

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Medical Mutual is the only professional liability company owned and operated by North Carolina physicians. The company was formed 1975 in response to the escalating medical liability crisis. Today, Medical Mutual has more than 8,300 physician members in North Carolina, Virginia, and Georgia.

In an effort to reduce overhead, the company was looking to replace an existing PBX system and two expensive T1 circuits with a Voice-Over-IP system.

Computer Service Partners helped the company implement a Cisco Unified Communications solution to serve its Raleigh headquarters and several remote employees in multiple states.

This new solution has enabled Medical Mutual to:

- Save \$20,000 per year in overhead
- Transition to the new system with no downtime
- Extend phone services to remote employees
- Offer advanced communication features to the entire staff

THE BACKGROUND

Medical Mutual has 150 registered phones and 110 users, nine of whom work from remote offices throughout the Southeast.

To support all those users, the company was paying for:

- Two expensive T1 circuits at company headquarters
- A monthly support contract on a legacy PBX system
- Nine additional dedicated phone lines to remote employees with home offices

Although there were no technical issues or service problems with this setup, the company was eager to find a more cost effective solution.

“From a service perspective, our old phone system worked perfectly,” said Brantley Richbourg, Network Engineer for Medical Mutual. “But, from a business perspective, it was expensive.”

“To really understand the significance of our previous situation, you have to understand that a T1 circuit has 24 lines coming into the building. So, with two T1 lines, that meant we had 48 lines coming into our office that were dedicated exclusively to voice traffic.”

“As we monitored our old system, we found that our highest call volume was never more than 12 calls at one time. So, during most business hours, we had 36 dedicated phone lines that were just sitting there. And because of the limitations of T1 technology, they couldn’t be used for anything else, like data.”

THE DECISION

“When we started brainstorming on how to save money on our phones, we looked at a Cisco-based solution. We had already invested in Cisco components for our computer network, so adding VOIP seemed like a logical step.

“CSP really helped with our research by providing price quotes, insight and advice.”

“During our exploration phase, we wanted to make sure that Cisco was the right solution for us and that CSP was the right vendor to implement it. As part of our due diligence, we also researched other vendors, and listened to their pitches, but in the end, we went with CSP because we trust them and we feel like they have our best interests at heart.”

“With our old Cisco vendor, we got the impression that once they sold us the switches they were done with us. But, with CSP, we’ve always felt like we were number one.”

“Now, anytime we have a technological endeavor that we want to investigate, CSP is our ‘go to’ team to help us explore options. Sometimes they’ve even helped us arrive at the conclusion that something is not right for us. To me, helping us avoid mistakes is just as valuable as helping us implement solutions.”

THE IMPLEMENTATION

“You know the old saying, *‘If it’s not broken, don’t fix it?’* Well, from a user’s perspective, we were fixing something that wasn’t broken. In fact, the bar for this project was extremely high because of how well the old phone system worked. That’s why we wanted to work with CSP to ensure a seamless migration.

“Bringing CSP in to help with this migration was the best decision we ever made. Their knowledge helped us avoid common mistakes and pitfalls that we would have probably made if we tried to set this up on our own.”

—Brantley Richbourg, Network Engineer
Medical Mutual

“I really appreciate how CSP approached this project. They didn’t come here and say, ‘*This is how you have to do it.*’ Instead they said, ‘*What are you trying to achieve?*’ Then, based on our business goals, they gave us options, and explained the rationale and implications of each option.”

“Once we had a plan in place, we worked hand-in-hand with CSP’s on-site project engineer who helped us with the setup, configuration and migration. CSP also provided training, and best practice guidelines on how to manage the system in the future.”

“Bringing CSP in to help with this migration was the best decision we ever made. Their knowledge helped us avoid common mistakes and pitfalls that we would have probably made if we tried to set this up on our own.”

“Because our old system worked so well, we couldn’t really afford a typical trial-and-error process. It would have been a great learning experience from an engineering perspective, but from a company and customer service perspective, it would have been problematic.”

“We definitely leaned on CSP’s expertise and that proved to be a wise decision because it saved us a lot of stress.”

THE OUTCOME

“Since switching to a Cisco Unified Communications system, Medical Mutual has been able to save \$20,000 per year by cancelling two T1 circuits and a monthly service contract on the company’s legacy PBX system.”

“From a cost perspective, our calculations show that the system will pay for itself in 5 years or less.”

“On top of the cost savings, our UC system offers additional benefits that are icing on the cake.”

“The platform allows us to offer advanced features like integrated voicemail and VPN access to our employees without adding hardware or incurring extra costs.”

“With our old system, our remote employees had a traditional telephone line in their house and if they didn’t answer, then the call was forwarded to an extension here in our office.”

“For those remote employees, we were able to port their numbers from the telephone company into our VOIP system. Now, those existing numbers are now all routed into our office here in Raleigh, and we no longer pay for all those separate lines.”

“Plus, our receptionist can now transfer calls between any extension, regardless of what city or state the actual phone or employee is in. From our customers’ perspective, it’s all seamless. We wouldn’t have been able to cost-justify that kind of remote access with our old system.”

“At this point, we haven’t taken advantage of all the advanced features Unified Communications offers. That’s one of the things we like about it...we know it’s something that will grow with us, without requiring additional hardware.”

“CSP also helped us implement a backup solution for our new phone system. Now, if our building loses power, all of our calls are routed to a backup system that has voicemail.”

“Aside from the phone migration, CSP has helped us with a variety other projects as well. They really do treat us like we matter and like we’re important and that’s the number one reason we’ve stuck with them. Not only have they helped us with specific projects, but they’ve helped us explore our options and understand the ones that are right for us and the ones that aren’t. It’s been a good partnership and I hope it continues.”

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