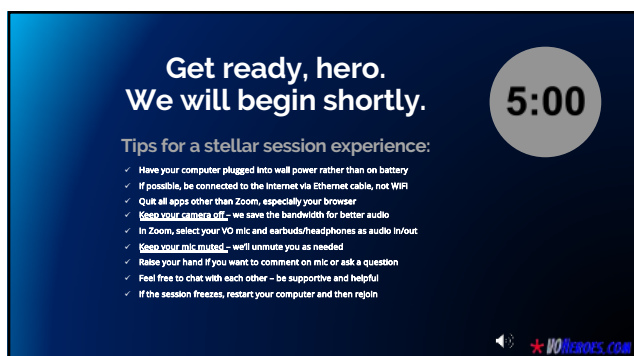


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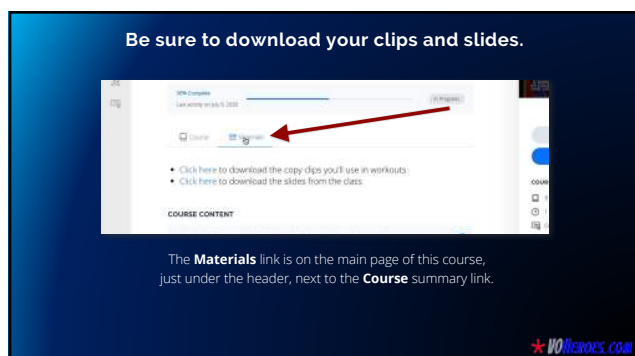
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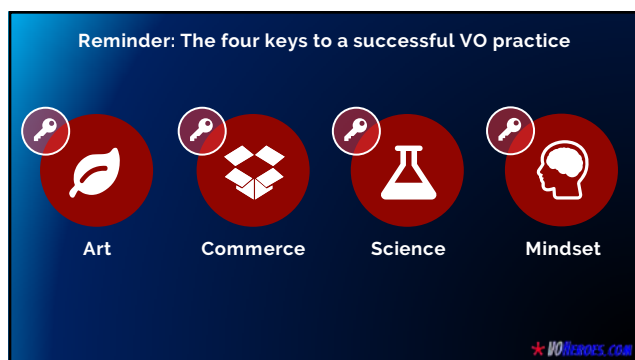
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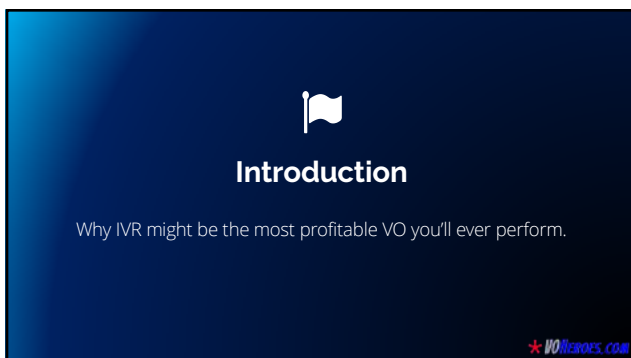
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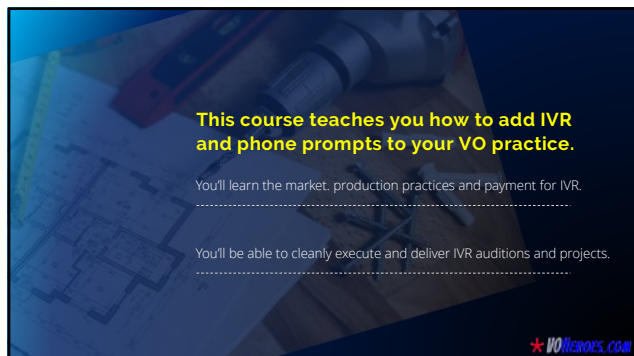
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9

