

Contact Center Automation

- Multimedia Recording & Quality Monitoring
- Outbound/Blended Dialing & Campaign Management
- Network-based Pre/Post-Call Routing
- Web Self-Service & Knowledge Management

Enterprise IP Telephony

Enterprise Messaging

Workforce Automation



Challenge

Replace key-based phone system with an open, software-based IP PBX offering inherent presence management, multi-channel routing, unified messaging, and the ability to tightly integrate to Microsoft CRM.

Solution

Enterprise Interaction Center™ (EIC) -- an all-software, application-rich IP PBX for mid-size enterprises that incorporates open standards such as SIP, along with tight integration to Microsoft products.

Benefits

- Reduced call wait time from an average of six minutes to less than three minutes
- Reduced call-back and email response times from 24 hours or more, to one hour or less
- Increased productivity using presence management, unified messaging, and MS CRM integration

"In the beginning, we didn't even have a PBX – we had a 10-year-old key-based phone system."

Purchasing Co-op for SUBWAY Improves Customer Service Using Application-Rich IP PBX

About IPC

Independent Purchasing Cooperative (IPC) is an independent SUBWAY franchisee-owned and operated purchasing cooperative for SUBWAY's 24,000 North American locations. IPC negotiates the lowest costs for purchased goods and services, while improving quality, enhancing competitiveness and ensuring the best value to SUBWAY members and their customers. Moreover, IPC is committed to delivering returns to its members year after year. By organizing as a cooperative, business initiatives are set by the owner-members, and are benchmarked by the active participation of an elected board of directors. IPC is based in Miami, Florida (U.S.A.) and can be reached at 1-888-445-9239.

www.ipcoop.com

The Challenge

When IPC decided to take over the SUBWAY franchises' electronic gift card program in 2005, it marked the first time the company and its small operations staff had to manage a technology service. As the purchaser for goods and services for franchisees of SUBWAY sandwich locations, IPC's operations staff generally fielded calls about purchasing – not technology questions related to gift cards.

"This was a realm of the business that we hadn't been in before," said James Esposito, director of operations for IPC. The SUBWAY franchisees were selling the SUBWAY gift cards to consumers and needed answers to questions related to sales, redemptions and reconciliation.

"We realized that we now had to be the face of the program, since we were handling the incoming calls and emails," Esposito said. "In the beginning, we didn't even have a PBX – we had a 10-year-old key-based phone system."

The two-person support staff working with Esposito needed to field about 50 calls a day, and about 10 emails a day related to the SUBWAY gift cards. The calls were initially taken by a front-office receptionist, who would try to contact support staff to see if they were free to take the call. Emails came to two support coordinators, who would respond as time allowed. (Calls from consumers with questions about the cards were managed by an outsourced call center.)

IPC was used to providing a consistently high level of service to franchisees, and recognized that it could not do so with its existing telephony solutions.

"Our operators were doing the work of an automatic call distributor, but they were doing it manually," Esposito said. "In fact, all our processes were manual. We didn't have a customer relationship management system, so our agents were logging calls into Excel spreadsheets. We knew our wait times were long, and we had an undesirable number of abandoned calls. Our customer service levels just weren't where we wanted them to be."

Callers might wait as long as 10 minutes for an agent to become available, and would often abandon the call. Callers who left voice mail messages – or sent emails – would not receive responses for more than 24 hours after initiating contact. Since the old calling system had no monitoring or statistics capabilities, Esposito and his staff did not know exactly how many callers simply hung up without completing the call.

The Solution

In line with its selection of other best-of-breed technology solutions for its operations, IPC sought a scalable and full-featured telephony system. Number-one on Esposito's wish-list of features was presence management in order to help receptionists determine if support staff are available to take a customer call. "All calls float through reception," Esposito said. "It's part of our company culture to have a person answer



every call. We wanted to retain that culture, but to enable receptionists to place calls into an ACD."

"It became clear that EIC was the best solution for our needs. That came as a surprise, since Nortel and Avaya have been in the business a long time. However, despite their incorporation of IP, these players still brought with them the legacy of hardware-based, proprietary architectures, while Interactive Intelligence offered an IP PBX built from the ground up on an all-software, standards-based platform."

