

AI-Powered Triage & Client Communication

What every vet should know

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THE IDEA

Triage means *sorting*, not diagnosing. AI sorts every call, completes the administrative ones, and sends anything medical to a person.

THE STORY · BALTIMORE, 1996

In 1995, Baltimore's police answered 1.8 million 911 calls, and the department estimated that sixty percent of them weren't emergencies. So on October 2, 1996 the city opened a second number — 311, the first in the country — for everything that wasn't. They didn't hire more paramedics. They built 311, and 911 got faster for the callers who needed it.

Practices evaluate AI phone systems medically ("What if it misses a bloat?") but use them operationally. The word triage comes from the French *trier*, to sort — coined on Napoleon's battlefields by Baron Larrey, who sorted the wounded by need. Most calls are administrative and can be completed without a person; anything medical gets routed to a live team member. The AI is not medically triaging on the phone.

THE NUMBERS

—25%

911 calls in Baltimore's first year with 311 — and a 911 call answered in 2 seconds instead of 6.

BALTIMORE PD VIA NYT 1997 · MAZEROLLE ET AL. 2002

80%

After-hours veterinary calls that are administrative: general FAQ 42%, scheduling 25%, prescriptions 13%.

PUPPILOT CALL DATA, MAY 2026

20 in 100

Calls that end with a helpful text (forms, payment links, directions) sent during the call once 100+ links are set up — up from 1 in 100 with only five. About 16 hours of follow-up saved a week.

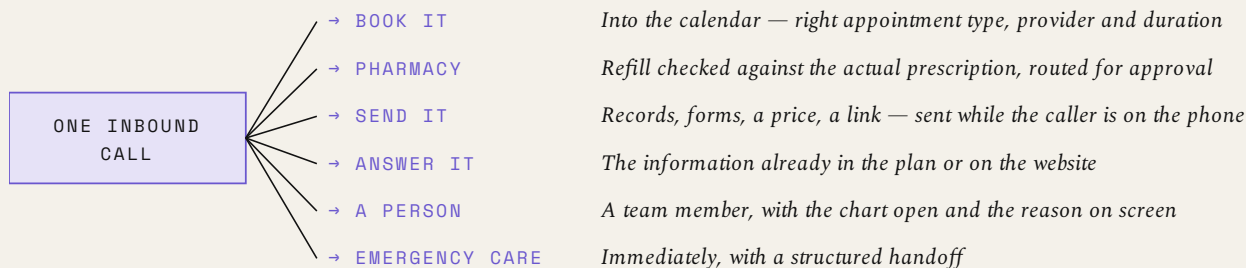
PUPPILOT DATA

15,000

Calls a month at one multi-doctor practice. Before AI, ~1,000 a week went unanswered; now every call is answered.

PUPPILOT CLIENT DATA

THE MODEL · WHAT AI PHONE TRIAGE DECIDES



Sorting is half of it. Finishing is the other half. A scheduling call is finished when the appointment is booked into the calendar — right type, right provider, right duration — not when a message asks someone to book it. A refill is finished when the request is checked against the prescription on file and routed to the pharmacy queue — and if an exam is due, an appointment gets booked.

QUESTIONS FOR YOUR PRACTICE

- 01 What does your call mix actually look like — has anyone measured it?
- 02 Where does your front desk lose the most time today?
- 03 If a fifth of your calls were answered with a text during the call, what would the team do with the hours back?

Most calls don't need a live person. They need *a solution, right away*.

SOURCES — BALTIMORE SUN, OCTOBER 3, 1996 · BALTIMORE POLICE DEPARTMENT FIRST-YEAR ANALYSIS, VIA NEW YORK TIMES, OCTOBER 2, 1997 · MAZEROLLE ET AL., CRIMINOLOGY & PUBLIC POLICY 2002 (~34%) · FCC 97-51, FEBRUARY 1997 · PUPPILOT CALL DATA (AS OF MAY 12, 2026) AND CLIENT DATA (ONE MULTI-DOCTOR PRACTICE). EVERY FIGURE IN THE SESSION HAS A PUBLISHED SOURCE, NAMED ON THE SLIDE.