



IP & COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTIONS TO PROVIDE BEST IN CLASS SUPPORT TO STAFF & STUDENTS

2005 COMPUTERWORLD HONORS CASE STUDY

BUSINESS

REMOTE AND TRAVELING WORKERS ARE EMPOWERED TO COMMUNICATE WITH CORPORATE EMPLOYEES USING AN INNOVATIVE 4 DIGIT DIALING SYSTEM WHICH ALSO ALLOWS CALLS TO BE EXTENDED TO REMOTE WORKERS USING ONE TELEPHONE NUMBER. EXTENSION TO CELLULAR ALSO ALLOWS A USER TO PROGRAM THEIR PHONE TO RING AT THEIR DESK AND TO ANOTHER PREDEFINED TELEPHONE NUMBER. [20055423]

A Search for New Services



SUMMARY

IP Softphone is an application that allows remote and traveling workers to communicate with corporate employees using 4 digit dialing and allows calls to be extended to remote workers using one telephone number. Extension to Cellular (EC500) allows a user to program their phone to ring at their desk and to another predefined telephone number.

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APPLICATION

In 2001, CNT conducted a voice services evaluation to determine what CNT employees needed to do their work more efficiently. Representatives from each department were interviewed or surveyed as part of the evaluation. One of the primary requirements that came out of the evaluation was a need to offer remote employees the same connectivity for telephone calls as they have for email and other applications.

IP Softphone was introduced in August, 2004 to address this requirement.

IP softphone allows remote workers to be reached via one telephone number wherever they are. IP softphone can be used in Telecommuter mode, whereby calls are routed via the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) or in Road Warrior mode whereby calls are routed via an IP connection.

EC500 is being introduced to workers who may not spend their day sitting at their desk, but it is important to receive calls while they are away from their desk.

BENEFITS

One number can be assigned to our employees regardless of whether they work in a corporate location and travel occasionally or if they are employees who work out of home offices or other remote offices.

Previously, our remote employees had no direct voice connectivity to our corporate location or visible indication of messages waiting for them. It was possible that one person would have several telephone numbers published in order for customers to reach them. IP Softphone provides voice connectivity for our remote workers that is similar to email or other applications. It doesn't matter where the remote employee is, they can be reached via one telephone number.

With IP Softphone launched calls can be routed to an employees computer, cell phone or office phone number.

IMPORTANCE

Our telephone switch provides advanced technology that allows calls to be redirected via the PSTN or over high speed access lines such as cable modem or DSL.

ORIGINALITY

When we replaced our telephone switch in August 2003, IP softphone was an application that we were very interested in implementing. Due to staffing changes at our organization, we dove into the project using new employees as our pilot group. As we rolled out IP softphone to our new employees, we stayed in very close contact with them requesting frequent updates and feedback on the application as well as the training material

provided.

We received very favorable responses from this group of workers.

SUCCESS

Our primary goal for rolling out IP softphone and to a lesser extent EC500 was to provide our remote employees easy access to other employees. The project has been a remarkable success in terms of employee acceptance.

Another benefit of IP softphone is that we used to have one person dedicated to installing, monitoring and cancelling telephone lines in home offices. We no longer need to be involved in telephone line installation for our home office employees. We have been able to provide a higher level of service to our remote workers while realizing a 25% headcount reduction in our telecommunications department.

We will continue to use IP softphone for our remote employees. We are slowly rolling IP Softphone out to our employees who travel internationally as it will reduce our international telephone costs. EC500 will continue to be rolled out as we discover more employees who will benefit from being more mobile.

DIFFICULTY

The IP softphone application is very easy to administer. Because we didn't need to purchase anything in order to roll out this application, we didn't encounter any difficulty with funding.

As with many projects, our greatest difficulty was getting existing employees to be willing to try this new application. In some cases, we were not able to convince some employees to attempt to use IP softphone. We expect that as word spreads regarding the ease of use and additional capabilities, even these employees will reconsider and begin to use IP softphone.