing your Auto Attendant prompts at the END of this document.**



## Generic Auto Attendant Prompt Examples

Here are some generic examples (substitute your company name for “**Our Company**” below.....

### Day Greeting and Menus

Thank you for calling **Our Company**, *(perhaps a company slogan or product information here)*  
*e.g Thank you for calling Marketing Messages, “the First Impression People in Telecom since 1984.”*

If you know the extension of the person you are trying to reach, you may enter it at any time, or press 9 for an Employee Directory.

For Sales, press 1.

For Technical Support, press 2.

For Accounting, press 3.

For our company address, email, and fax numbers, and how to reach us on the Internet, press 4, or press 0 to speak with an operator.

### OR

Thank you for calling **Our Company**. If you know the extension number of the person you are trying to reach, you may enter it at any time.

For Sales press 1,

For Technical Support press 2.

For a dial by name directory press 9,

Or remain on the line to be transferred to the operator.

**OR**

Welcome to **Our Company**,

Please listen carefully as our menu options have changed, and note that calls may be recorded for quality assurance or training purposes.

For sales, press 1.

For technical support, press 2.

For system emergencies, press 3.

For a dial by name directory, press 4.

To speak with an operator, press 0 or just remain on the line.

To hear these options again, press 9.

**Day Greeting Sub Menus**

For printers, press 1.

For laptop computers, press 2.

For computer accessories, press 3.

To go back to the main menu, press the pound key.

**Night Greetings and Menus**

Thank you for calling **Our Company**, *(e.g Thank you for calling Marketing Messages, "the First Impression People in Telecom since 1984.")*

Our offices are closed at this time. If you know the extension number of the person you are trying to reach you may enter it at any time, or press 9 for an Employee Directory.

For Sales, press 1.

For Technical Support, press 2.

For Accounting, press 3.

To report a technical emergency, press 4.

To leave a message in our general mailbox for a callback, press 6.

**OR ...If you want to state your hours.....**

Thank you for calling **Our Company**,

*e.g Thank you for calling Marketing Messages, "the First Impression People in Telecom since 1984."*

Our offices are closed at this time. Regular office hours are Monday through Friday from 9 AM to 5 PM (Time zone optional depending on location) Eastern Time. If you know the extension number of the person you are trying to reach, you may enter it at any time, or press 9 for an Employee Directory.

For Sales, press 1.

For Technical Support, press 2.

For Accounting, press 3.

To report a technical emergency, press 4.

To leave a message in our general mailbox for a callback, press 6.

To hear these options again, please the pound sign.

### OR.....For "After Hours".....

Welcome to **Our Company**. Our office is currently closed. To report an emergency, press nine. Regular business hours are Monday through Friday from 8 AM to 5 PM, Eastern Time (optional). If you would like to leave a message and you know your party's extension, please enter it now. Or to leave a message in the general mailbox, press 8 now.



### Holiday Closure

*Many companies use one generic prompt like this for ALL holidays:*

Thank you for calling **Our Company**. Our offices are closed at this time in observance of the holiday. If you know the extension number of the person you are trying to reach, you may enter it at any time, or press 9 for an Employee Directory.

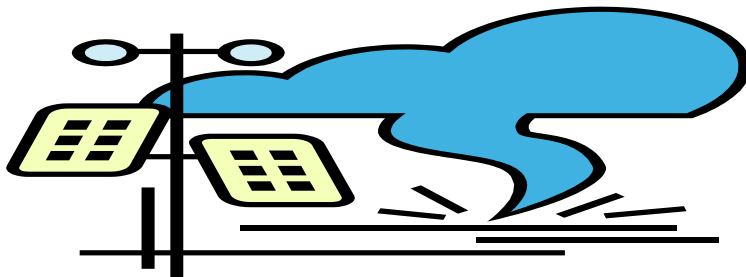
For Sales, press 1.

For Technical Support, press 2.

For Accounting, press 3.

To report a technical emergency, press 4.

To leave a message in our general mailbox for a callback on the next business day, press 6.



### Closed for a Weather Emergency

Thank you for calling **Our Company**. Our offices are closed at this time due to severe weather conditions. If you know the extension number of the person you are trying to reach, you may enter it at any time, or press 9 for an Employee Directory.

For Sales, press 1.

For Technical Support, press 2.

For Accounting, press 3.

To report a technical emergency, press 4.

