

Case Study

Heritage YMCA Group Converged IP Communications Customer Case Study

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Joe McBride
MIS Manager, Heritage YMCA Group

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Company Background

The Heritage YMCA (The Y), an Activate America YMCA, serves more than 21,000 members across seven locations in northern Illinois. The organization's mission is "to enhance quality of life for families through programs reflecting Christian principles to build healthy spirit, mind and body for all." The 500+ employees of the not-for-profit organization serve all children and families without regard to financial ability to pay. Support of this important YMCA mission greatly benefits the communities served, but leaves the YMCA faced with tighter budget constraints.

As with most budget-strained smaller organizations, Heritage YMCA has a lean IT department. MIS Manager Joe McBride, who reports to the CEO, oversees all telecommunications and network technology decisions, purchases, and implementations.

Business Need

Until recently, Heritage YMCA's IT functionality filtered through its main branch in Naperville, housed in a 100-year-old building subject to power and telecommunications connection failures. Staff relied on multiple software, hardware and telecommunications systems and vendors, posing administrative challenges and functional limitations. The Y desperately needed a number of improvements in their communications and connectivity infrastructure including independent Internet connections at each location, but contractual obligations and the cost of a new infrastructure had prohibited them from making any changes.

MIS Manager Mr. McBride began conversations with JEP Communications, an IT Integrator and reseller of CommPartners Connect, a leading wholesale IP network and applications company. JEP Communications utilizes CommPartners Connect's nationwide network and applications platform with SIP trunking and hosted PBX functionality engineered for quality IP communications services for business. JEP's sales director, Joe Proctor, met with Mr. McBride in September 2007 to explore improvements in their voice and data (internet) services. Mr. Proctor and Mr. McBride mapped out short-term and long-term telecommunications and data contract expirations and overall budgets.

"We got involved with JEP because they gave us a proposal we couldn't refuse. They came in and proposed a phased approach as our current contracts expired, versus yet another binding contract. Their approach was consultative, versus high-pressure proposing a migration process and products tailored to meet our needs," said Mr. McBride. "I also value being able to rely on JEP to follow developments in the market, then assess them and present ideas about new products and services that will help us reduce costs or increase performance. This saves me both time and hassle."

JEP Deploys CommPartners Connect's IPTrunking Solution for The Y

The Heritage YMCA initially had a T1 line into the main office carrying only data, and a separate Primary Rate Interface (PRI) for voice. JEP implemented CommPartners Connect's IPTrunking Solution for business, bringing in bonded T1s featuring Quality of Service (QoS) voice prioritization and connecting through an Integrated Access Device (IAD) for connection to the Y's existing PBX. Testing, on this "converged" voice and data solution was performed, which addressed and resolved a handful of issues that came up. Then the new system went live.

The process of moving from a PRI, previously coming into The Y's PBX system, to bonded T1s carrying voice and data, was transparent. In fact, when McBride informed The Y's leadership team that they'd completed the transition, the team said nothing seemed different. McBride replied, "good," then explained the magnitude of technical changes they'd made and acknowledged the move had been successfully transparent to the users.



Company:
Heritage YMCA Group
Location:
Northern Illinois
Industry:
Community Center
Website:
www.heritageymca.org



Quality VoIP Transition and Service

The Y is now 100% migrated to CommPartners Connect for their voice and data services at their headquarters and is waiting until the last contracts expire to move to a completely integrated voice and data solution throughout their multiple locations. They are pleasantly surprised with the voice quality experienced by their VoIP users.

“JEP was very competitively priced, did not require an ‘all or nothing’ commitment, and has a low-pressure sales approach. Our existing data supplier told us they could manage the same upgrades, but I was already disappointed with their service to date, and was discouraged by their proposed pricing,” expressed Mr. McBride. “We have a business quality voice service and communications have been no different than with a PRI.”

The ROI of VoIP and Great Service

By completely integrating its voice and data networks The Y will save \$2,000-\$2,500 per month, representing a noteworthy figure to a small organization. The Y has applied some of the savings already realized to network security improvements, and still expects to realize a return on its overall network communications and security investments.

“Overall, we aren’t pocketing a significant amount of money yet because we used the savings to invest in a new IP infrastructure and network security connections,” commented Mr. McBride. “However, as contracts expire and we move additional branches onto the new communications network, we see a potential savings approaching several thousand dollars per month.”

More to Come for the Y from JEP

At a recent visit to The “Y”, Mr. Proctor demonstrated the hosted IP PBX solution to Mr. McBride as a recommended IP communications solution for their other locations. “Our current PBX system consists of independent PBXs at each location, which I have some access to, but need to be a programmer to really configure. The hosted PBX service JEP demonstrated will allow us to manage all of our moves, adds or changes, and have the phone system follow the person, rather than having to reconfigure and move wires,” commented McBride. “The potential integration of VoIP with PCs to manage all of that will save significant time. For instance, I should be able to troubleshoot issues (that aren’t show stoppers) myself, versus adding them to a list for an ultimate \$200 supplier site visit. And, if I can’t fix something going forward, JEP will come train me to do it, or address it within the terms of the contract. That’s service!”

The Y was required to make a number of improvements in their communications and connectivity infrastructure including, more specifically, the need to reduce their communications costs. However, contractual obligations and the cost of a new infrastructure had prohibited them from making any immediate significant changes. JEP together with CommPartners Connect was able to deliver the most versatile and cost-effective solution to The Y, enabling The Y to realize the immediate and significant advantages of converged IP communications while providing a smooth transition to a hosted VoIP service.

As converged IP communications progresses to become the fastest growing, in-demand communications solutions for the SMB business market, JEP and CommPartners Connect will continue to bring IP communications to the SMB business market through a number of offerings including IP Trunking, hosted contact center, and fully hosted IP PBX services.

About CommPartners Connect

CommPartners Connect is a nationwide IP-based network operator providing wholesale VoIP and enhanced IP applications to carriers, strategic partners and VARs. The CommPartners Connect IP network has been engineered to provide business-grade, IP-based voice and other value-added services. CommPartners Connect has obtained Competitive Local Exchange Carrier (CLEC) certifications in 49 states and the District of Columbia and certifications in Alaska are pending. With nationwide IP network coverage, CommPartners Connect delivers reliable, high quality, and competitively priced carrier and wholesale hosted IP services for business. CommPartners Connect’s wholesale services are supported by a scalable and automated OSS platform for billing and account management. For more information, call 877-677-5485 or visit CommPartners Connect’s website at www.commpartnersconnect.com.

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