newo

Whitepaper

Voice AI · A point of view

Press zero is dying.

The future of voice AI at scale

Customers want answers, not phone menus. What happens when businesses respond with voice AI that gets things done?

Insights from David Yang
Co-founder, Newo · October 2026

Executive summary

A customer calls a business and reaches a phone menu, a voicemail box or no answer. Some hang up and call a competitor. Newo, a Voice AI platform, estimates that small and medium-sized businesses miss up to 40% of incoming calls. Each missed call can mean a lost opportunity to help a customer.

Voice AI can help address this when the agent knows the business, can act in its systems and checks its work during the conversation. Delivering that for hundreds of businesses a month is the problem Newo has spent years on.

Drawing on the experience of David Yang, co-founder of Newo, this paper sets out five ideas for anyone building, buying or reselling voice AI.

1. Know the business

Agents built from your website, opening hours, services and policies give answers specific to you.

2. Take action

Booking, updating your systems and handing over to a person when needed, not just answering questions.

3. Check during the call

Observer and supervisor components check the conversation and help the agent correct mistakes during the call.

4. Voice sets the bar

Voice adds real-time turn-taking, accents and background noise to the challenges of understanding a customer.

5. Scale makes it practical

Partners need an agent customers can try in minutes, not weeks. David Yang expects voicemail and phone menus to give way to voice AI, and websites to start talking to their visitors.

1. Where Newo came from

Newo grew out of research on Morpheus, an experimental AI companion in David Yang's home. "Our house doesn't have keys," David Yang says, "so you have to communicate with the house." Even with the small models of that era, Morpheus remembered names, recognized faces and emotions, and composed music.

Later, Newo co-founder Luba Rein urged him to turn the research into a business. Her words, as he recalls them: "Forget about this science and art. Let's convert Morpheus into a commercial business."

David Yang's earlier work in restaurant automation taught him how small businesses struggle to adopt new technology. He saw an opportunity to help businesses capture revenue from customer inquiries outside normal opening hours.

An orthodontics group, then cleaning and HVAC professionals, asked to automate their industries under their own brands, which is how Newo's white-label model emerged.

2. What customers need from voice AI

A good phone call ends with the customer's problem solved. For voice AI, that comes down to three things.

It knows the business

Using available business information, the agent can answer questions about services, prices, opening hours and service areas. The business should review this information before launch.

It takes action

It books the appointment or reservation, updates your systems and confirms with the customer, instead of taking a message for someone to call back.

It checks itself

Observer and supervisor components follow the same conversation and help the agent correct itself if it gets something wrong, such as a closing time.

The third point matters most when things go wrong. If the agent offers a time after closing, it can be prompted to say so aloud and offer an alternative while the caller is still on the line.

3. One request, start to finish

An illustrative scenario based on situations described in this paper. It is not a customer case study.

A caller phones a spa that has two infrared sauna rooms, one for three people and one for five, and asks to book for four people tomorrow evening.

1. **The agent understands the request.** It knows the spa's services and room sizes from the business information it was configured with, and recognizes that four people need the five-person room.
2. **The agent checks availability.** It checks the requested date, opening hours and room availability. If the requested slot is unavailable, it offers an alternative.
3. **The agent takes action.** With the caller's agreement, it books the available five-person room in the scheduling system and sends a confirmation through the configured channel.
4. **A person takes over when needed.** If the caller asks for something outside the agent's workflow, such as a custom group package, the agent hands over to a member of staff.

Booking, confirmation and handover behavior depend on the integrations and rules set up for each business.

4. From a website to a test agent in about three minutes

Many platforms create voice and text agents, and some are excellent. Newo's focus is scale. For partners who need hundreds of agents a month, David Yang says, "the rules are different": the platform has to produce an agent a business can try within minutes, without manually building each initial agent.

Who needs hundreds of agents a month?

Channel partners. Newo has about 170, including white-label partners, according to David Yang. They cannot build each initial agent by hand, so they rely on technology that does it for them.

170 channel partners, including white-label partners.

Newo figure, as stated by David Yang.

From a website to an agent you can try

David Yang says the platform reads public information about a business and can produce an "almost production ready" system "literally in 3 minutes."

1. **Choose an entry point.** A Google Maps listing, the business website, or an interview with the owner. Many salons, spas and laundries have no website at all.
2. **Read business information.** The Newo platform extracts opening hours, services, prices, location and service area.
3. **Match the closest supported industry.** It picks the nearest of Newo's supported verticals and starts from an industry-specific configuration.
4. **Test and configure.** Review the initial agent's answers, connect the required phone and business systems, and test its workflows before accepting live calls.

~3 min from a website URL to an initial agent you can try.

The initial agent is ready to try in about three minutes. Connecting phone and business systems and preparing for live calls takes longer; Newo's platform page currently describes this stage as taking weeks. Source: newo.ai/platform.

Industry matters because vocabulary and flow differ. Orthodontic clinics have new and existing patients; hotels and restaurants have guests. A cleaning agent, for example, can give a preliminary price estimate. Newo spent years generalizing behavior across hundreds of customers per vertical. David Yang says the resulting agent “suits 90, 95% of small, medium businesses in that specific area.”

90–95% of small and medium-sized businesses in a vertical can start from one industry-specific configuration.

David Yang’s estimate, based on generalizing across hundreds of customers per vertical. Not independently measured.

5. Why voice sets the bar

Customers contact businesses by phone, SMS, web chat, email and social messaging. Newo supports multiple channels through configured integrations; availability and setup requirements vary by channel.

Voice, though, is “the most complex” channel, according to David Yang. It adds latency, real-time turn-taking, accents, background noise and the need to distinguish the caller from other speakers. Errors such as hallucinations can affect both voice and text.

