

MIDWEST-CBK CHOOSES SWITCHVOX AND DIGIUM PHONES



CASE STUDY

SWITCHVOX

Replacing an aging phone system can be challenging, but sometimes the hardest part is narrowing down the selection and accurately comparing features and costs between vendors.

Midwest-CBK, an importer of home décor products, and part of the MVP Group International family, began their search for a new global telecommunications system to replace their aging Centrix PBX at their Elkin, North Carolina facility, by setting up an evaluation team made up of members from multiple departments, to make the final decision. It would be based on a carefully weighted-comparison of what the end-users (their employees) wanted to see in the new system. Price and an easy implementation would play important roles in the final analysis, but neither of those benefits mattered unless the new system had the functionality needed by users in the field. After a complex elimination process, MWCBK chose the total Digium Switchvox UC solution with Digium IP phones. The system beat at least four competitors, based on a combination of factors, including the feature-rich functionality and flexibility of the Switchvox UC system, the easy installation of new IP phones, and a competitive price.

Global Retail Distributor Compares Leading Phone System Vendors and Chooses Digium's Switchvox UC Solution and Digium IP Phones for a Total Solution

Midwest-CBK designs, manufactures, and markets several lines of home décor items, gifts, and home fragrances to specialty retailers worldwide. Renowned for design, style, and trend leadership, MWCBK's long-term goal was to network together all 15 MVP Group administrative, call center, warehousing, and distribution sites across the U.S., with the first centralized directory located at their Elkin, North Carolina location. It would allow them to call extension-to-extension anywhere within the company. With 15 locations impacted by the new phone system, MWCBK wanted input from multiple departments across the country.

"We discovered that telecommunications is a complex industry where each vendor uses their own terminology for everything, even when referring to the same things," says project lead Todd Little. "So we asked users from multiple departments to contribute to the process. We asked them, 'From your point of view, what is most important in a phone system, based on your job duties?'" Some consistent factors surfaced from the varied answers including ease of use; ability to access voicemail from mobile devices and tablets (UC); and having call queues and ring groups. The answers, included as line

items in a weighted matrix where priorities were rated on a scale of one to ten according to level of importance, gave MWCBK a starting point and allowed them to compare apples to apples.

To the preliminary weight-comparison analysis, Little included certain expectations from the IT department. These weighted priorities included flexibility and ease of implementation, since linking the 15 sites would happen in progressive phases, and not all at once; whether to enter into a maintenance contract with a vendor, or maintain the system themselves; and cost, although it would not be the final deciding factor.

“We looked at systems by Mitel, Shoretel, Microsoft, and a couple of others,” Little says. “Someone on the team also knew about Digium, and suggested we contact them.” MWCBK then plugged all the telephony solutions into the grid so they could compare the aggregate scores of their top priorities with the telecom offerings. Digium and one other scored in the mid to high seventies percentile as the perfect solution.

“When we compared Digium with the semi-finalist, Digium won based on ease of use and very low learning curve. I was impressed enough to present it to the multiple department phone team.” They were also impressed with Digium’s pre-sales support, their demonstration of the features, and they were attracted to the potential capabilities of the phone system as they rolled it out to the rest of the sites.

MWCBK had an IP infrastructure but spent about three months running new cabling and setting up a separate connectivity network at the Elkin facility. They purchased the Digium SMB355 Switchvox appliance designed for up to 400 users — an ideal fit for use in call center operations. “The timing was also great because Digium was just launching their new IP phone product line,” noted Little. “We purchased five D70 phones for our power users and eighty D40s for everyone else.” Digium IP phones are available in D70s, suitable for executives and administrators; D50s for mid-level managers; and D40s, which are perfect for call centers and most any employee in the company.

“We saw immediate savings by buying the new Digium phones because it was part of a launch promotion to introduce them to the market. Tech support was great helping us install them, although we really like how easy they are to use, requiring little-to-no training.” The built-in feature-set lets employees easily access all of their contacts, make calls, and access call queues, directly from the phone interface. “From a maintenance perspective, these phones save us time because they can be pre-configured from Switchvox,” says Little. Because the firmware is updated automatically, once the technician puts a phone on an employee’s desk, they never have to touch it again. “We really like the Digium phones and will be deploying more as we continue building the site-to-site dialing network that connects all 15 sites.”



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