To leave a message in our general mailbox for a callback, press 6.

### Closed for a Company Event

Thank you for calling **Our Company**. Our offices are temporarily closed for a company event. If you know the extension number of the person you are trying to reach, you may enter it at any time, or press 9 for an Employee Directory.

For Sales, press 1.

For Technical Support, press 2.

For Accounting, press 3.

To report a technical emergency, press 4.

To leave a message in our general mailbox for a callback, press 6.

### Company Information Message

Our business hours are Monday to Friday from 8:30 AM to 6:00 PM Eastern Time. Our fax number is 617 527 3728. You can find us on the web at marketing messages dot com, and our email address is info @ marketing messages dot com. We are located at 51 Winchester St in Newton Massachusetts.

## Voice Mailbox

*Note: Voice mail is also a great way of promoting a product or service that a caller may not be aware of.*



### General Mailbox Messages

1. Thank you for calling the EFG Store, serving the health and wellness needs of your community for over 50 years. Ask us about our door to door prescription delivery service. *(Pause)*. Please leave your name, company name, phone number and a brief message after the tone, and a representative *(or sales representative, agent, etc.)* will return your call shortly *(or promptly, or on the next business day)*. Thank you.
2. This is the General Mailbox for the EFG company, serving the health and wellness needs of your community for over 50 years. Visit our new renovated store today. *(Pause)*... After the tone, please leave a message with your name, telephone number, and the nature of your call. Your message will be forwarded to the appropriate person and your call will be returned as soon as possible during normal business hours. Thank you for calling.

3. No one is available to assist you at this time. After the tone, please leave a message, including your name, telephone number, and a convenient time to reach you, and we will return your call promptly. Thank you.
4. Please leave your name, company name, phone number and a brief description of the problem that you are experiencing, after the tone. Your call will be routed to a Support Specialist (**representative, etc.**) and your call will be returned shortly. Thank you.



### Personal Voicemail Greeting

You have reached the voice mail box of John Smith. John is not available at this time. If you require immediate assistance, please press zero. Otherwise, please leave your name and telephone number, and he will return your call as soon as possible. Thank you.

## Departmental Messages

### Technical Support Welcome Prompt

Thank you for calling **Our** Technical Support line. Your call will be directed to the next available Support Specialist.

### Marketing & Sales General Delivery Greeting

Hello, you have reached the Sales and Marketing Group. *(Enter a short promotional message here regarding “specials”, “open houses”, “sales drives”, etc.)* We’re sorry to have missed your call. Please leave your name, phone number, and any other details, and your call will be returned promptly. Thank you for calling.

### Sales Queue

Welcome to the Sales department. *(Enter a short promotional message here regarding “specials”, “open houses”, “sales drives” etc etc.)* Please hold for the next available agent. Your call will be handled in the order it was received. To leave a message, press 1. To transfer out of the queue, press 2.

## EXAMPLE OF A BI-LINGUAL VOICE PROMPT (English/Spanish)

Thank you for calling XYZ Bank. For online or mobile banking assistance, press 1. Enroll in a new online or mobile banking service, 2. Or, for all other products or services, 3. *(Spanish version)* Para recibir asistencia con la banca móvil o en línea, oprima 1. Para inscribirse en un nuevo servicio de banca móvil o en línea, oprima 2. O, para todos los otros productos o servicios, oprima 3.

## ACD Messages (Hold Prompts)

These are short generic type messages which would serve as stand-alone “reassurance” messages while the caller is “on-hold” OR as part of a larger informational/promotional message on hold with music. *(\*\*\*Ask us about a full professional “Message-On-Hold” production, including a licensed music background, for your phone system).*

### First delay prompt

All of our representatives are busy assisting other customers at this time. Please hold for the next available representative.

### Second delay prompt

All of our representatives are still busy at this time. Please continue to hold, and our next available representative will be right with you.

### Option to hold or leave a voice mail

Due to a high volume of calls, all agents are busy. If you would like to leave a message, please press 1. You *will retain your place in the call queue*, and your call will be returned prior to others on hold. If you prefer to continue waiting, please stay on the line. Thank you.