VOHeroes: Voicing IVR And Phone Prompts

Slides/Class Notes



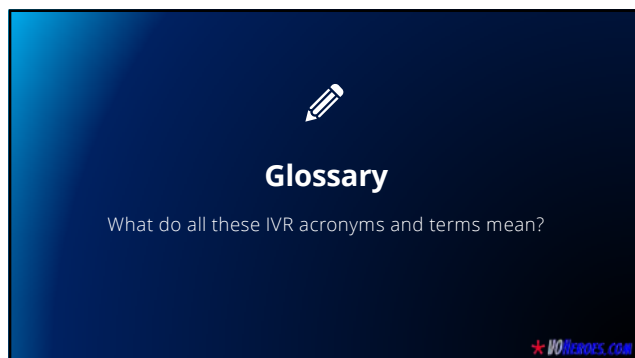
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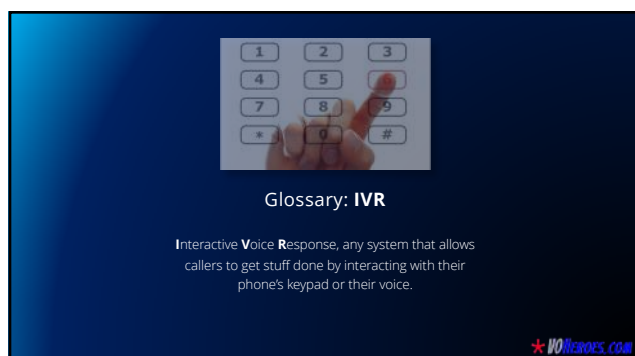
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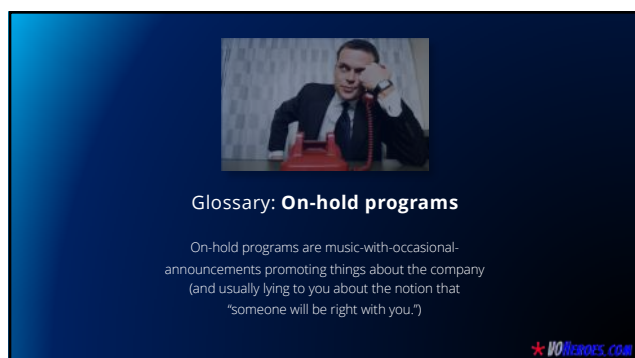
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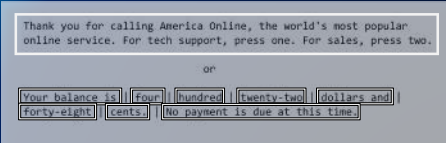
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15



Thank you for calling America Online, the world's most popular online service. For tech support, press one. For sales, press two.

or

Your balance is \$400.00 (four hundred twenty-two dollars and forty-eight cents). No payment is due at this time.

Glossary: Prompt

A pre-recorded passage, phrase or fragment, played to a caller when needed, and sometimes used to construct longer messages. Also called a **file**, a **recording** or a **message**.

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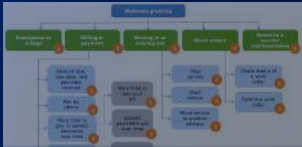


Glossary: Tree

The general organization of an IVR system, with the main menu as the trunk, and the options as limbs and branches.

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Glossary: Options

The choices offered by the IVR system to callers, accessed by taking actions using the keypad or the caller's voice: sales, support, balances, locations, etc.

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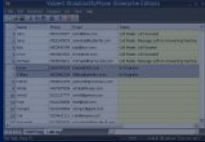


Glossary: Actions

Something physical you want the caller to do to achieve the desired option. Usually pressing a particular key or keys, or using voice commands.

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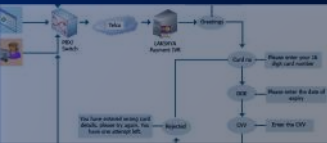


Glossary: Robodialer/Autodialer

A system that calls a series of phone numbers in a list, often at random and with a common message. Not legal in most situations.

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Glossary: Messaging

A term for the recorded content of an IVR system, describing both the meaning and the flow of the system.

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(ring) Hello, I'm Ted Brunson, and I want to be your next 4th district Congressman. The Springfield metro has seen some real challenges present themselves, in the form of increased traffic on the Loop, especially in the downtown area, a stronger homeless population, and development in the Plaza area that is out of control.

Glossary: **Outbound**

Messaging that is delivered to a caller, usually in the form of pre-recorded announcements.



22



Glossary: **Speech-to-text**

Also called **voice recognition**, this process recognizes spoken language, and converts that content to text, which the system uses to respond to the caller.



