

Using Seneca[®] with a Third-Party Voice Mail System

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Introduction

The Seneca[®] speech-enabled call management module can be configured and implemented to provide a number of different feature sets. While it can serve as the enterprise voice mail system, it can also be used to extend the functionality of an existing third-party voice mail system by adding advanced call completion and personal assistant features to an enterprise *without requiring the existing voice mail system to be removed*. This allows a company to take advantage of the Seneca system's high-end call completion and personal assistant features that are not available on their current voice mail system but to continue to use their existing voice mail to handle their normal voice messaging functions. This type of deployment offers numerous advantages to the customer including:

Reduced costs

By purchasing the Seneca system to be used in conjunction with their existing voice mail, less Seneca ports and user licenses will be required compared to a configuration where the Seneca system actually replaces the existing voice mail system. This reduction in cost can be very attractive to some prospective customers.

Asset retention issues

In many cases, the existing voice mail system is still carried on the books as an asset with value and to remove and replace it is a difficult financial process. Using Seneca in wrap-around mode allows the existing voice mail system to remain on the books until its value has been aged to a point where the customer is comfortable in replacing it.

Reduced need for training

Many customers have a concern about the need to retrain all of their users on a new voice mail system. By retaining the old voice mail system, and only training the users on the new speech-recognition interface to Seneca, the training costs and time required for retraining are greatly reduced.

