



Ensuring Quality Launches Insurance Company

By Entrepreneurship Expert, Roger Pierce,
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"You have to spend money to make money", says Allstate agency owner Jerry Crouse. *"However, it's important to spend it wisely."* True to his belief, Jerry invests carefully in the quality of his operation and the quality of his people selling for him. However, when he can spend less without compromising quality, he does. This attitude, along with a long history in sales, marketing and telemarketing, has delivered dramatic results to his four-month-old company.

Before opening his Allstate agency in Jamestown, North Carolina, Jerry carefully hired the right people and trained them well. *"All we did was training for the first three weeks",* says Jerry. *"As a result, we were prepared to hit the ground running."* And run they did. By the end of his second month, his agency finished #14 in the southeast region in auto insurance sales. The southeast region covers four states and includes hundreds of agencies. This is no small success.

While investing when it made sense, Jerry was very careful about how he spent his start-up dollars. One area where



he found a huge savings as well as value-added services was on his phone system. After researching the options, he chose to work with 8x8, Inc.

"Before opening, I was talking to one of my consultants about how expensive my phone service was going to be with my regular carrier. Equipment was going to be \$10,000 for 4 or 5 phones. The monthly telephone service was \$400 - \$500 a month. I wasn't prepared for that. My consultant said to talk to Vincent of 8x8 in New York. Vincent priced my package. The phones were less than \$1,000 and my monthly bill is \$177."

Saving money is not enough reason for Jerry to choose one system over another. The lifeblood of his business is telemarketing. The phones have to be of good quality,

and the system must be reliable. He found both with 8x8 Virtual Office which uses VoIP, Voice over Internet Protocol. *"All smart business people are using VoIP these days. It just makes sense",* says Jerry.

"Success in this business is all about numbers. 8x8 Virtual Office also comes with reporting software. I can go in at any time to see who my sales people are calling, and how many inbound and how many outbound calls they're making. I have full accounting of call volume per telemarketer."

Jerry Crouse's Agency sells a full line of personal and commercial insurance including auto, house, boats, motorcycles, general liability, investment products and health insurance.