Untangling Your IVR: IVR Problems and Solutions

Matt Florell of Vicidial
and
Allison Smith of The IVR Voice.com

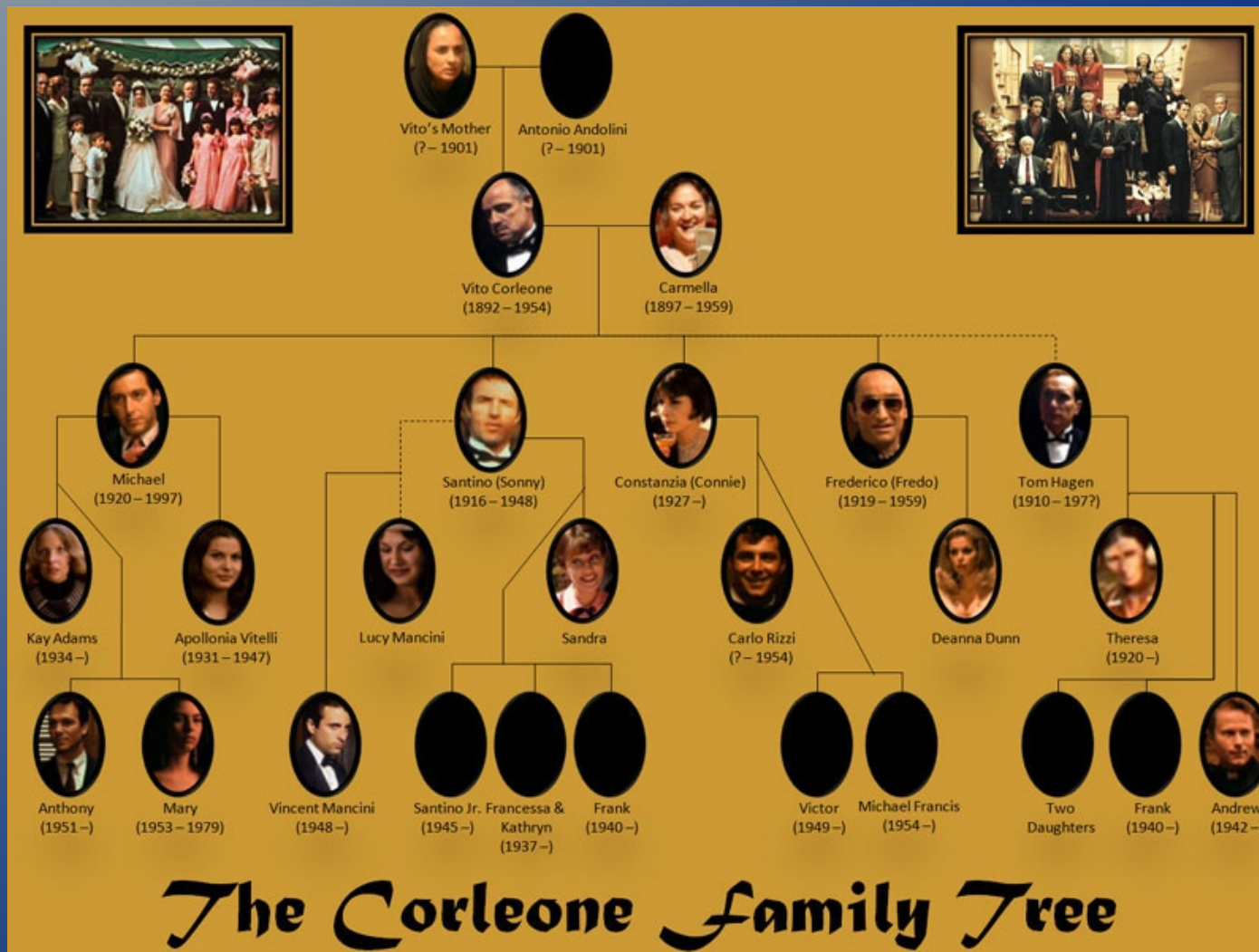# Symptoms of a "Tangled" IVR

- Designing and implementing your phone system a chore?

- Keep getting pushed down in priority?

- Mired down with too many drafts?

- Tending to your system seen as a waste of time?