23



Glossary: **Text-to-speech**

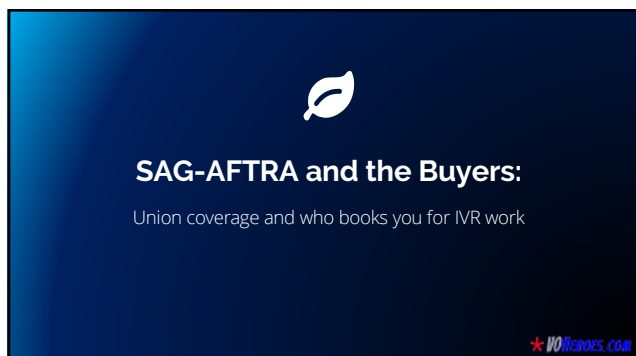
Also called **synthetic voicing**, this process converts text content to speech, which the system uses to respond to the caller. Has been in use since the 8-bit days in the 80's via computer generation.



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27

Union coverage: non-broadcast Co-Ed.



IVR is covered under Co-Ed

IVR is referred to and covered by the SAG-AFTRA Corporate-Education contract.



No residuals are paid


You get paid once for your work. It would be almost impossible to track per-play residuals.




28

| | | | | |
|---|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Segment - 1st hour | \$200.00 | \$200.00 | \$200.00 | \$200.00 |
| 2nd | | | | |
| 3rd and Group (less than 10 bars) | 214.00 | 243.00 | 210.00 | 240.00 |
| 4th and 5th (or more) | 122.00 | 144.00 | 110.00 | 140.00 |
| Stop Out (Stop Out stops out of group) | 27.00 | 27.00 | 27.00 | 27.00 |
| If one of any group is 4th or 5th stop out and stops less than eight (8) consecutive bars or repeats up to five (5) words, then each of the segments in repeating out or speaking words shall be paid the fee specified above, in addition to the group fee for the group called. | | | | |
| Continuation - additional 50% of contract value | | | | |
| | \$211.10 | \$243.30 | \$210.50 | \$240.50 |
| Interactive Voice Recording (IVR)/Phone Prompt Systems and Preprocessing | | | | |
| 1st hour, per hour | \$210.00 | \$220.00 | | |
| Each additional half hour or segment thereof | 105.00 | 110.00 | | |
| These rates pertain to an unlimited period of use. | | | | |
| Storecasting | | | | |
| 3 months use | \$300.00 | \$400.00 | | |
| 6 months use | 750.00 | 800.00 | | |
| MISCELLANEOUS RATES | | | | |
| Section 32. Overtime | | | | |
| • Section 32.4.1. Day Performance | \$340.00 | \$360.00 | | |
| • Section 32.4.2. Overtime Callings | | | | |
| • Day Performance | \$340.00 | \$360.00 | | |
| • Night Performance | \$340.00 | \$360.00 | | |
| • 1st hour | \$340.00 | \$360.00 | | |
| • 2nd hour | \$340.00 | \$360.00 | | |

Union rates: they were session-only, but they've been renegotiated. More on pricing later.




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AFTRA Health & Retirement Funds


The benefit contribution rate for IVR work is 18.75%, with medical going to SAG-AFTRA Health, and pension going to AFTRA Retirement. And you don't have to be SAG-AFTRA to be an AFTRA Retirement plan member.



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Who are IVR buyers?

- ✓ Customer service
- ✓ IT departments
- ✓ Small businesses
- ✓ Individuals
- ✓ Casting site clients




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Creating Your IVR Demo

Make sure the listener can imagine you being their voice

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Your IVR demo: for this one, use a producer.
Ensure your demo shows off three common IVR patterns and standards.

Hire a producer for this demo.
A producer who knows the "sound" of IVR systems.

Like all demos, immerse the listener.
You should sound phone quality, not studio quality.

Length: 1-2 minutes, and a single tree.
Your demo needs to show you can "carry a tune."

Include some realistic rough edges.
Just like in the real world, responses should sound "constructed."




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Performing The Work

IVR-specific voicing tactics: taking care of the caller

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Four must-haves in IVR prompt writing and voicing.

These four things are essential when writing and performing the prompts themselves.



Option, then action

Instead of "Press 1 for sales, press 2 for service" it's "For sales, press 1. For service, press 2."



Emphasize the action

When you voice a prompt's action, raise your pitch on the action. Don't make the listener squint their ears.



