

# Medical Alert Success Story

## Making the Connection



When it needed a more robust contact center solution, emergency monitoring device provider Medical Alert looked to the cloud. Now it has smarter sales campaigns, forecasting tools, and the ability to integrate with other applications—all thanks to Five9.



### Customer Profile

Medical Alert, a Connect America company, provides emergency monitoring devices to seniors that allow them to contact 9-1-1 personnel in the event of an emergency.

- 24/7 contact center with 350 agents
- 90,000 inbound calls monthly
- Outbound sales return calls

### Industry

- Medical alert devices

### Website

- [www.MedicalAlert.com](http://www.MedicalAlert.com)

### Challenges

- Outdated, premise-based phone system
- Prone to weather-related outages
- No reporting tools
- Inability to integrate with Salesforce or other applications and databases

### Solution

- Blended inbound/outbound solution from Five9
- 69% increase in agent productivity
- Ability to integrate with Salesforce and other systems
- Active blending of inbound and outbound calls
- Call reporting and forecasting
- Agents can work from anywhere—even from home

### Company Background

Founded in 1977, Medical Alert, a Connect America company, provides personal emergency monitoring devices that give seniors access to emergency support services at the touch of a button. Customers wear pendants that can activate two-way communication speakers in their homes that automatically connect to 9-1-1 certified agents. When a caller encounters a life-threatening emergency, Medical Alert sends for help and notifies the caller's family. The company also provides mobile devices that give customers the ability to get help outside of the home.

Medical Alert handles roughly 90,000 inbound calls a month, including 60,000 sales calls and 30,000 support calls. It also makes a significant number of outbound calls for up-selling and cross-selling purposes. The company is based out of Broomall, Pennsylvania and has a total of 350 agents.

### Rapid Growth at Risk

According to CIO Scott Blau, Medical Alert had begun to experience rapid growth shortly before he and Director of Telecommunications Joe Huffnagle arrived in February 2012. The problem was the company's phone system.

"It was the most basic PBX system you could have," Huffnagle said. "Except for ACD and round robin call distribution, it had no functionality. There was a whispering coach, but no supervisor line. And there were no reporting capabilities."

Worse, the system was susceptible to trouble. Medical Alert uses a separate, disaster-proof emergency contact center to get customers the 9-1-1 help they need. But its internal phone system for handling sales and service contacts was located on-site and had no backup, and it frequently went down during bad weather.

"It's a perception issue," Blau says. "If we can't handle their billing questions, how are we going to respond when there's an emergency?"

### Looking for the No-Brainer

There were several must-haves Medical Alert needed in a new contact center solution. But Blau and Huffnagle knew from the start that their search would begin in the cloud.

"We're not a tech company, so leveraging the cloud made sense for us," Blau said. "If we chose a premise-based system, we knew we'd have to bring in half a dozen people to support it around the clock. But with a hosted solution, we could push everything to the cloud and focus on our business—instead of having to scale up hardware and infrastructure."

Huffnagle added that it was also important to have a system that integrated with Salesforce, which Medical Alert agents use to manage campaigns and handle customer support. "We looked not only at vendors that integrate with Salesforce, but ones that allowed the easiest integration—and ones that would allow us to grow our business."

## Going with Five9

After extensive research, Blau and Huffnagle discovered the Five9® Blended Contact Center would provide everything they needed. Medical Alert implemented Five9 in May 2012 and integrated its new contact center with Salesforce in July 2012. Immediately, they began to see results.

Since implementation, agent productivity—measured by the decrease in call length times and increased sales—has risen 69 percent, says Huffnagle. And there were savings, too. For example, Medical Alert owns 2,400 toll free numbers, which it uses in sales campaigns. According to Huffnagle, Medical Alert saved \$500,000 a year by switching its toll free numbers to Five9.

And when Medical Alert needed assistance, Five9 and its experienced technical support staff were at their call. “They made dealing with any support situation pleasant,” Blau said. “It’s like they are an extension of our IT and telephony departments, not a vendor.”

## Enhanced Customer Service

Through Active Blending, Medical Alert agents can handle and switch between inbound and outbound calls depending on call volume, thereby increasing agent efficiency and productivity.

With Five9, managers also have new reporting tools that let them forecast call volume and plan accordingly, based on agent availability. “The greatest thing is we don’t have to pay for workforce management,” says Huffnagle. “We just look at the numbers and we’re able to make informed business decisions internally.”

Ultimately, Active Blending and enhanced reporting features from Five9 are helping Medical Alert improve customer service. For example, the company recently noticed some callers got transferred to too many departments on the same call. “The data doesn’t lie,” says Blau. “The reporting tools within Five9 proved to us that this was happening, and that ignited our thinking to make changes to create a truly differentiated customer experience.”

## Advanced Application Integration

Five9 is also helping Medical Alert make intelligent decisions on how to route and handle calls. “Because we can link campaigns to Salesforce, the agent knows where the customer got the number and whether that customer is calling during a national or local commercial, so we can be intelligent about the sales pitch,” Huffnagle says.

An even bigger benefit, says Huffnagle, is that Medical Alert can integrate other applications—not just Salesforce—into the Five9 environment. “Five9 allows us to tap into other databases and bring back relevant information for our agents, so we can make intelligent and informed decisions about the customer,” he says.

Recently, Medical Alert began beta testing an API that shows call stats and wait times on its website. “If the wait time is longer than 10 minutes, the customer has the option to email us and we’ll get back to them,” Huffnagle said. “Five9 really is the backbone to the multichannel contact center solution we are providing for our customers.”

## Seamless Environment

With its new virtual contact center, Medical Alert can allow its agents to work from anywhere, even from home. All they need is a high-speed Internet connection and a phone headset.

“When customers call, they may be talking to an agent who’s at home,” Huffnagle says, “but it’s as if we’re all in the same phone center—it’s totally seamless.”

## The Bottom Line

For a company growing as fast as Medical Alert, moving to the cloud was a no-brainer. But while there are many hosted providers, only Five9 had the tools it needed to give agents the freedom and power to excel, while giving Medical Alert the scalability it needed to manage its growth.

“With Five9, I don’t worry about the telephony side of our business,” says Blau. “We have full, feature-rich capabilities, and we can scale on a moment’s notice. That’s just the situation you want to be in.”

Adds Huffnagle: “If you truly want to be in the programmable web, and if you want to get more data in front of your agents so they can make more informed decisions, you need Five9.”

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Joe Huffnagle  
Director of Telecommunications

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### Get More Information

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