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For Immediate Release

Human Touch Ever-present for American Diabetes Association Help Line *Non-Profits Profit From One-of-a-Kind Response Service, Increase Outreach Potential*

GURNEE, ILL. — The Alexandria, Va.-based American Diabetes Association (ADA) is getting up to four times more calls thanks to a remarkably lifelike technology that covers for live operators of the ADA's 1-800-DIABETES hotline, according to the inventor of the Natural Speech Technology (NST) used at ADA. When calls outnumber available operators, or come in during off hours or for a routine request, a service called ConServIT from Conversational Voice Technologies Corp. handles the incoming requests for literature and information.

Patent holder Peter Theis developed the technology for the ConServIT service that many callers think is a real person and others find comforting and extremely natural for getting the information they seek.

“The human and *humane* approach is to act and sound naturally with inbound callers,” says Theis, whose 30 years of work has included non-profits along with many large corporations in diverse industries. “For the ADA, the goal is to make the 24-hour 800 number just as user-friendly as if an operator/counselor was available.” During November Diabetes Month and the annual March Alert Campaign, the hotline heats up at all hours.

A Calming and Productive Presence

“People are very frightened when they've been diagnosed with diabetes or are concerned about someone they know,” says ADA's Call Center National Director Lee Barona. “We've found the use of natural conversational speech in fulfilling constituent requests is especially comforting to callers who can be adverse to technology. Most people we serve through 1-800-DIABETES can be in a situation where they really want to speak to someone.” ConServIT gives that conversational experience and interaction. Barona says requests with complete follow-up

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information (standard recording systems often get hang-ups or partial information) were up 73 percent in the 2001 March campaign, with ConServIT handling 28,000 of ADA's 66,000 incoming calls. According to Gurnee, Ill.-based Conversational Voice Technologies Corp. President Theis, "A call into our natural speech technology is a very relaxed and human-like call. Due to its lifelike nature, it can relax the caller, it doesn't make the person uneasy, it does not threaten, it does not demean, and it does not dehumanize the caller.

Listening Rather than Talking

"The importance of natural speech technology is that you are making a person feel comfortable in the communication between the organization, the ADA, and the caller. You don't feel like you have to go through hoops or be intimidated or be told to do something. It's just as if their next-door neighbor was speaking," explains Theis.

"I can see how people could take it for a human voice," says Barona, "and my feedback has included staffers wondering if it was a real person. Many non-profits can't afford round-the-clock staffing and this is an effective way to serve and help our constituents when we can't be there personally during peak or off-hour times. We get our information back promptly within 24 hours and can immediately respond to requests."

Theis points out that the true effectiveness of ConServIT lies in the full and complete information that callers leave. "The basic principle is if you can't say it one-to-one, don't talk that way to the caller with your answering technology," says Theis. "For other clients we've found that NST outperforms standard answering system performance and typically outperforms live operators in the gathering of full and accurate information."

About the American Diabetes Association

The American Diabetes Association is the nation's leading nonprofit health organization providing diabetes research, information and advocacy. The mission of the organization is to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes. To fulfill this mission, the American Diabetes Association funds research, publishes scientific findings, provides information and other services to people with diabetes, their families, health care professionals and the public. The Association is also actively involved in advocating for scientific research and for the rights of people with diabetes.

About ConServIT, a service of Conversational Voice Technologies

ConServIT provides automated inbound teleservices using proprietary voice processing, switching, and reporting technologies. ConServIT is a leading provider of automated call handling services and database management of information. More information, including a real telephone call handled by ConServIT, is available at www.conservit.com or 1-800-994-4400. E-mail: sales@conservit.com.