



SAP Concur 

Five Ways Your Business Can Benefit From Voice Recognition Today

As voice recognition technology grows increasingly accurate, it's also going mainstream. By 2022, smart speakers – like Amazon's Alexa, Google Home and Sonos One – will be in more than half of all U.S. households, according to a recent [report](#), and voice assistants will be in use on more than five billion smartphones.

Widespread adoption for business use as well is inevitable, experts say. One major reason: employees and customers will demand the convenience of voice recognition technology. Another: companies will take advantage of the ways voice recognition can automate and streamline business functions.



“Five years ago, most voice recognition technology was proprietary. **Now, it's accessible for smaller companies**, because there are so many open source development resources,” says Adam Spinner, CEO of SpinnerTech, an IT service provider in Lindenhurst, New York.





While the future for voice recognition is wide open, here are five ways **small and medium-sized businesses can access its benefits** right now.

Organize the team: Amazon's Alexa for Business works with major video and call conferencing providers so that users can join through a voice command instead of a dial-in number and access code. Alexa can also be "trained" to find an open meeting room for in-person meetings, as well as other tasks, like ordering new supplies or notifying IT of an equipment issue. Companies can build/add the "skills" (the voice recognition equivalent of apps) that they need. Cortana, Microsoft's virtual assistant for Windows 10, integrates with Office 365, Outlook, Bing Search, and more. Employees can set up meetings and reminders with their voice and be reminded automatically of things they've said in emails.

Speed up customer calls: "How do you service a lot of customers with a small staff? You route calls efficiently by having an automated system that does not require human capital to fulfill," Spinner says. "Companies can put applications in phone systems to give customers instant access to a wide range of information they want, without ever having to speak to a live representative, or enter a 20-digit account number." An AI (artificial intelligence)-powered auto-attendant can recognize a phone number, attach it to the customer's account in the company's CRM system, and use voice recognition to "discuss" a customer's account, whether he or she has called previously for service, the status of a delivery, and more.

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Enhance access control: “Voices are even more unique than fingerprints, and the technology has gotten very good at differentiating them,” Spinner says. “We are using this more often with companies that need to be compliant with PCI DSS [Payment Card Industry Data Security Standard].” For access to sensitive accounts, two-factor authentication is defined as something you know (like a password) and something you have (like a fingerprint or a token sent to your device). Increasingly, that “something you have” will be the human voice.

Increase sales team productivity: In addition to giving sales reps the ability to quickly access CRM data by voice command, speech recognition can help them avoid the mundane task of manually inputting data into the system. (Using speech recognition technology is nearly three times faster than typing on a handheld device.) Even more advanced functionality is available: Zoho CRM recently introduced its conversational assistant Zia, which the company says can do everything from checking inventory before a sales call, to email scanning and prioritization, to predicting deal closure rates.

Plan business travel: The voice activated Google Assistant can tell a person the fastest way to get to the nearest airport or the best time to visit London. SAP Concur has created an **Amazon Alexa skill** using SAP Concur APIs, so you can ask Alexa about upcoming business trips, flights, hotel bookings, and transportation.



For more about automating your business for greater efficiency, visit: concur.com/smallbusiness

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