Centcom 2006

Tuning the Dialer

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There is No Magic Button

There is no magic button! It's kind of a funny way to put it but it has a pretty significant meaning. No system in the world has that magic button that once you are ready to start using the system, you can flip the switch and it runs at its optimum efficiency for your environment. Dialer tuning takes time and energy and each environment is always different. Like any dialer, the following information is a guideline to start with but you must watch the performance of any list and settings to optimize what is best for your environment.

We will start out with some of the settings that can affect dialing. One of the biggest questions in most people's minds is, "When do I dial predictive or power?"

First, you must understand the difference between the two types of dialing.

Power Dialing

Power dialing is a type of dialing that waits for an agent to declare when they are ready to call by placing themselves in a ready status.
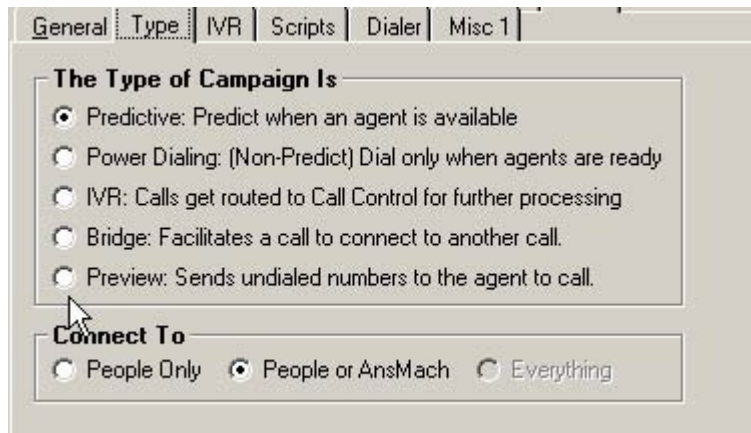
Predictive Dialing

Predictive dialing utilizes algorithms that compute variables from the agents such as the agents' talk times, wrap times, not ready times, etc. Then it uses these times to predict when an agent will be available for a call. Predictive Campaigns constantly dial and the power dial Campaigns wait for an agent to become ready before it dials.

When to Use Each

Predictive dialing should be used when 8 agents or collectors or more are logged on to a single Campaign. Power dial should be used when there are 6 or less agents on a single Campaign. The 6-8 agents range is a gray area where predictive or power dial could potentially be effective.

Some of the other things that go into the determination of which type of Campaign to dial include the quality of the lead base, the way the agents use the system, how many lines you have available to dial out on and whether or not you are using the drop call and answering machine message IVR's.

Quality of Leads

What is my contact ratio? How many numbers does my system have to dial to get a contact? This number decreases the more you dial through a list so you must constantly watch this for changes in dialing patterns once you reset the dials. (See resetting dials section of the Supervisor manual.) So if your lead quality is good, you may only need to dial in a power mode because your contact ratio is high. After you have dialed through the list a few times you may find the need to go predictive to get the proper amount of contacts you need to keep your group busy. Also, as a side note, be aware of the time of day you are calling. This may fall into the guidelines as what you experience with lead quality. Commonly on residential Campaigns the contact ratios are higher during the night then the day and may call for a change in the type of dialing.

The Way Your Agents Use the System

Are your agents required to enter notes into a second piece of software such as collections software? Do they take extensive time in between calls to research for the call? Are there any other things my agent's do that slow down the process between the endings of the conversation and when the agent places themselves back into a ready status? These questions will help you determine if power or predictive could be used. If you answered yes to any of those questions and you have fewer then ten agents you may want to consider power dialing.

How Many Lines do you have Available to Dial Out On

What is the total number of lines on a Campaign that could be dialing? Do I have enough lines to potentially run a ratio of 4 lines per agent?

Drop Call and Answering Machine Message IVR

When using Drop Call and Answering Machine Message IVR, you will significantly use up resources in available lines and the speed of dialing. Quite a few environments do not take this into consideration with their line assignments.

Examples – 6 agents, lead base in fresh and are high on the contacts, and you have a full T1 to use for outbound dial.

Try Power dial on a 2:1 line to agent ratio, with high contacts your agents must understand that they have to keep themselves in a ready status when not on a call because every time an agent places themselves as a ready status the system will make two calls. The chance of both lines connecting on a lead base that is getting good contacts is possible so other agents must be available to use the second call.

IVR's can affect dialer performance if you have 20 lines, 10 agents and a dropped call message that is 2 minutes long. Obviously the dropped call message can eat up resources for dialing and needs to be taken into consideration when looking at the dialer .

Pacing

On predictive Campaigns pacing is definitely a consideration along with the Auto dropped call percentage and the Auto line recalc button. To speed up a predictive Campaign, toggle the pacing button to the right and allow time for the system to adjust. We recommend allowing 10-15 minutes to see proper results. If you are running a set drop percentage, which most telemarketing companies do, you could potentially spike over your set drop percentage by toggling up the pacing and if it is late in the shift the system may not have time to readjust for the dropped calls you experienced - so be careful.