- System ineffective?
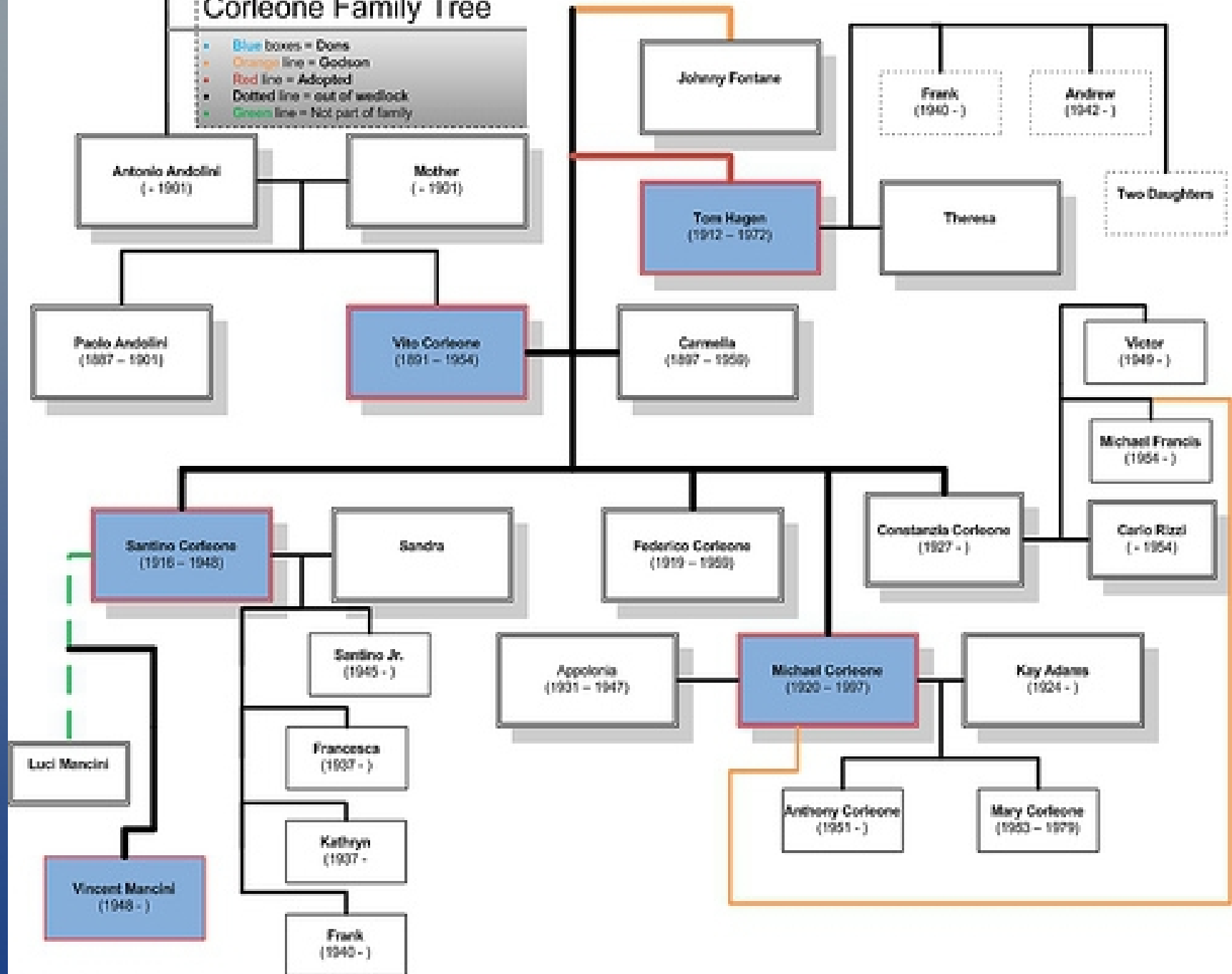
YOU'RE IN YOUR IVR'S WAY!

CASE #1

- 6 Conference calls over 2 months....*for 8 prompts!*

- Survey with no fewer than *18* drafts!

