

Affiliated Physicians Eliminates Downtime and Increases Agent Productivity with 8x8 VoIP and Contact Center Solutions

Preventative healthcare services Provider



Affiliated Physicians had traditional phone lines with all the traditional problems: frequent downtime, no flexibility, and limited features. Their replacement system needed to combine phone service with a virtual contact center and physical devices. 8x8 was the only company that delivered the whole trifecta in one comprehensive cloud solution.

For more than 30 years Affiliated Physicians has provided preventative healthcare services to individuals and corporations across the United States. Based in New York City, Affiliated Physicians promotes health and wellness through comprehensive physical examinations, on-site employee flu and wellness clinics, travel immunizations, drug screening, pre-placement exams and other related programs. They are guided by their commitment to exceptional patient care and customer service, and demonstrate this with a passion and integrity in all they do.

Outdated Phone System Lacked Reliability and Modern Features

But despite efforts to meet strong service commitments to patients, its outdated phone system sometimes got in the way. The company had purchased traditional phone lines from a large local carrier, and the T1s kept failing.

“Reliability was a big issue for us,” says Mark Weingarten, Vice President, Patient Services, for Affiliated Physicians. “We spent a lot of time on hold, being transferred from one person to the next, trying to get through to the carrier, so we could get our lines back up.”

Another major issue was the lack of modern phone features and reporting tools. For example, the company’s antiquated phone system provided no call center metrics at all—something Weingarten was determined to change. In late 2013, he met with company principals and other top managers at Affiliated Physicians to convince them the company needed to replace its phone and call center systems.



Customer: Affiliated Physicians

Industry: Preventative healthcare services

Locations: Headquarters in New York City; nationwide presence through a network of doctors and hospitals

Employees: 70

8x8 Products: Virtual Office, Virtual Contact Center

Extensions: 75

Contact Center Seats: 12

Connectivity: Redundant Verizon FiOS and broadband cable lines

Favorite 8x8 Features: Contact center reporting and monitoring tools

Primary Reason Chose 8x8: Needed a solution that combined phone service, contact center operations and physical equipment

Website: www.affiliatedphysicians.com

8x8 Combines Phone Service, Contact Center and Devices in One Comprehensive Solution

Once he had management buy-in, Weingarten began researching replacement phone systems. He was already familiar with the many benefits of hosted VoIP, but wanted a solution that combined phone service, contact center operations and physical equipment.

“There aren’t a lot of providers out there that do all that,” says Weingarten. “8x8 stood out immediately as the one that could best meet our needs.”

The decision was made to transition to 8x8 during Affiliated Physicians’ off-peak season. But when Weingarten began making arrangements to port the company’s existing phone numbers, another challenge arose.

“We had a hard time getting through to our existing phone carriers to find out how many numbers we had,” he recalls. “It was a complex maze of phone lines.”

Fortunately, the rest of the 8x8 deployment went smoothly. Within a month, the company had tested its network, installed new fiber-optic and cable lines, and plugged in the new 8x8 equipment. By February 2014, Affiliated Physicians had fully deployed 8x8 phone service and contact center operations.

Auto Attendant Keeps Callers Informed

Calls that don’t come in to the contact center are now answered by a more robust and full-featured auto attendant than the company had before.

“Using the auto attendant means we don’t have to pay for a live receptionist to route our calls properly,” says Weingarten. “Calls are professionally answered by the 8x8 system, and callers can route themselves to the right person or department”.

The flexibility of 8x8’s auto attendant feature has also helped Affiliated Physicians provide good customer service—and business continuity—even when the office unexpectedly had to close.

“We recently had a snow storm that forced our office to shut down for the day,” explains Weingarten. “With a couple of mouse clicks, I enabled our ‘office closure’ message so we could let customers know to leave voicemail or in some cases, connect live to staff working from the comfort of their homes. With 8x8, we can immediately respond to changing conditions instead of having the phones ring and go unanswered.”

Freedom from Voicemail Jail: Live Answering in Less Than 30 Seconds

In the past, too many inbound calls to Affiliated Physicians ended up in voicemail, and messages were not always returned promptly. Since the company switched to 8x8, Weingarten has noted a drastic improvement in both live answering and callbacks.

“Our employees use 8x8 call forwarding and the mobile app to take calls wherever they are, so no caller goes to voicemail unless they choose to leave a message or call after hours,” says Weingarten. “And almost all calls are answered in less than 30 seconds. That kind of responsiveness is essential for our business: we’re providing a concierge service and customers expect to be treated well.”



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—Mark Weingarten
Vice President of Patient
Services Affiliated
Physicians



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Vice President of Patient Services, Affiliated Physicians

Powerful Reporting Tools Increase Visibility into the Contact Center

Before Affiliated Physicians deployed 8x8 service, the company had no ACD dashboard or reporting and monitoring tools for its call center. That meant agents and supervisors were both working “blind,” which in turn made it difficult to serve customers efficiently or staff the call center appropriately.

With the new 8x8 Virtual Contact Center, agents now have web-based dashboards that let them see who's calling so they can handle calls more efficiently. In fact, agents are so much more productive that Weingarten has been able to reduce contact center staffing—while also reducing call hold times. Whenever a caller has been in queue for more than two minutes, an audio alert sounds until someone answers the call.

Supervisors are also benefiting from 8x8 technology. They now have wallboards that provide a comprehensive view of contact center operations.

“We configured 15 different queues so we can see what's going on in the contact center at a very granular level,” says Weingarten. “If hold times in one queue are too long, we can move agents around or have a supervisor jump in and help. 8x8's flexibility lets us make quick changes whenever we need to.”

Recording and Monitoring Capabilities Enhance Agent Performance

In addition, 8x8's powerful recording and monitoring capabilities enable supervisors to listen in and mentor agents during live calls. They can also use recorded calls as a quality assurance (QA) tool to enhance agent performance.

“We've definitely increased revenue and improved the way our people complete appointments because we're able to QA their calls and coach them,” says Weingarten.

And if a customer complains, we can review the recorded call and take corrective action.”

Automatic Redirect to Cell Phones Ensures Business Continuity

These days, Weingarten no longer worries about the company's phone system going down. Not only is 8x8 service highly reliable, it includes built-in business continuity features.

“If our phones go down because of a storm or a brownout, calls are automatically redirected to employees' cell phones,” he says.

“And we are able to conduct business from home or our car if necessary.”

CASE STUDY

Easy System Administration—Without On-site Maintenance

In the past, Weingarten had to pay a vendor to come on site whenever the company needed to reprogram its phone system. With 8x8, he can easily make changes himself.

“Our old phone system had no flexibility and was expensive to maintain. Now we can configure changes ourselves in just a few minutes. The 8x8 system does exactly what we need it to do.”

At the same time, though, Weingarten is delighted that his cloud solution requires no on-site system maintenance.

“Upgrades are pushed out automatically, so we always have the latest software without having to install anything,” he says.

“There’s no system maintenance to deal with, which saves us a lot of time and money.”

As for the future, Weingarten believes 8x8 will enable more employees to work remotely if bad weather, power outages or family emergencies come up.

“A great thing about 8x8 is that it gives our employees the flexibility to work anywhere without customers noticing a change in service,” he says.

Find out how 8x8 can help your business. Call: **1.866.862.2811** or visit **www.8x8.com**

