8x8, Inc.

TSI switches from analog phones to VoIP service from 8x8

By Mike Fisch,
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Old Analog Phone System Too Cumbersome

Technical Systems Integrators (TSI), a provider of electronic design automation solutions, decided to upgrade its aging analog phone system. The existing system required significant ongoing maintenance and lacked the latest telecommunications features. *"Configuring our previous system was a pain,"* said Chuck Reynolds, founder and principal of TSI. When the company moved its home office about two and a half years ago, it decided to take advantage of the opportunity to also invest in a new phone system.

TSI sells software, training and consulting services to companies that design and build integrated circuits and printed circuit boards. TSI is based in Maitland, Florida and also has field offices in Texas, North Carolina, Georgia and other parts of Florida.

The company wanted a phone system that could tie together its geographically-distributed offices. It was also looking for advanced features and a simpler, low-maintenance system.

Switch to Virtual Office from 8x8

After researching several phone systems, TSI chose Virtual Office from 8x8, a hosted voice-over-IP (VoIP) phone system. Virtual Office is a digital service that runs over broadband IP networks instead of traditional analog phone networks. 8x8 provides each customer with their own virtual PBX, hosted in secure centralized data centers. Customers access it via high-speed Internet connections from their offices.

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Improved Productivity

All of TSI's employees are now connected through the same virtual phone system. *"The interface to our customers and vendors is extremely professional and streamlined,"* he said. *"We don't have to have a receptionist. We can all conference in at the drop of a hat. We use it actually as our conference call-in for all of our [external] meetings, so we save money on the fees for the webinars that we do. Having everybody local from a phone perspective is great. It's just improved the productivity of everybody. And from the business side of it, it cut our phone costs substantially."*

Reynolds continued, *"We have it integrated into Outlook, so when somebody calls in, it pops up their contact record. I do my dialing out of Outlook. I can take the phone home or on the road and pretend I'm at the office."*

"If the Internet does go down, each person's extension is then automatically forwarded to their cell phone, so we never lose any calls that way," he said. *"So we don't have phone lines now. It's all Internet based. I recommend it highly."*

Simplicity and Cost Savings

"The software of the 8x8 system is quite friendly and easy to use. It has more features than you would ever care to use," said Reynolds. The cost of using 8x8's hosted service was also less than buying and managing their own PBX. *"We ran the numbers on it and it was just so much more economical."*

TSI deployed Virtual Office, bought new phones from 8x8 and installed a high-end network router. *"We got rid of our 800 numbers. We got rid of our conferencing service. All those things went away, and we just went to the VoIP system,"* he said.

Reynolds recommends a good managed switch with QoS features and reliable Internet service for deploying a VoIP phone system. "That makes all the difference in the quality of service."

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