



Industry: Government

Installation: 3 locations; Enterprise Contact Center on ShoreTel distributed IP PBX, 13 ShoreGear voice switches, 150+ ShorePhone IP phones

Date of Install: February 2006

Challenge:

With a new company-wide customer service initiative introduced to improve service to both internal and external customers in order to improve efficiency and grow the company, The T determined that it needed an automated call center with expanded functionality for reporting, key performance indicators, and continual overall customer service monitoring and improvement.

Solution:

ShoreTel provided the Transportation Authority with Enterprise Contact Center, an integrated suite of applications on the distributed ShoreTel IP telephony system, including ShoreGear voice switches and ShorePhone IP phones. Enterprise Contact Center is used to ensure callers reach people—not voice mail—thereby vastly improving The T's customer service.

Benefits:

- Hundreds of dollars saved monthly in service provider charges and maintenance fees.
- Enterprise Contact Center leverages call center staff across all locations and ensures callers reach people—not voice mail.
- Enterprise Contact Center allows The T's 30 agents to be located anywhere and administrators to manage the suite of applications from a single user interface.
- Return on investment realized quickly in approximately one year, and total cost of ownership considerably reduced.
- Robust feature set improves employee productivity and system enhances overall internal and external communications.
- System management is simplified and brought in-house.

FORT WORTH TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY MEETS CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENT INITIATIVE WITH SHORETEL ENTERPRISE CONTACT CENTER AND IP TELEPHONY SYSTEM

ShoreTel Enterprise Contact Center Helps Ensure Callers Receive Immediate Attention and Exemplary Customer Service

The Fort Worth Transportation Authority (“The T”) provides quality public transportation to meet the mobility needs of Tarrant County and the North Central Texas region. The T, with over 200 administrative employees and located in three locations across Fort Worth, provides service to more than 8 million passengers annually on buses, vanpools and the Trinity Railway Express (TRE), the commuter and passenger rail between Fort Worth and Dallas. The T is a regional transportation authority of the State of Texas, governed by a nine-member board of directors appointed by the Fort Worth City Council and Tarrant County Commissioners Court.

COMMUNICATIONS NEEDS

In early 2005, The T had a Nortel PBX-based telephone system and analog telephones across its three locations. Beyond the need for more features and functionality, The T also wanted a solution that would provide it with an automated call center to help improve customer service, and one with a robust set of reporting features to log performance and other criteria.

“Our primary concern was that we needed a solution that would integrate all of our communications into one system—from calls to e-mails to voice mail messages,” said Bobbie Morton, IT Director for The T. “We envisioned a system for our call center that would let us monitor calls and attach voice mail messages to supervisor notes, so that we could better respond to customer requests or complaints.”

With a newly created customer service initiative being launched, Morton and the IT team started a search for a new telephone system to improve both internal and external communications to better satisfy all of its audiences. With plans for significant expansion and growth in its near future, it was the perfect time to evaluate IP telephony solutions. In June of 2005, the organization issued a request for proposal (RFP) and received responses from three vendors. After seeing demonstrations and talking to end users for each vendor, The T chose ShoreTel for its robust Enterprise Contact Center feature set, ease of use and management, as well as its efficiency and scalability.



With the help of ShoreTel's integration partner, the installation took place in February 2006, and deployed were 13 ShoreGear® voice switches, over 150 ShorePhone™ IP phones, and Enterprise Contact Center in a turnkey switchover to IP telephony.

“We were impressed at the ability to rapidly deploy and implement the ShoreTel system,” said Patrick Bixler, Network Administrator for The T. “And all of our users love the ease-of-use and how the phone is integrated with their desktops.”

To achieve redundancy, the organization has Primary Rate Interfaces (PRIs) going into its inter-modal transportation center (ITC) and its main office, and T1s go into both locations, so if a site goes down due to weather or another natural emergency, calls are re-routed to the other location.



SHORETEL ENABLES ADVANCED CALL CENTER CAPABILITIES

ShoreTel's Enterprise Contact Center is an integrated application suite on the ShoreTel distributed IP communications platform. Enterprise Contact Center allows The T's 30 agents to be located anywhere and administrators to manage the suite of applications from a single user interface. The enterprise resource matching function matches each call to the right agent based on unique customer and agent profiles, so each call can be handled quickly and efficiently. In addition, the single distributed voice network facilitates teamwork and enables virtual workgroups, and calls can be routed across sites anywhere on the ShoreTel network—not just within the same physical location.