*Check to see if your switch system is able to handle this type of prompt.*





## Disclosures

We must provide you with the following Important Rate, Fee and other cost information for the XYZ Credit Card. For XYZ Credit Card Accounts, the Annual Percentage Rate (APR) for purchases ranges from 13.99%- 24.99% based on your credit worthiness. The APR for Balance Transfers and Cash Advances is 25.99%. All APRs will vary with the market based on the Prime Rate. If you are charged interest, the charge will be no less than \$2.00. There is no Annual Fee. This information about these costs is accurate as of today.

New York residents may contact the New York State Department of Financial Services to obtain a comparative listing of credit card rates, fees, and grace periods. New York State Department of Financial Services 1(800)518-8866 or [www.dfs.ny.gov](http://www.dfs.ny.gov).

**California Residents:** If you are married, you may apply for a separate account.

**Ohio Residents:** The Ohio laws against discrimination require that all creditors make credit equally available to all creditworthy customers, and that credit reporting agencies maintain separate credit histories on each individual upon request. The Ohio Civil Rights Commission administers compliance with this law.

**New York, Rhode Island and Vermont Residents:** We may order credit reports in connection with processing applications/solicitations and any update, renewal or extension of credit. Upon request, we will tell you the name and address of any consumer-reporting agency that furnished a report on you. You consent to the obtaining of such reports by signing or otherwise submitting an application or solicitation.

**Wisconsin Residents:** No provision of a marital property agreement, unilateral statement under Section 766.59 or court decree under Section 766.70 adversely affects the interest of ABC Bank, unless the Bank, prior to the time credit is granted, is furnished a copy of the agreement, statement or decree or has actual knowledge of the adverse provision when the obligation to the Bank is incurred. Thank you for listening. If you are interested in hearing more about the XYZ Pre-Paid MasterCard, please press 1 now.

**And finally...**

## TIPS FOR CONSTRUCTING YOUR AUTO ATTENDANT VOICE PROMPTS

**Some important tips and hints to take into consideration when designing your Auto Attendant messages.....**

1. Always put the "option" (i.e., "press 1) at the end of the sentence.....AND avoid using "please" before EVERY "press" (to avoid repetition), although it can be used for the first one, just to be polite.

2. When mentioning a time zone, drop the word “Standard”. It’s no longer necessary. So to write it out for speech, “EST” would be “Eastern Time”, “PST” would be written “Pacific Time” etc.
3. There’s no need to speak the “www dot” in a web address....so instead of “www dot marketing messages dot com” it would be just “marketing messages dot com”.....and always write it out in FULL. Remember, this is going to be read by a voice talent.
4. Avoid abbreviations within the scripts. States should be written out as a full word, i.e “TX” = “Texas”, “MA” = “Massachusetts”.....”St” should be written as “Street” and “Ave” should be “Avenue” and so on.
5. Avoid copy and paste for URL’s. Do you really want the voice talent to speak the “http colon slash slash” part? Copy and paste will provide a hyperlink, which is useless for a message that’s to be listened to. Keep the URL or web address simple and the chances of the caller retaining that information for future use will be 100% better.
6. When composing the text for your Auto Attendant message, always keep in mind that this is “audio”. Keep it simple, brief and to the point but as informational as you need it to be for the callers to achieve what they need to in an efficient and speedy way. Always keep in mind that this will be “spoken” and that the simpler the prompt is, the more likely a caller will be able to successfully navigate the system, without frustration, to reach their required destination.
7. Does your business name involve the word “company” or “Incorporated”? Think about whether you want the voice talent to say “Co” (pronounced as “coh”) or “Company” .....OR “Inc” (pronounced “ink”) or incorporated. It can make a difference in creating their “First Impression” of your business.
8. Take time to choose the right voice. Male or Female? Young and energetic or mature and established? Bubbly and fun? Think of your target customer in terms of demographic and gender and match the voice to what you think they would like to hear and would make them feel more comfortable.
9. ...and, when writing your prompts text, always remember that the voice prompt/message will be heard through a phone speaker NOT read from a document. Clarity is key to a successful routing of the call.
10. Make a “live” person readily available. If your voice prompts, as efficient and well recorded as they may be, STILL lead your caller down a meandering alley of multiple “press” choices, think about making it easy for them to transfer to a live person OR a reliable voice mail, so they will feel like they have accomplished their goal from the call. Too many auto attendant phone “trees” can become tedious and result in a caller “giving up” and possibly going somewhere else to conduct their business or quickly obtain the information they need.

Need more information? Call us anytime and we’ll be happy to assist.