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Viewpoint: GDPR and its big impact on call centers

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The E.U. General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), which goes into effect May 25, has a very broad definition of personal data. It accounts for any biometric, cultural, economic, genetic, mental, political, religious and social information that may be used to identify an individual.

Audio recordings are personal data and cannot be desensitized. If your call center takes calls from an E.U. data subject, you must abide by GDPR regardless of where you are located.

GDPR poses unique challenges for call center operations. For one, telephone representatives must be clear and unambiguous asking callers for their consent to record, process and retain any personal data. This consent can be withdrawn at any time by an individual, even during a call. In addition, individual callers have the right to obtain and review data in a usable format; they can request data deletion and restricted data processing; they have legal recourse through government and contractual standing; and data must be processed in accord with consent, and consent can be revoked and modified.

The key for the modern call center business is the ability to provide insightful analytics while complying with the GDPR data subject



handling requests. This means separating the audio from the data it contains, as audio cannot be desensitized and is subject to handling requests including deletion. Even if a person does not want to exercise his or her right to be forgotten, other data handling requests and the overhead associated with them is a costly endeavor unless automation tools are implemented.

Fortunately, there are steps you can take so your call center can comply with GDPR, avoid intel loss and expedite audio content searches: Develop retention policies for data acquisition, processing and storage practices; leverage the latest call center solutions; and separate the business analytics from the audio recordings.

Retention policies ensure compliance with GDPR data consent and processing requirements to en-

sure alignment with your business use of the data. Combined with new technology solutions, they enable you to easily find relevant business information without the audio. Some solutions feature real-time call transcription and speech analytics to evaluate the words and sentiments of callers. Other solutions enable you to remove specific personal data from transcripts and recorded calls and still retain important business information and insights.

GDPR will certainly impact how call centers use voice data. But you can experience a smoother transition to this regulation by establishing proper policies and using modern technologies.

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