Follow conventions

Pressing the star key usually means to back up. The pound key usually means skip or move on.



No standard/daylight

Just say "(zone) time". If you include "standard" or "daylight" you'll be wrong half of the year.



37

Performance with IVR: clearly be heard.

There are four basic standards of IVR performance excellence.

01 Supportive energy

You must own this work and be forceful, without any subtle shadings of meaning.

02 Sharp enunciation

You never know what you're going to be competing against for the listener's attention.

03 Care for the listener

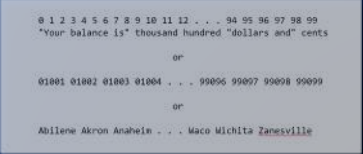
Your whole job is to help the listener get their job done, using only the phone and their voice.

04 Clarity rules

Even if the client is looking for an attitude, remember that you must be heard clearly.




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Booked to voice/produce an inflection set? Rejoice.

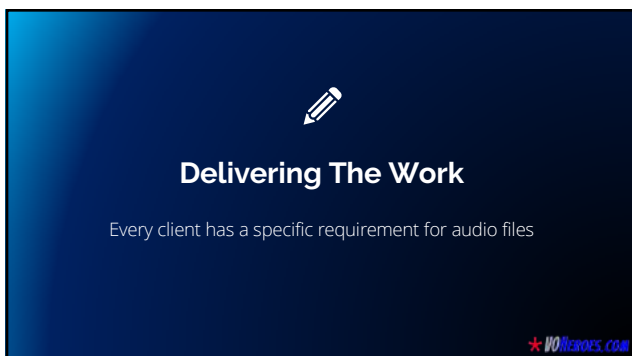
A series of numbers, names and connective words and phrases that IVR systems use to build complete sentences. Each set member is a separate prompt.



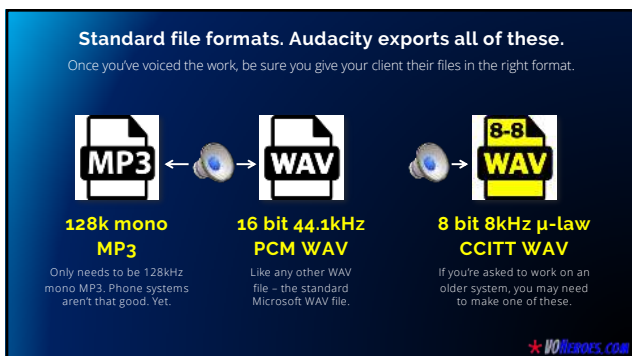
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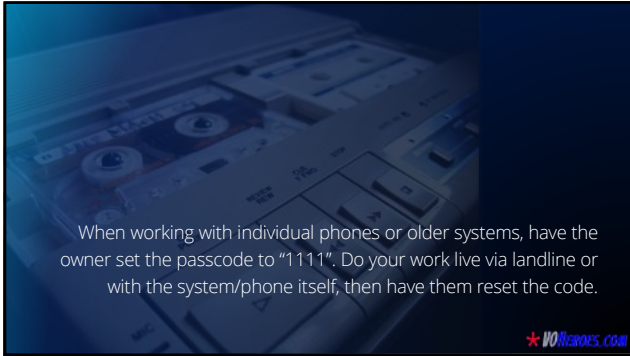
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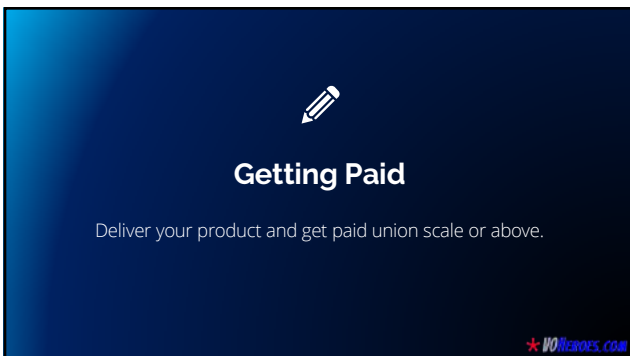
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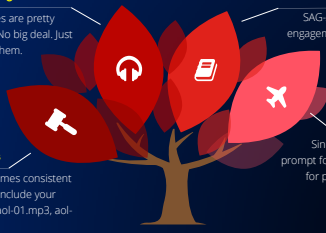
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Delivery and payment.