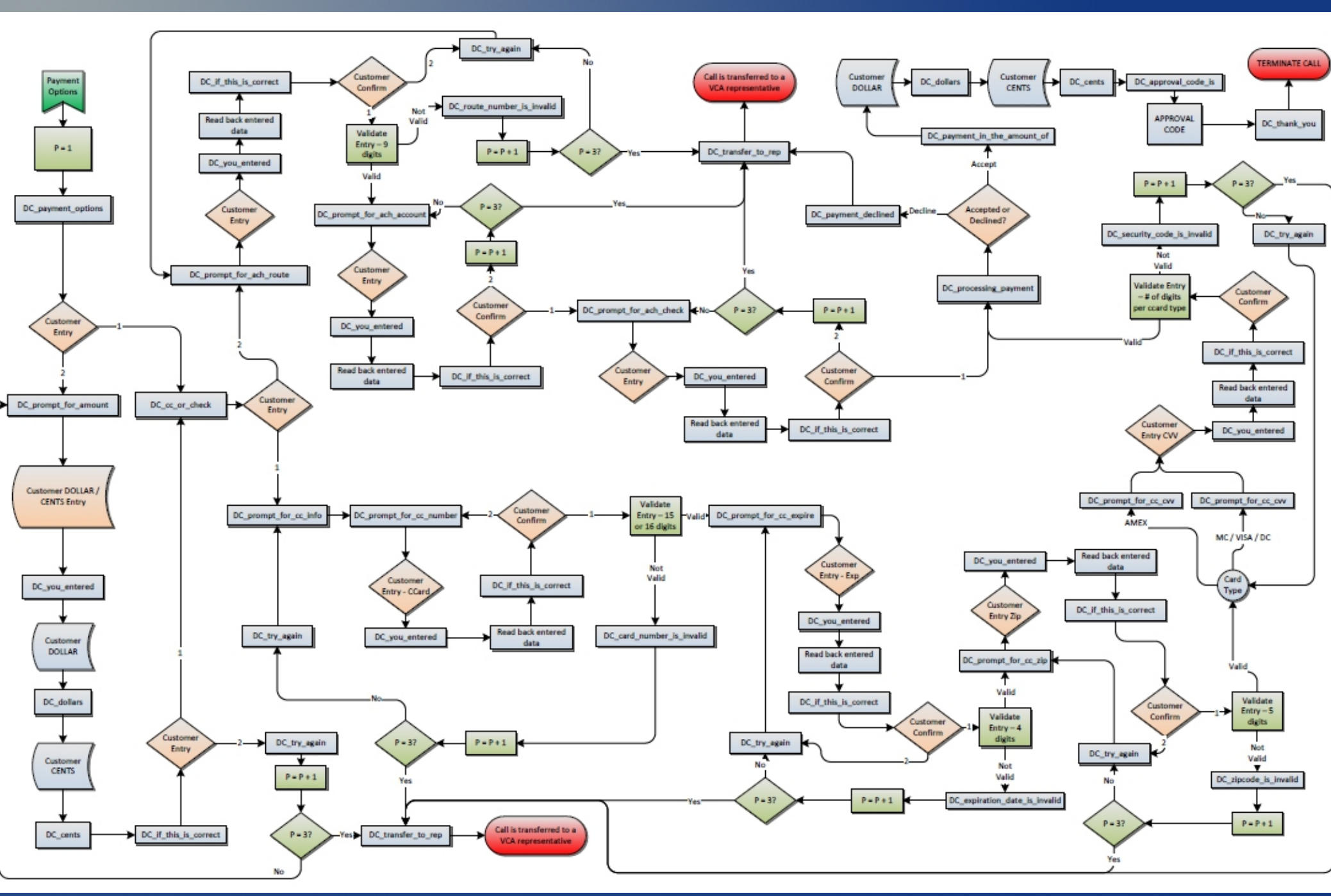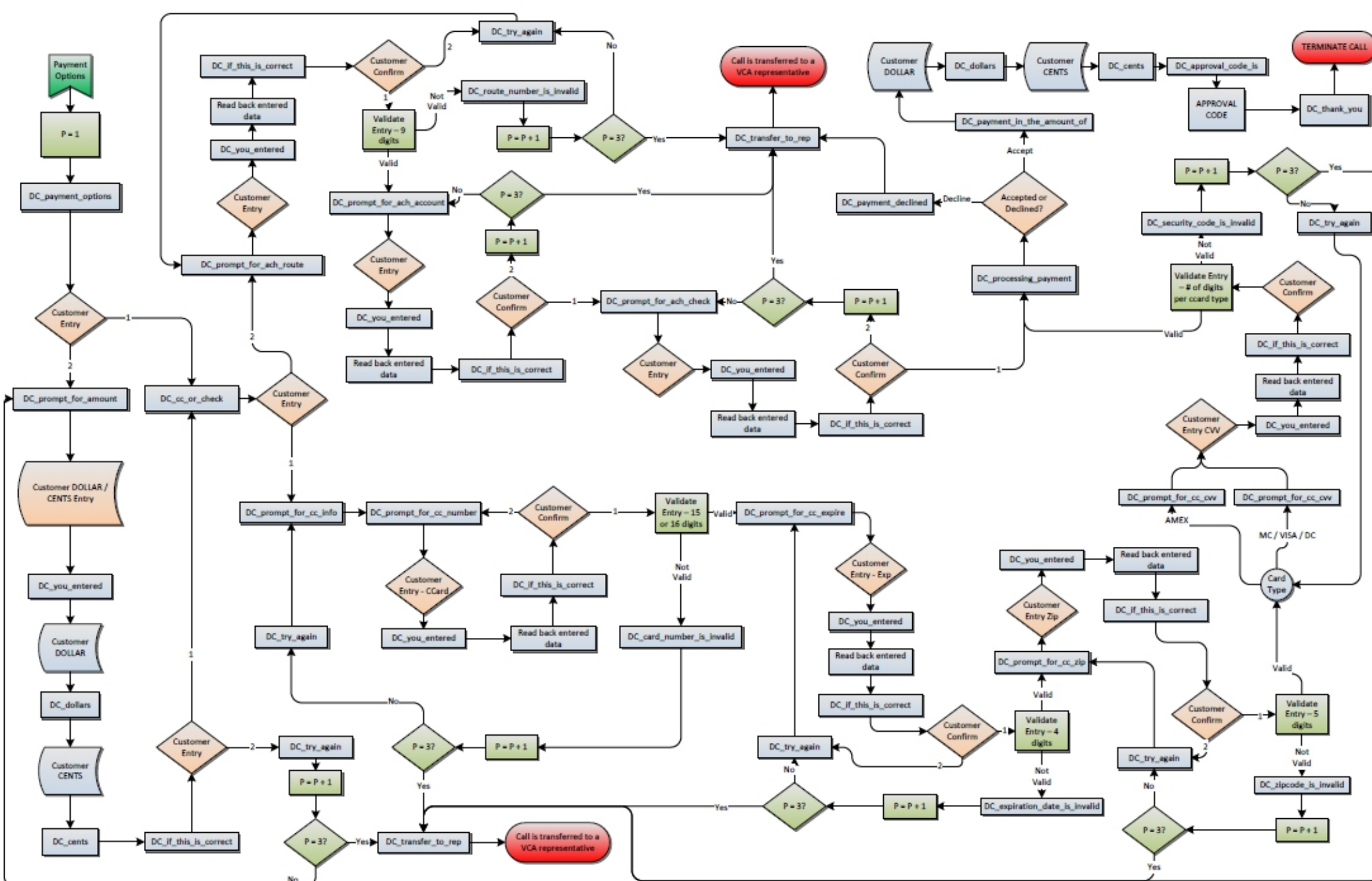- Phone tree taking better part of *a year* to design!

