

# The Essential Guide to Voice Marketing



# INTRODUCTION

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Many of the initial discussions we have with new customers center around the challenge of rationalizing the number of recorded voices one of their customers might encounter in the course of various phone and web interactions. Clients know they should employ a more unified voice approach, but don't have a roadmap for thinking through how to make the right choices that will ultimately impact the overall customer experience.

This eBook lays out an approach that addresses this challenge and helps you create a truly integrated customer experience.

# What is Voice Marketing?

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**Voice Marketing** is a branding strategy that aligns all of an organization's professionally recorded messages and the unique attributes of a given voice with their value proposition.

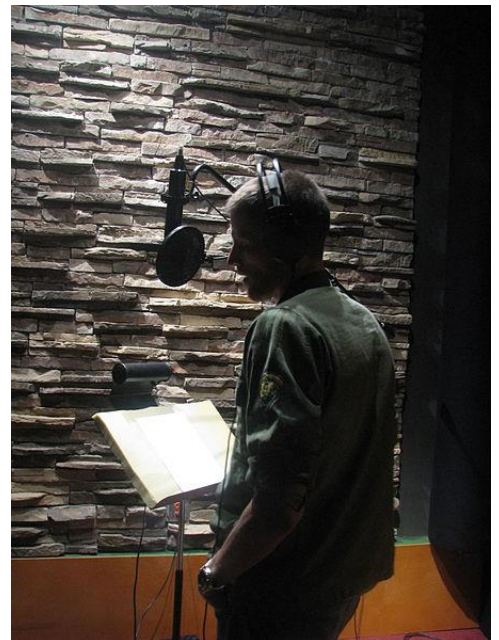
This alignment is achieved by employing a single voice or set of voices across a broad range of customer "voice touch points", including phone, web, and other communication vehicles.

For example, when a caller is:

- **Navigating through phone menus** - as with auto attendant voice prompts
- **Conducting a phone transaction** - as with IVR prompts
- **Waiting on hold** - as with Message-On-Hold
- **Viewing a video on a website** - as with web video narration
- **Being educated about a product or service** - as with e-learning narration

The chosen voice talent should deliver in a way that is emotionally compelling and consistently builds customer familiarity over time via continual reinforcement – whether the caller is talking to a call center application with touchtone voice prompts, viewing a web video, or participating in an E-learning presentation.

The right voice for a narration project brings the subject into focus quickly and clearly, and with personality. We're talking about a professional voice talent – someone with training to speak with the proper pace, with great clarity and in the right tone.





# Principles of Voice Marketing

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Voice Marketing presumes that the organization has established at least one of the following:

- **Brand statement** - A description of how the organization wants to represent its products and services to its customers – i.e., it's “promise” to these customers.
- **Customer persona** - A short story that defines relevant characteristics, interests, and demographic information representative of individuals in its prospect and customer base.
- **Value proposition** - The unique set of customer benefits offered by the organizations' products and services that differentiate it from its competitors.

The development of professionally recorded voice prompts, messages and narration should consistently support each of these elements – and should proceed according to the following six guiding principles:

## 1. Voice attribute alignment

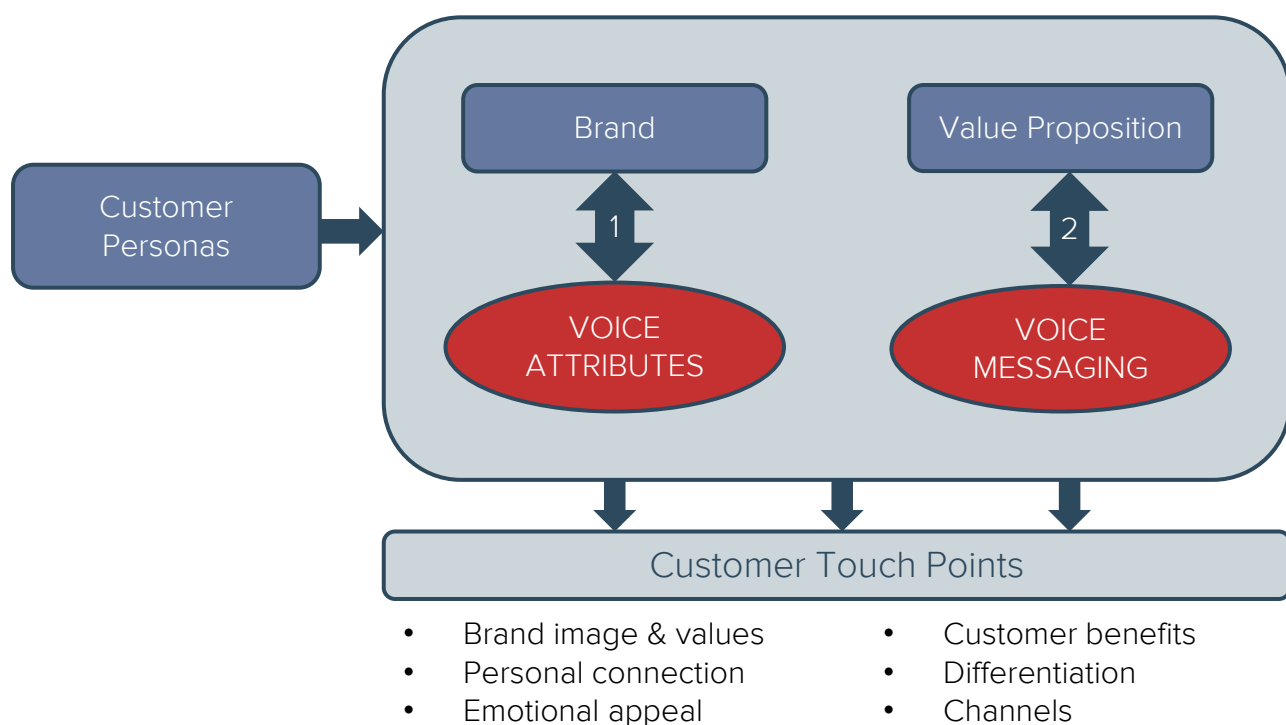
A voice talent's vocal attributes should accurately represent and support the company and/or product brand. They should appeal to specific customer personas.