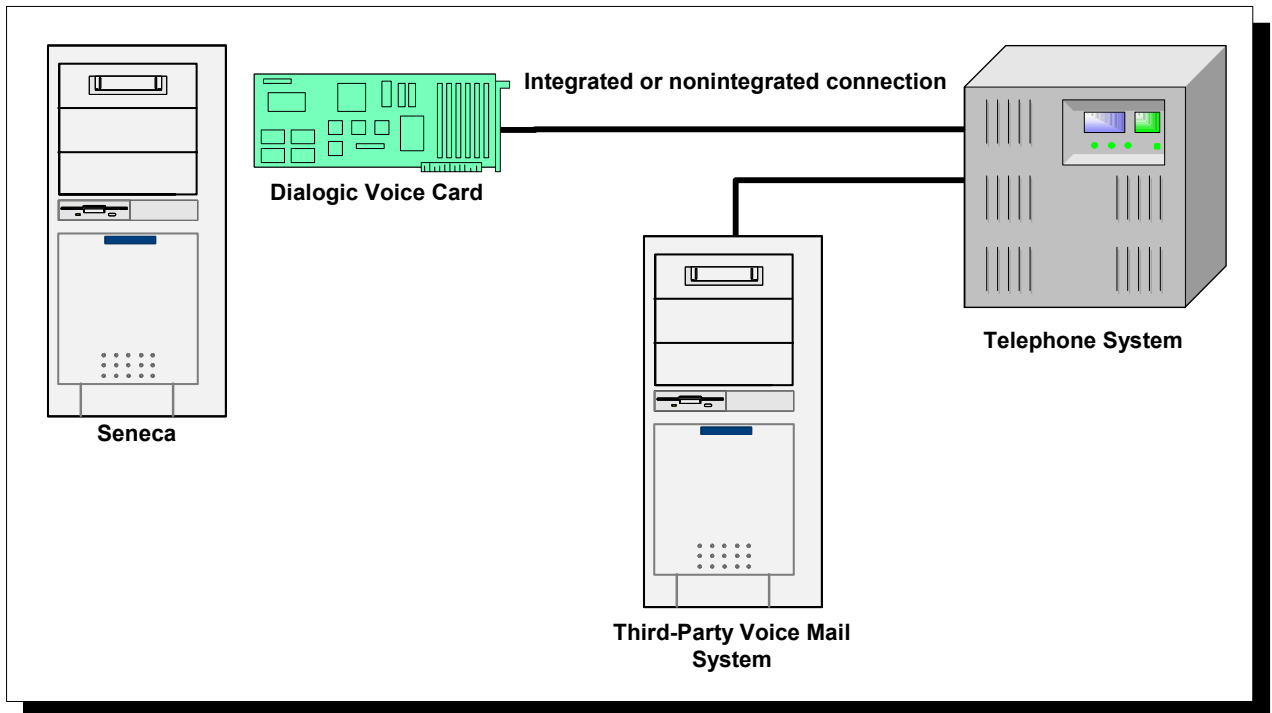
Maintaining a consistent environment

Some customers have a consistent messaging environment across multiple locations. This type of deployment can also include message networking. By leaving the existing voice mail system in place and only using Seneca for the call completion and personal assistant features, the integrated environment remains in tack.

All of these points contribute to an environment where Seneca being used in conjunction with an existing voice mail can be very attractive to a prospective customer.

System Architecture and Functionality

In order for Seneca to function along with an existing third-party voice mail system, Seneca needs to be able to answer calls from outside callers and subscribers, perform the desired functionality from the Seneca feature set and then, in some cases, move the caller into the third-party voice mail system when the functionality of that system is required. There are two types of callers who would benefit from calling into Seneca; outside callers who can take advantage of the advanced call completion features Seneca offers and system subscribers who can use the personal assistant features available to Seneca subscribers. In both cases, at some point in the call, Seneca may need to move those callers into the third-party voice mail system. Seneca accomplishes this transfer seamlessly based on the speech commands spoken by the caller. Seneca connects to the same telephone system as the third-party voice mail system and is capable of transferring the callers directly into the other voice mail using a combination of normal transfer features and the ability to pass certain variables to the third-party system.



Handling outside callers

In the case of handling outside callers, Seneca can offer access to the full range of Seneca speech-recognition based call completion features to those callers. When callers are answered by Seneca and speak the name of the party they are trying to reach, the following Seneca features can come into play:

- Speech recognition-driven automated attendant
- Speech recognition-driven menus
- Real and Virtual extensions
- Call screening
- Caller acknowledgement
- Locate numbers
- External paging access
- Do not disturb
- Call routing schedules

If after trying all of the various call completion options available to a subscriber, a caller is still unable to connect to that subscriber, Seneca will offer the caller a final option: *“Please say take a message, try another person or operator”*. If the caller responds with *“Take a message”*, Seneca will transfer the outside caller into the subscriber’s mailbox on the third-party voice mail system where they will hear the subscriber’s personal greeting (from the third-party system) and will then be able to leave a voice message for the subscriber (on the third-party system). Subscribers can then retrieve their voice messages by calling into the third-party voice mail system just as they always have. No new training is required for the subscribers. A typical call flow for this call completion process is shown at the end of this document.

Handling system subscribers

When Seneca is used in conjunction with a third-party voice mail system, it can also offer a wide range of personal assistant features to the subscribers. While all voice messaging functions are accomplished by the third-party voice mail system, Seneca can offer the following speech recognition-driven features to its subscribers:

- Placing outgoing calls to members of their address book
- Placing outgoing calls by speaking the telephone number
- Calling other Seneca subscribers at their desk, virtual extension or locate numbers
- Sending new e-mail messages to address book members and other Seneca subscribers
- Reading their e-mail messages (optional)
- Accessing and managing their fax messages (optional)

This feature set allows a Seneca subscriber to use their Seneca mailbox as a location to perform a wide variety of communications tasks. When they are done processing their e-

mail and fax messages, making outgoing calls to answer their messages and sending new e-mail messages, users can have Seneca transfer them into their mailbox on the third-party system in order to allow them to access their voice messages. This is accomplished automatically when the subscriber says *“Get new voice mail”*. A typical user session is shown at the end of this document.