Case #2: CORLEONE FAMILY TREE

The Corleone Family Tree

Corleone Family Tree

Payment Options

P = 1

DC_payment_options

Customer Entry

DC_prompt_for_amount

Customer DOLLAR / CENTS Entry

DC_you_entered

Customer DOLLAR

DC_dollars

Customer CENTS

DC_cents

DC_if_this_is_correct

Customer Entry

P = P + 1

P = 3?

DC_try_again

DC_transfer_to_rep

Call is transferred to a VCA representative

DC_cc_or_check

Customer Entry

DC_prompt_for_ach_route

Customer Entry

DC_you_entered

Read back entered data

DC_if_this_is_correct

Customer Confirm

Validate Entry – 9 digits

DC_route_number_is_invalid

P = P + 1

P = 3?

Not Valid

Valid

No

DC_try_again

DC_prompt_for_ach_account

P = 3?

Customer Entry

DC_you_entered

Read back entered data

DC_if_this_is_correct

P = P + 1

Customer Confirm

DC_prompt_for_ach_check

No

P = 3?

P = P + 1

Customer Confirm

Customer Entry

DC_you_entered

Read back entered data

DC_if_this_is_correct

Yes

DC_payment_declined

Decline

Accepted or Declined?

Accept

DC_processing_payment

DC_payment_in_the_amount_of

Customer DOLLAR

DC_dollars

Customer CENTS

DC_cents

DC_approval_code_is

APPROVAL CODE

DC_thank_you

TERMINATE CALL

P = P + 1

P = 3?

Yes

No

DC_try_again

DC_security_code_is_invalid

Not Valid

Validate Entry – # of digits per ccard type

Valid

Customer Confirm

DC_if_this_is_correct

Read back entered data

DC_you_entered

Customer Entry CVV

DC_prompt_for_cc_cvv

DC_prompt_for_cc_cvv

AMEX

MC / VISA / DC

Card Type

Valid

DC_prompt_for_cc_info

DC_prompt_for_cc_number

Customer Confirm

Validate Entry – 15 or 16 digits

Valid

DC_prompt_for_cc_expire

Customer Entry - CCard

DC_if_this_is_correct

DC_you_entered

Read back entered data

DC_card_number_is_invalid

Not Valid

DC_try_again

Customer Entry

P = P + 1

P = 3?