Any personal characteristics, behaviors, lifestyle information should be conveyed to the voice talent so the talent can more effectively establish a connection with the customer.



## 2. Voice channel alignment

A customer interacts with a company brand through a series of customer touch points. Each has the potential to become a “voice touch point” – or instance in which the customer comes in contact with a recorded voice. Each customer touch point should be evaluated to determine if the use of a recorded voice would be an effective communication vehicle – and if such use would be a cost-effective alternative or complement to other modes of communication.

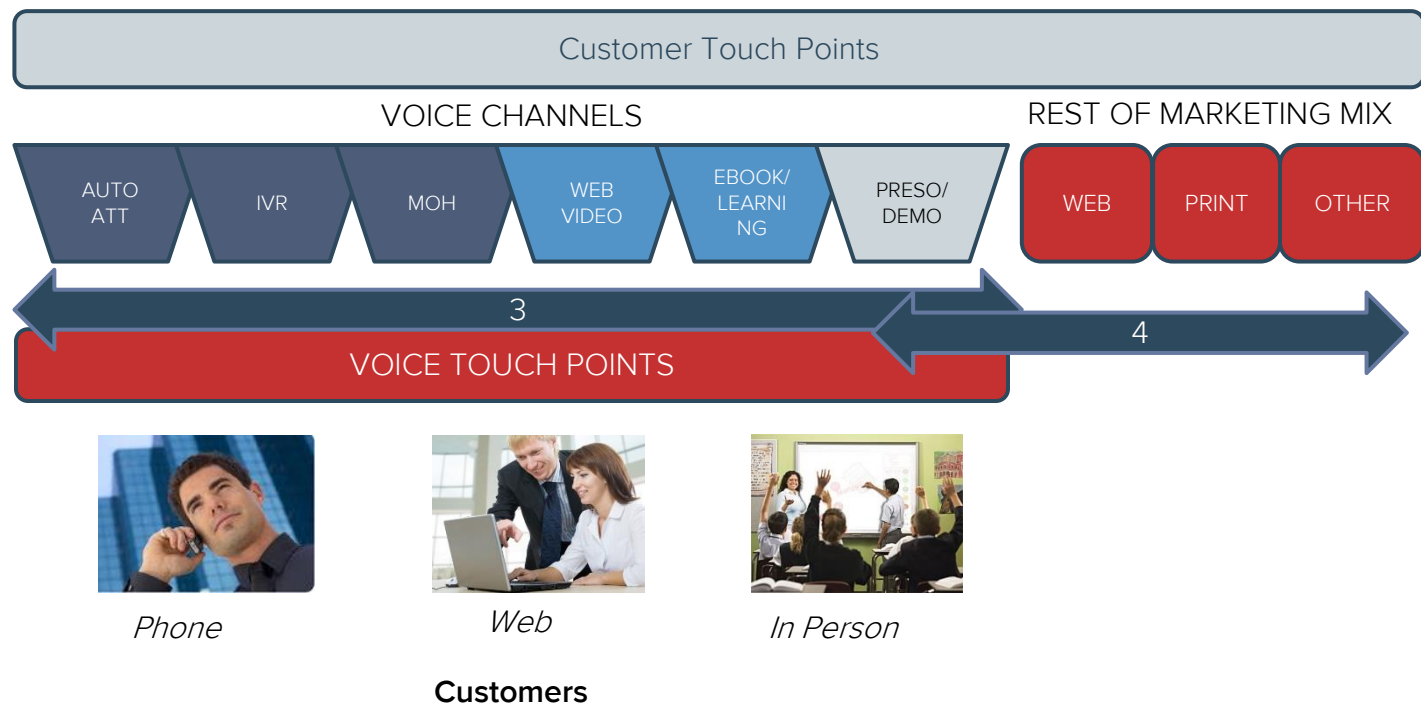


## 3. User experience consistency

Use of a voice talent should create a consistent user experience. The same vocal style, emotion, and inflection should be employed across all vehicles enabled by professional voice services – and these same elements should remain consistent over time.

