



## **Speech Technology Magazine's Q&A with Steve Pollock, Co-Founder and EVP of TuVox**

**October 5, 2005**

<http://www.speechtechmag.com/issues/industry/12504-1.html>

### **Q. TuVox recently announced that it will be acquiring NetByTel's hosted speech application business, what exactly does this acquisition entail?**

A. TuVox is acquiring the NetByTel hosted speech application business, which includes ownership rights to the NetByTel speech applications, as well as the relationships with all the NetByTel customers such as Danka, H&R Block, Office Depot, Time Customer Service and 1-800-Flowers. These customers are now TuVox OnDemand customers. TuVox is also bringing forward the NetByTel partnerships, including deepening relationships with existing partners as well as forging new ones.

### **Q. What does this acquisition mean for TuVox?**

A. With the acquisition of the NetByTel business, TuVox accelerates its growth and expertise into vertical markets such as retail and financial services and expands its offering of voice self-service applications from 30 to over 40 self-service applications. In addition, the acquisition expands our customer base to over 50 customers worldwide and increases our professional services delivery capacity to help accelerate our growth.

We are very excited about this tremendous growth and are well prepared to support the diverse needs of our new and existing customers.

TuVox has already been offering its speech applications in both hosted and on-premise deployments. In fact, almost half of TuVox deployments are in a hosted model. When we provide our speech applications through a hosted and managed deployment model, we manage the full customer relationship including the full-service level to the customer.

Our hosted solutions are managed in conjunction with our hosting partners, as TuVox is not in the business of owning hosting infrastructures and we do not have long term plans to own any hosting facilities. However, for the time being we will continue to manage the hosting facilities acquired from NetByTel.

### **Q. What new opportunities will be available to new and existing customers with this deal?**

A. Both new and existing TuVox customers will benefit through access to additional applications. TuVox now offers over 40 self-service applications including Benefits Enrollment/Status, Catalog Request, Change of Name/Address, Customer Authentication/Eligibility, Customer Surveys, Fares and Schedules, Location Finder, Order Status, Password Reset, Prescription Order/Refill, Price and Availability, Product Return, Service Scheduler, Technical Troubleshooting and many more,

TuVox now provides applications for retail, health care, communications service providers, financial services high technology, and transportation companies. These applications cover a broad range, from natural language call routing to transactions, voice-enabled knowledge base, and live agent time savers.

For the existing NetByTel customers, the acquisition will be transparent. Existing applications will operate exactly as they have before and TuVox will continue to provide ongoing application maintenance and operational support to our new customers.

**Q. How will this impact your ability to provide customers with speech applications in deployments?**

A. The primary change is in the breadth of available applications. In addition, we're expanding our delivery team, so we'll have more available expertise.

**Q. What types of changes should customers who are switching from NetByTel to TuVox expect to see in service and applications offerings?**

A. Since TuVox is already in the hosted business with our OnDemand offering, we plan to fold the NetByTel customers into that offering. The service offerings are very similar, and include:

- Rapid deployment
- 24/7 support
- Redundant systems at multiple levels
- Application maintenance and update services
- Web-based reporting

We are working to ensure that the acquisition is transparent to NetByTel customers. Their existing applications will operate exactly as they have before and we will supply best-in-class application support to address their needs. Over time, we will smoothly migrate the applications to the TuVox CVR platform for operational efficiency and added functionality.

One visible change is the availability of other TuVox applications. We look forward to working with our new customers to continue to enhance their existing implementations, as well as leverage the wider variety of new applications, should they choose to do so.

**Q. What impact do you think this acquisition will have on the speech market? While there has been a lot of consolidation activity in the speech market, this acquisition is the first consolidation of speech application-focused companies. TuVox is seeing a significant increase in the number of prospective customers who are specifically looking for application software based offerings, as opposed to "custom coded" applications built on traditional platform technologies.**

A. Speech application software enhances the caller experience while reducing deployment risk and reducing the total cost of ownership. In addition, they provide a much richer set of "out of the box" capabilities, ranging from VUI features through lifecycle management software and reporting.

This acquisition creates a broader, stronger application offering, giving customers a clear alternative to using their incumbent vendor's professional services organization to build expensive, inflexible custom applications – whether on premise or hosted.

**Q. Is there anything you would like to add?**

A. We continue to be very optimistic about the growth of the speech market. In addition to this acquisition, we're investing internationally with a physical presence in both Europe and Australia, and continue to invest substantially in R&D.