



Sentinel Real Estate Uses CallXpress® Unified Messaging

BACKGROUND

Headquartered in New York City, Sentinel Real Estate Corporation specializes in real estate advising and management of commercial and residential properties. Formerly a real estate division of the brokerage firm Smith Barney, Sentinel Real Estate manages about 200 properties with more than 1,500 employees across the United States.

THE CHALLENGE

A year ago, Sentinel Real Estate relied on local office administrators to manage incoming phone calls and manually send faxes. Over time, the limitations of this system began to negatively affect Sentinel's ability to deliver quality customer service.

"We are a national company with offices in different time zones across the United States," explains Emile Rashkovich, IT director. "When clients or potential customers tried to contact us at any one of our offices after-hours, not only were they unable to reach the appropriate party, they weren't even able to leave a message. In real estate, missed calls can mean missed sales opportunities. Even our own employees were unable to communicate effectively with their associates in other offices."

Recognizing the business benefits that would result from improved communications, both internally and externally, Sentinel began looking for a unified communications system—one that offered voice mail, email, and fax capabilities in a single package—from a proven provider. "We were looking for a financially sound company that

was not too big or too small—not a company that would disappear within a few years," says Rashkovich.

THE SOLUTION

CallXpress® from AVST Inc. fit Sentinel's qualifications. The CallXpress unified messaging solution enables its users to access all their voice, fax and email messages from a telephone, a desktop computer, wireless device or the Internet. CallXpress is a high capacity, IP-ready unified messaging system that allows users to manage all message types from their familiar Microsoft Outlook® or Lotus Notes® email Inbox. When out of the office or on the road, users can also access and manage all their messages from any telephone worldwide.

One of the greatest selling points for Sentinel was CallXpress' tight integration with Microsoft Outlook. "We had been using Outlook for email and CallXpress fit in beautifully with our existing system," Rashkovich says. "Using CallXpress, our employees are able to access their voice, fax and email messages from their Microsoft Outlook interface. This single point of message management saves them time, and saves us money in increased employee productivity.

Employees using the products were thrilled with the results and soon, CallXpress was implemented throughout the entire New York office consisting of 200 employees. Sentinel is planning a nation-wide rollout to the company's 1,500 employees.

Rashkovich's IT department has been able to run the company's help desk much more effectively with CallXpress unified messaging. The department's ability to respond quickly and efficiently has been directly impacted since implementing CallXpress. For example, each of Sentinel's 200 locations has computers that are used for running the leasing office operation. Before implementing CallXpress, when property offices experienced computer problems, their ability to collect rent and perform other critical functions in managing properties was threatened.

"In the past, the property office experiencing computer problems would try to call the IT department, but more often than not, the caller would receive a busy signal or be transferred to a receptionist who would take down a handwritten message," Rashkovich explains. "Due to the volume of calls and the complexity of the problems, we were often unable to return the call and resolve the problem within a reasonable timeframe. When we did call, we had to spend time finding out exactly what was wrong before we could proceed."

CallXpress from AVST changed all that by enabling callers to leave a message (email, voice or fax) detailing their issue. The IT department can then review and prioritize problems before returning the messages. Sentinel soon found that CallXpress saved them time in resolving technical issues with fewer resources, and helped them to manage their properties more efficiently.

"Today, one year later, we continue to be pleased with CallXpress," says Rashkovich. "Now, all communications here are transferred into a universal messaging format. The system is very easy to understand and to use. Most importantly, CallXpress enables us to work with our clients more quickly and effectively."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Applied Voice and Speech Technologies, Inc. ("AVST") is an emerging force in the unified communications ("UC") marketplace uniquely combining the strengths of its world-class messaging platform, CallXpress®, with its innovative speech applications platform, Seneca™, to create a powerful, next-generation unified communications solution. The Company's products are designed to scale and support organizations of all sizes. For more information please contact us at: www.avstgroup.com or +1.949.699.2300.