Delivery is easy-peasy, but knowing how to charge for your work is a bit more involved.



Sending files
The files are pretty small. No big deal. Just email them.

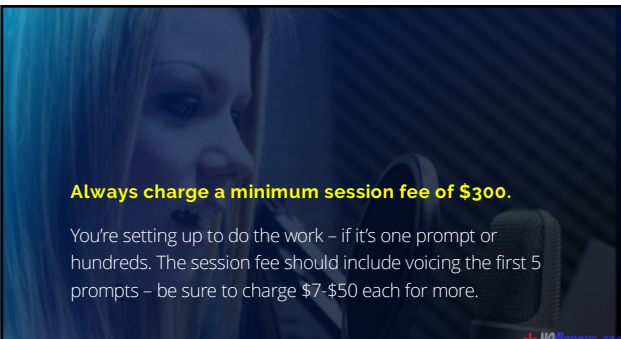
Union payment: getting better
SAG-AFTRA now pays a minimum engagement fee of \$300 plus \$7 per prompt above 5. You can charge more than that.

Set YOUR price per prompt
Since 1988, I've charged \$50 per prompt for unlimited use. Do the math for payment on a 20 prompt tree.

Naming files
Keep the filenames consistent and readable. Include your client's name: aol-01.mp3, aol-02.mp3, etc.

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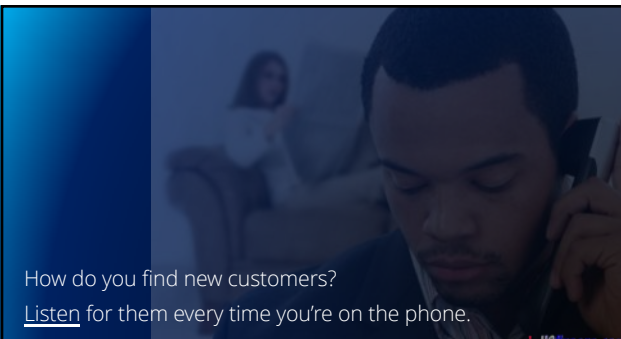


Always charge a minimum session fee of \$300.

You're setting up to do the work – if it's one prompt or hundreds. The session fee should include voicing the first 5 prompts – be sure to charge \$7-\$50 each for more.

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How do you find new customers?
Listen for them every time you're on the phone.

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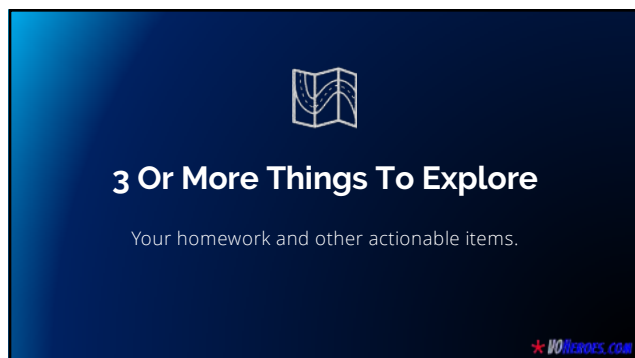
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Start as a voice over talent offering IVR services.

- + The next time you call a company that has an IVR tree, listen carefully.
- + Practice your inflections and pitch when voicing prompts.
- + Search for "CCITT" on voheroes.com to learn to make that weird WAV.
- + Start a list of potential clients – companies that you think need better IVR.

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Questions?

Post in the ProConnect discussion group

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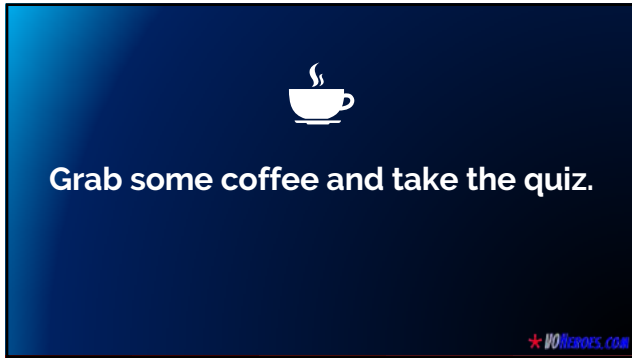


Not a VOHeroes Pro yet?

<https://voheroes.com/pro>

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