## 4. Messaging consistency and reinforcement

The messages communicated via voice-enabled vehicles should mirror and reinforce those conveyed through the organization’s overall marketing mix. This alignment should extend across as many marketing vehicles as appropriate – so that messaging is reinforced and made more memorable. Voice-enabled marketing vehicles should also reinforce messaging at the individual marketing program or initiative level – supporting new product/service introductions, special promotions, and feature enhancements.



## 5. Voice talent uniformity

The preceding principles suggest that a single voice talent should be deployed across all voice touch points. The talent should be professionally trained to deliver IVR prompts, on-hold messages, and narration uniformly with respect to style, tone, emotion, and inflection. Multiple voice talents can be effectively utilized as long as each can be associated with a well-defined set of customers, products and/or brands – or thoughtful consideration is given to how the voice talents relate to each other.

## 6. Emotional engagement

The voice talent should elicit emotional responses that are conducive to establishing and maintaining a strong relationship with target customers – resulting in positive outcomes for the business. Vocal attributes should nurture a sense of familiarity that is constantly reinforced across multiple vehicles – strengthening the bond between the customer and the brand.

# Benefits of Voice Marketing

Following these guiding principles will yield significant value in terms of brand equity:

- **Consistent brand reinforcement**
- **More powerful value proposition**
- **Strengthened customer connection**

One of our customers sums up these benefits as she describes how voice has become a unifying force in their overall marketing approach:



*“Before we standardized all of our voice recordings using a single voice, the customer experience was disjointed and confusing. Callers heard a credible but very formal voice on our main auto attendant, a friendly, authentic voice for our commercial loan processing IVR prompts, and a highly energetic voice on our customer service line.*

*Looking back, it was hard for the caller to understand what our brand stood for. Worst of all, we just looked – and sounded – less than professional. Now all of our recorded voice prompts reflect a friendly, welcoming tone, which is consistent with the image we’re trying to portray as a community-oriented regional bank.”*



# Voice Marketing Strategy Examples

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There are many use cases of how successful voice marketing can help a company establish its brand identity and provide a positive user experience. Here are some voice marketing strategy examples:

## **Example #1: Regional Bank Differentiates Itself From Competitors**

One regional bank wanted to differentiate itself as being “friendly” and “accessible” – both in terms of messaging and vocal style – versus its larger competitors who sounded more formal and “robotic” in their voice systems.

Their previous voice messaging was done by a long-time internal employee from their IT department. By hiring professional voice talent and identifying the tone and style they wanted to convey, they were able to successfully convey their brand.

## **Example #2: Consumer Goods Changes Voice Talent to Reflect New Market**

An outdoor recreation retailer employed a younger, male voice when it shifted its focus to a younger, more active target market and a product line more centered around outdoor sporting equipment.

Previous voices were a combination of 5 voices – a mix of internal and professional voices – each associated with acquired or merged companies. This had created a disjointed customer experience and didn’t accurately portray their brand.

## **Example #3: Financial Services Adapts to Persona**

When an investment management firm added a retirement planning offering for high net-worth individuals, they also added a branch in its IVR using a more mature voice with a slight British accent.





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## Example #4: Healthcare Company Uses Voice Marketing To Encourage Action



Take a page from the “good cop/bad cop” routine – A pharmaceutical company using IVR for their prescription drug testing application uses two female voices: one with a soothing, nurturing style for the main call flow, and one with a sterner voice for the branch of the application used to remind patients to take their medication on schedule.

The previous voices were described by the marketing group as “robotic” and “uninspiring”. In addition, the company reports increased usage of the drug reported systems and better compliance to drug schedules.

## Conclusion

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Voice marketing is essential to reinforcing your brand and creating a positive and strong customer connection. It’s important to not only align your voice across all customer “voice touch points,” but also ensure that the voice you choose accurately represents your brand statement, customer persona and value proposition.

## Ready to take your voice marketing to the next level?

We’re here to help you speak your brand. Since 1984, we’ve been a full service provider of professionally recorded audio for voice prompts and messages for telecom and web applications, as well as long-form narration for websites, e-learning, sales presentations and demonstrations, and voice-enabled apps. Contact us today to create a truly integrated customer experience through your voice messaging.

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