“With Enterprise Contact Center, we're able to balance the workload of the customer service representatives through workgroups, which is a tremendous benefit,” said Morton. “We use Enterprise Contact Center for our Mobility Impaired Transportation Service, which is a door to door service. Some of those calls can be about a life-or-death situation, so calls need to reach a live person quickly. MITS calls have priority over other calls and the ShoreTel Auto-Attendant quickly directs these calls to MITS personnel.”

With Enterprise Contact Center, The T's agents can see how many calls are waiting in each queue and supervisors can monitor these queues to make sure the right calls are getting priority. Enterprise Contact Center can also record each agent's calls, which is helpful in continually monitoring their performance and the organization's overall customer satisfaction.

“Enterprise Contact Center is very helpful in monitoring agents and making sure calls are being routed correctly,” said Elaine Graves, Manager of Customer Service for The T. “I can listen in on calls and provide training directly to the agent on how to better handle a customer situation. ShoreTel has allowed us to succeed in our improved customer service initiative, and we can easily use recorded conversations for training purposes.”

“We appreciate the reports we get from Enterprise Contact Center,” said Dwana Burnett, Contact Center Supervisor for The T. “We can pull information to see how many calls each agent is answering—for a month, a week or whatever time period we want. We use this important information to determine how we schedule agents, according to the busiest times of each day, week and month. With Enterprise Contact Center, we also have an automatic call-back function that allows a caller to press a certain option and punch in

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Contact Center Supervisor,
The T



“The ShoreTel system is easy to learn and use. Everything is so intuitive.”

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Network Administrator,
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their phone number if they do not reach a live agent and the system automatically calls them back when someone is available. These calls are routed to the next available representative, so the customer does not have to worry about continuing to call. This saves the customer time and minimizes the wait time to talk to someone, eliminating frustration. The bottom line is that ShoreTel helps us improve customer service.”

CUSTOMER SERVICE IMPROVEMENTS

ShoreTel’s ShoreWare® Auto-Attendant provides The T with 24-hour automated call answering information and outgoing prompts, which can be customized and linked to the time of day and/or day of week and/or holiday. Individual groups can also have their own menus with unique greetings and options.

The T has set up special Auto-Attendant prompts for business hours and after hours. MITS has a dispatcher on at all times, so callers can dial through to reach this person live. After business hours, other calls are directed to various information lines or a general voice mail box if the caller chooses. “We want to ensure that a live person can answer the MITS calls 24 hours a day, and the ShoreTel Auto-Attendant allows us that flexibility,” said Morton. “We can also prioritize these calls so that they’re covered quickly during business hours. ShoreTel has definitely improved our responsiveness to our customers.”

The T also utilizes ShoreTel’s Hunt Group feature outside of the contact center to make sure standard phone calls reach a person as well. Hunt Groups have multiple call routing options and ensure that live calls are answered by having primary and backup operators. With hunt groups, when a person is busy on the phone or unavailable, calls are routed to another extension or multiple extensions, preventing callers from unnecessarily reaching voice mail. The T has hunt groups set up for its help desk, maintenance department, and service station.

The T struggled to deliver excellent service outside of normal business hours with their previous system. With the ShoreTel contact center, after-hours calls can be routed to specific hunt groups, so that each call can be answered by a person with the appropriate skill to help the caller.

“It’s helpful that ShoreTel Hunt Groups allow a call to ring a number of different phones so the first person available can pick it up quickly,” said Bixler. “Also, it eliminates the chance of a caller being put into a voice mail box, which can be frustrating—and when there is an emergency, it’s imperative that a live person be reached. ShoreTel helps us achieve the goal of callers reaching a person to help them.”

EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY GAINS

The ShoreTel system provides employees with integrated messaging, such as directory dialing, contact screen pop, and calendar integration. ShoreWare Personal Call Manager™ enables employees to manage all of their communications—voice mail, e-mail, faxes—centrally on their desktop. With it, employees can quickly browse contacts and make calls from local directories, making hardcopy directories—which are often out of date anyway—obsolete.