Child Campaign Behavior

Child Campaign behavior can also affect your dialing, but only if you are running multiple child Campaigns set on Queued dialing expecting to fetch records from all Campaigns. (See Running Parent and Child Campaigns in the How To section of your manual.)

Line Initialization

Line Initialization can affect your dialing because if you are trying to run a 3 to 1 line ratio with 20 lines and 10 agents then the best you can do is 2 to 1. Also look at your replacement behaviors because if you are allowing other Campaigns to steal lines from your primary Campaign then you are going to have problems.
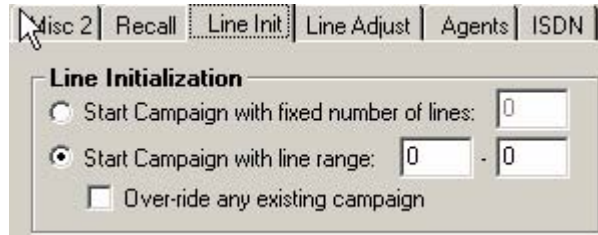
Line Adjust

Line adjust can be used to speed up or slow down a Campaign. Always make sure you are dialing at the proper ratio for the type of Campaign you are running. In non-predictive or power dial Campaigns always start at a 1 to 1 ratio to avoid making a significant number of drops right away.
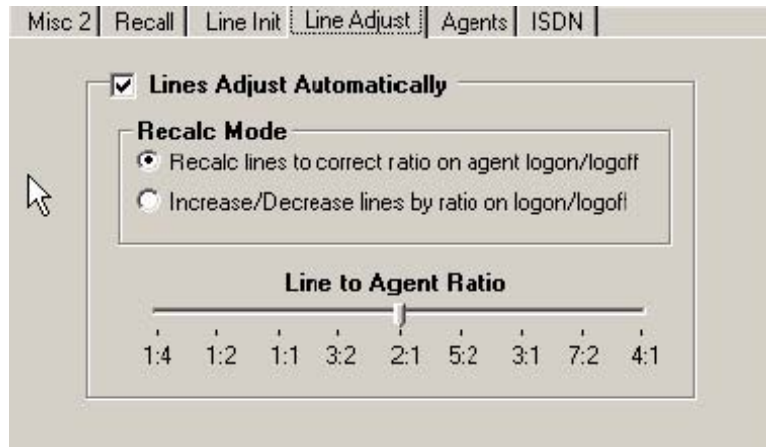
Lead Management

The next most common application for tuning your dialer is not just a function of the dialer but also the way you manage the phone numbers you load into your dialer. Lead management affects contacts, which then affect your closing percentages whether you are selling or collecting. Some other things in dialer performance and tuning you can do are setting up your child Campaigns and their parameters properly, and then managing those Campaigns and understanding and setting your recalls on your CRC's properly. Setting the proper call back settings for your environment is vital so you do not continue to call the same records repeatedly.

Agent Training

One of the most important things in dialer tuning is making sure that your agents are trained on how to get the most use out of the Centcom system. It is their money in their performance and yours; so teach them that to sit in wrap mode, place themselves in a not ready status and put themselves from ready to not ready repeatedly are not good for theirs or their neighbors performance. These things will greatly increase your drop percentage which, in turn, will cause the system to slow down in most environments.

Agent Control Panel Settings

One of the tools we give you to help with this is inside the control panel (Telephony Server Log On) of the Agent application which is displayed when an agent logs in.

In the Log On area, click on [Change Settings], then on the "Config" tab hide or enable functions inside the Agent application.
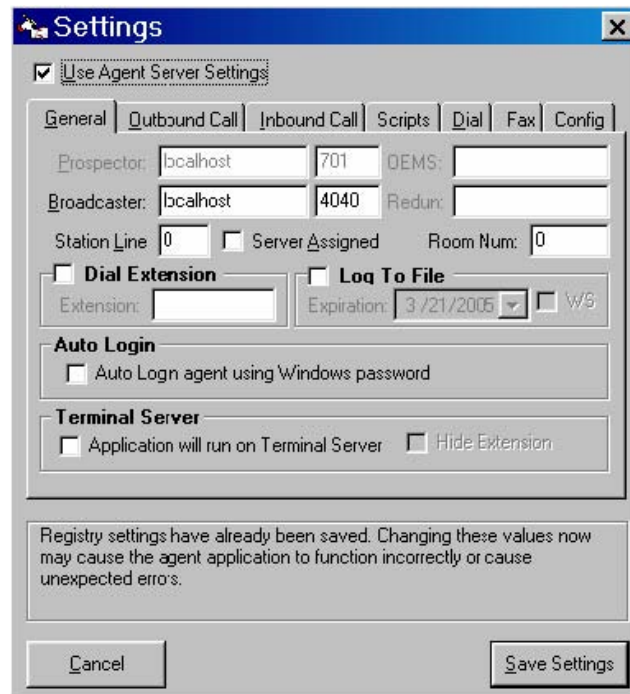
To avoid the above mentioned errors on the part of agents we recommend selecting the Auto Ready button and hiding the not ready button. By setting the Auto Ready it will place the agents in a ready status to start taking calls when they log in. By selecting to hide the Not Ready feature they can still log out for break but they can't sit in a not ready status.