IPC also needed interactive voice response (IVR) capability; a solution that supported unified messaging (UM); and one that would integrate with a CRM solution.

Via a request for proposal process, IPC considered solutions from Cisco, Avaya, and Nortel, as well as *Enterprise Interaction Center™* (EIC) from Interactive Intelligence, an all-software, application-rich IP PBX. Working with Interactive Intelligence reseller, Miami-based Commlogik, Esposito received a demonstration of EIC.

The review process was a tough one: Commlogik and Interactive Intelligence proceeded through three rounds of demos against Cisco, Nortel and Avaya. Following the cut, Cisco and Interactive Intelligence remained. After another rigorous review process, IPC decided the Interactive Intelligence EIC product was best able to meet and exceed its requirements.

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EIC went live at IPC in late 2007. Today, IPC's 90 employees all use EIC's standard calling and voice mail features, and many of them are using its unified messaging features. The two support staff that field calls about the electronic gift card program use EIC's multi-channel queuing and routing feature. Receptionists rely on its presence management feature to determine which staff are available. EIC is also integrated with IPC's Microsoft CRM solution.

The Benefits

While calls from gift card sellers continue to be answered initially by receptionists – in order to maintain the personal connection that the company requires – they can now be managed on a queue basis using EIC's ACD feature. Leveraging EIC's presence management, receptionists can also let callers know if someone is available, and how soon their call might be taken prior to placing them in the queue.

"With EIC, call wait times have dropped from six minutes to less than three minutes. Callers who opt to receive a call-back, rather than wait on hold, receive responses in less than an hour – compared to 24 hours prior to the deployment."

"It's the warm human touch, wrapped up in technology," Esposito said. Callers can also opt for EIC's call-back option if they don't want to wait on hold.

"With EIC, call wait times have dropped from six minutes to less than three minutes," Esposito said. Callers who opt to receive a call-back, rather than wait on hold, receive responses in less than an hour – compared to 24 hours prior to the deployment. In addition, Esposito says escalations to supervisors and other departments have dropped dramatically – a sure sign that customers are getting fast answers to their gift card questions. Gift card sellers who send their queries by email now receive an initial response within one hour.

"Our customers now say, 'You got back to us so fast,'" Esposito said. "We are so much more productive now, and can handle more calls in much less time."

The integration of EIC with IPC's Microsoft CRM solution further benefited IPC through quick access to the customer database during peak call times, and the ability to prioritize calls, open cases and queues.

Finally, the deployment would not have been such a success, according to Esposito, without CommLogik's more than eight years of experience deploying gateways, media servers, end-point devices, and other hardware, along with its comprehensive certification on the Interactive Intelligence platform.

"CommLogik was fully involved in the project at the outset, from answering the RFP and providing thorough presentations, to giving in-depth training and performing the installation. In particular, CommLogik deployed our failover environment, which was critical to us given the risk of power failure during Florida's hurricane season. It is absolutely essential to select a knowledgeable and experienced partner, particularly when moving to IP," Esposito concluded.



INTERACTIVE INTELLIGENCE

Interactive Intelligence Inc. (Nasdaq: ININ) is a global provider of business communications solutions for contact center automation, enterprise IP telephony, and enterprise messaging. The company has developed a single-platform, standards-based unified communications software suite designed to eliminate the cost and complexity introduced by product portfolio vendors. Founded in 1994 and backed by more than 2,500 customers worldwide, Interactive Intelligence is not just an innovator, but an experienced leader offering proven solutions designed for maximum customer value.

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Commlogik Corp. is a value-added computer telephony distributor for Florida, the Caribbean, and Latin America. Services include support, training, warranty services, RMA, and same-day shipping on most products. Consulting services are offered to assist with a wide range of deployments, including the SS7 protocol, digital telephony, contact center applications, PC-based PBX systems, corporate telephony communications solutions, and VoIP. Commlogik also supplies fault-tolerant industrial computers and turnkey telephony servers and systems.

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