How much arrives by phone depends on the industry

Vertical	What David Yang observes
High-end restaurants	Roughly 40–60% of table reservations come by phone
Quick-service restaurants	Mostly text
Pizza and Chinese food	Surprisingly high phone volume
Spas, medical spas and cosmetic clinics	Customers ask about procedures, duration and doctor availability before booking
Smart window film	Technical pre-sale questions, such as temperature, thickness and voltage, before any appointment

David Yang’s observations across restaurant and service customers. Not independently measured.

These examples suggest that conversations can play an important role when customers need answers before booking.

6. From fluency to trust

Asked when voice AI became ready for production, David Yang points not to a model release but to a metric: Newo’s **lead success score**, its internal measure of whether a conversation ends the way the business wanted, such as a correct booking. When it came close to human performance, he says, Newo entered a period of rapid growth.

Newo-defined metric. The comparison with human performance is Newo's own and has not been independently verified.

Early paying customers, he says, had been dissatisfied mainly because of latency: answer quickly and there is little time to think; think first and the response takes four or five seconds.

The failure mode that looks like success

Many platforms let teams build impressive agents fast, with deep integrations, webhooks and dynamic data. David Yang describes the risk this way: nine conversations in ten go perfectly, but the tenth can appear successful and still end with a booking outside business hours. The culprits are small:

- Relative dates and times, such as "tomorrow" or "next Friday."
- Confusing opening hours with closed hours.
- Mixing up similar services, such as an infrared sauna with a three-person room and a five-person room when a party of four calls.

In David Yang's observation, one or two calls in ten could end in frustration on systems without checks like these. That is an observation from deployments, not a measured benchmark.

How supervision works

Newo uses separate components to guide the conversation and carry out the actions the agent promises. Its developer documentation describes an Observer that coaches the agent through procedures and next steps, and a Supervisor that detects commitments and triggers the corresponding backend actions.

This architecture is intended to help the agent stay responsive while following the business's workflows. Businesses still need to test dates, opening hours, service details, bookings and escalation paths before launch.

Source: Newo platform differentiation, developer documentation.

The bar is not perfection. Humans make mistakes too, David Yang notes, and "when AI makes mistakes … in the same order of magnitude with humans, then the business owners will be okay."

7. Where this is heading

David Yang's forecast: voice AI could replace the phone menu

David Yang expects every small and medium-sized business to have a voice and text AI agent. Voicemail and "press zero, press two" menus, he says, will "be gone," replaced by "AI agents which can actually book and get revenue."

> **Websites will start talking to the visitors.**
>
> David Yang

He expects the same shift to reach websites. David Yang estimates that about 300 million voice and text agents “will appear in about five, six years, maybe 10 years.”

300M voice and text agents over the following five to ten years.

David Yang’s forecast, not a measured figure.

What counts as an “AI employee”?

David Yang describes an AI employee as software that can communicate with people, use tools and retain the context needed to complete a task. Such agents could work inside organizations as well as in customer-facing conversations, which are Newo’s focus for now.

8. Four questions to ask before you deploy voice AI

If you resell

How many initial agents can you create each month, and what review and setup does each need before going live?

If you buy

How does the agent handle relative dates, similar services, closing times and requests it cannot complete?

If you build

How does your architecture detect mistakes, keep the conversation on track and trigger the promised actions?

If you measure

How do you define a successful outcome, and what evidence supports any comparison with human performance?

Conclusion: getting things done

Sounding natural is the starting point. What matters is whether the agent actually helps the customer get something done.

Three things make that possible: an agent that knows the business because it is built from your own information, an agent that takes action in your systems and hands over to a person when needed, and observer and supervisor components that check the conversation as it happens. Scale then makes it practical, because an agent you can try within minutes reaches far more businesses than one that takes weeks to build.

If David Yang is right, voicemail boxes and phone menus will give way to voice AI that completes the customer’s request, and websites will begin to speak. The most direct way to judge the approach is to hear it for yourself.

TRY IT YOURSELF

Hear an agent built for your business.

Enter your business website. The Newo platform reads your services, opening hours and locations and builds a voice AI agent you can try in about three minutes.

Create your AI

Book a demo

Going live takes longer and depends on phone setup, integrations and testing.

ABOUT NEWO

Voice AI that turns customer conversations into completed work.

Newo is a voice AI platform that builds an initial agent from your own website. It answers, books and follows up across supported channels, and checks its own work as it goes.

KEY DIFFERENTIATORS

Voice-to-Voice Technology

Natural, human-like conversations.

Zero-Latency Conversations

Real-time responses with no awkward pauses.

Newo Vibe Mode

Customize and retrain your live agent by talking to it in plain language.

WHAT A NEWO AGENT CAN DO

Handles inbound calls

Takes calls around the clock, in multiple languages.

Books and schedules

Appointments and reservations recorded in connected scheduling systems.

Follows up

Outbound calls, SMS and instant callback to new leads.

Works across channels

Phone, SMS, web chat, email and supported social messaging integrations. Channel availability depends on configuration.

Connects to your tools

Updates the CRM and booking systems you connect.

Responsive voice conversations

Voice-to-voice, built for natural turn-taking and quick responses.

PRIORITY INDUSTRIES

Call centers

AI call center for overflow, after-hours and high call volume.

Dental and ortho clinics

New and existing patients, booked and followed up.

Restaurants

Reservations and questions, by phone and text.

Software platforms (SaaS)

Voice and text AI inside your own product, white-label ready.

Sources: newo.ai/about, newo.ai/platform and Newo developer documentation (platform differentiation), checked 5 November 2026.

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Create your AI

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