“It’s helpful that we can attach a voice mail message to a GroupWise e-mail



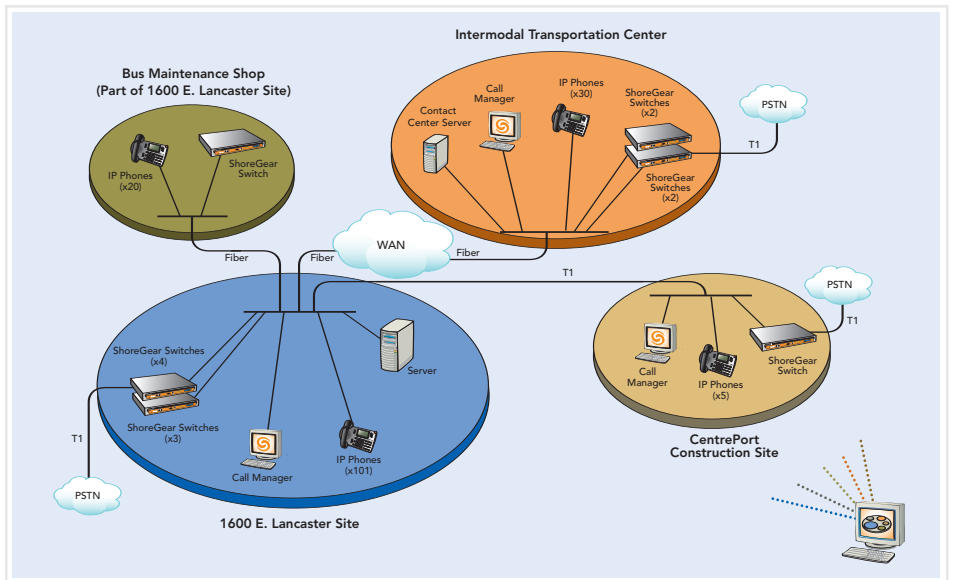
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IT Director,
The T

message and use that to follow up on phone calls where that information is needed,” said Morton. “When it comes to complaints, it’s helpful to keep those voice mail messages, for legal reasons, and forward them to the right people.”

“The ShoreTel system has helped us increase productivity throughout the entire organization because people are more efficient handling phone calls,” said Morton. “Auto-Attendant and the Enterprise Contact Center functions have streamlined phone traffic and actually reduced the time it takes to respond to callers. We also have Enterprise Contact Center set up so that frequently asked questions get an automated response, freeing up agents to take other calls.”

In addition to powerful user features, ShoreTel’s Call Control software is distributed to every voice switch, which eliminates any single point of failure in the system. In the unlikely event of a ShoreGear voice switch failure, other switches on the network will automatically take on the call-processing load so no call into The T is ever dropped.



Fort Worth Transportation Authority deployed ShoreTel to 3 locations with 156 IP phones.

MANAGEMENT SIMPLIFICATION

ShoreWare Director is ShoreTel’s browser-based management interface. From anywhere on the network, an administrator can launch a Web browser and gain access to ShoreWare Director. Through this browser, every site and feature can be managed, including voice mail, automated attendant and desktop applications. Adding a new user simply entails clicking “add new” and entering the user’s name, which in turn updates the centralized database and notifies every voice switch. Once the user is entered, a mailbox is created, the automated attendant dial-by-name and number feature is updated, and online directories are updated—all within seconds, and changes are just as quick and easy.

“The ShoreTel system is easy to learn and use,” said Bixler. “It’s easy to do moves, adds, and changes—everything is so intuitive. We can now install a phone in a new location in 15 minutes, whereas it would have taken them close to 5 days with the old phone system.”



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DEFINITIVE SAVINGS

ShoreTel has saved The T money in every way, from wiring and system management costs to recurring line and toll charges. In addition, employee productivity and customer service have been enhanced and system management has been brought in house so that time, hassle and money are saved.

“We were able to see a rapid return on our investment—payback was just a little over a year,” said Morton. “We realize savings by eliminating the external phone service from third-party providers, reducing maintenance costs, and using our existing network infrastructure for the ShoreTel system because it’s vendor agnostic. And because it’s so easy to scale, the ShoreTel system will easily meet our growth requirements, even changes that need to be made quickly. We’re pleased with both ShoreTel and their integration partner.”