Special Caveats

When using a Seneca system in conjunction with a third-party voice mail system, some care needs to be taken to ensure that prospective customers and users understand exactly what functionality is available from the Seneca system. In this configuration, there are some feature differences as compared to those available with a standalone Seneca implementation. The following items are the feature differences when using Seneca wrapped around a third-party voice mail system:

No call recording features

Since all voice mail functions are provided by the third-party voice mail system, Seneca subscribers cannot record their incoming or outgoing calls and have them put in their Seneca voice mail inbox. The following commands are not available when using Seneca and a third-party voice mail:

- *“Call and record”*
- *“Dial and record”*
- *“Locate and record”*
- *“Accept and record”*

No message recording or message notification features in Seneca

Since there is no voice messaging functionality in this configuration, users can't record and send new voice messages to other Seneca users. To perform that task, they would move into their third-party voice mail system by saying *“Get new voice mail”*. All message notification would then be controlled by the features of existing third-party voice mail system.

No speech functions in the third party voice mail system

Once the outside caller or the Seneca user has transferred over into the third-party voice mail system, Seneca is no longer connected to the call. As a result, there are no speech recognition capabilities added to the existing functionality of the third-party voice mail system.

Handling Outside Callers with 3rd-party Voice mail Wrap

An outside caller looking for John Tyler dials the Seneca pilot number:

Seneca: *“That you for calling ABC Company. Please speak the first and last name of the person, or the name of the department, you are trying to reach.”*

Caller: *“John Tyler”*

Seneca: *“Who’s calling, please?”*

Caller speaks their name

Seneca: *“One moment, please.”*

Based on the subscriber’s current Seneca programming and options, Seneca tries the caller at their real or Virtual extension. If the subscriber doesn’t answer:

Seneca: *“This is the personal assistant of John Tyler. Please say locate, leave a message, try another person or operator.”*

Caller: *“Locate”*

Seneca: *“Trying locate number one.”*

Seneca tries to reach the subscriber at their locate numbers. If after trying all of the subscriber’s locate numbers, the subscriber doesn’t answer, Seneca provides the caller with other options.

Seneca: *“I’m sorry, there is no answer at that number. Please say leave a message, try another person or operator.”*

Caller: *“Leave a message”*

Seneca: *“One moment, please.”*

Seneca now transfers the caller into the subscriber’s voice mailbox on the third-party system.

Third-party System: *“Hi, this is John Tyler. Please leave me a message at the tone and I’ll get back to as soon as I can.”*

The subscriber can now access this message by calling into their third-party voice mail system.

Handling Subscribers with 3rd-party Voice mail Wrap

A subscriber calls into their Seneca system:

Seneca: *“That you for calling ABC Company. Please speak the first and last name of the person, or the name of the department, you are trying to reach.”*

Subscriber: *“User login”*

Seneca: *“Please say your name or enter your mailbox number.”*

Subscriber: *“John Tyler”*

Seneca: *“Please say or enter your password.”*

Subscriber: *“12345”*

Seneca: *“Hello, John. What would you like to do?”*

Subscriber: *“Get new e-mail.”* or *“Get new faxes”* or *“Send an E-mail”* or *“Locate Mary Jones”* or *“Ring Mary Jones”* or *“Call Bob Thompson”* or *“Dial 435-666-7788”*, etc.

Seneca: processes any of the user’s available personal assistant commands.

When the subscriber is finished using the Seneca personal assistant features and wishes to access their mailbox on the third-party voice mail system:

Subscriber: *“Get new voice mail.”*

Seneca: Transfers the user directly into their mailbox on the third party system.

Third party system: *“You have fifteen new voice mail messages.”* (third-party voice mail system prompt).

The user is now logged into their third-party voice mail system and can process their voice messages using all their familiar DTMF commands.

For more Information

Applied Voice & Speech Technologies, Inc. (“AVST”) is a leader in the unified communications (“UC”) marketplace uniquely combining the strengths of its world-class messaging platform, CallXpress[®], with its speech-enabled call management module, Seneca[®], to create a powerful, next-generation unified communications solution. The Company’s products are designed to scale and support organizations of all sizes. For more information please contact us at: www.avstgroup.com or +1.949.699.2300.

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