Yes

No

Customer Entry - Exp

DC_you_entered

Read back entered data

DC_if_this_is_correct

Customer Confirm

Validate Entry – 4 digits

Not Valid

DC_expiration_date_is_invalid

P = P + 1

P = 3?

Yes

DC_try_again

No

DC_prompt_for_cc_zip

Customer Entry Zip

DC_you_entered

Read back entered data

DC_if_this_is_correct

Valid

Customer Confirm

DC_try_again

P = 3?

No

Yes

Validate Entry – 5 digits

Not Valid

DC_zipcode_is_invalid

P = P + 1

Valid

DC_try_again

P = P + 1

P = 3?

Yes

No

DC_transfer_to_rep

Call is transferred to a VCA representative

Case #2 – THE CORLEONE FAMILY TREE

Problem: Excessively complex schemogram

- Schematics good for organization, planning, anticipating, "walking through it"

- Visually mapping our flow helps identify gaps, omissions

- Invaluable tool for programming, AND it's a great start....

BUT!

Programmers *(and voice talent!)* need something more

- LINEAR
- A STEP-BY-STEP FLOW
- UNCLUTTERED
- NON-CONFUSING

Case #3 – Leaving Customer out of Loop

- No option for "Press 0 for Live Agent"
- "Commercial" in opening prompt
- Either Not Tracking OR Disregarding High Call Drop Rate
- Disregard for customer's time and patience

SERIOUS PROBLEMS

SIMPLE SOLUTIONS!

CASE #1

- 6 Conference calls over 2 months….*for 8 prompts!*

- Survey with no fewer than *18* drafts!

- Phone tree taking better part of *a year* to design!

SOLUTION:

- Don't Over-think It
- Assign someone to have authority over phone tree design
- Avoid "Committee" mentality
- Don't give the client too much latitude

IT DOESN'T HAVE TO BE PERFECT – IT JUST HAS TO WORK!

SOLUTION:

- Detail of options from each step of the IVR:

Menu ID: anvil_welcome

Customer Action	Audio File	Message	Action
Prompt	anvil_welcome.wav	Thank you for calling ACME Anvil Supply. Para Espanol, numero quatro. For sales press 1. For support, press 2. If you are having a Roadrunner problem, press 3. For all other inquiries, please press 0.	Wait 10 seconds for customer input before repeating 2 times, then to timeout action
Press 1	<none>	<none>	Transfer to anvil_sales menu
Press 2	<none>	<none>	Transfer to anvil_support menu
Press 3	<none>	<none>	Transfer to priority_roadrunner queue
Press 4	<none>	<none>	Transfer to anvil_welcome_es menu
Press 0	transfer_operator.wav	Please hold while we transfer you to the operator	Transfer to ring group 119<rings phones 101, 102 and 103>
Timeout	menu_timeout.wav	Thank you for calling ACME Anvil Supply. Good Bye.	Hangup the line
Invalid	menu_invalid.wav	I'm sorry, that is not a valid option, please try again	Play main prompt again
Invalid 3rd time	menu_invalid.wav	I'm sorry, that is not a valid option. Good Bye.	Hangup the line

Simple Schemogram Begat Simple Script:

File Name	Prompt
Enter_password.wav	Please enter your password.
Followed_pound.wav	...followed by pound.
Reenter_password.wav	Please re-enter your password.
Having_problems.wav	We seem to be having problems.
Account_number_located.wav	Your account number is the seven-digit number in the upper-right-hand corner of your statement.
Still_there.wav	...are you still there?
Cents.wav	...cents.
Dollars.wav	...dollars...
Live_agent.wav	Please hold while I get a live agent to help you.

Case #3 – Leaving Customer out of Loop

- No option for "Press 0 for Live Agent"

- "Commercial" in opening prompt

- Either Not Tracking OR Disregarding High Call Drop Rate

SOLUTION:

- Provide opt-out

- Be sensitive to customer's costs, time, patience

- Don't front-load prompt

- Track call drop rate

- Pay attention to feedback

- Call ID database tracking regular/loyal customers – prioritize repeat callers

- Be proactive with changes!

Summary

- IVR can be a chore because we overthink it
- We get in our phone tree's way by complicating it
- Cluttered and complicated IVR leads to high call drop rate and customer dissatisfaction
- We think it needs to be perfect – when really:

it just has to work.

Thank you!

- For more information, go to:

http://www.theivrvoice.com

http://www.vicidial.org

http://www.asterisk.org