



AMERICAN CANCER SOCIETY

Case Study and Success Story

September 2000

CUSTOMER PROFILE

The American Cancer Society is a nationwide community-based voluntary health organization dedicated to eliminating cancer as a major health problem. Their goals are to prevent cancer, save lives, and diminish the suffering from cancer, through research, education, advocacy, and service. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, the American Cancer Society consists of a National Society, with chartered Divisions throughout the country and over 3,400 local Units organized to cover the counties and communities in the US with thousands of community leaders who direct the Society's programs at this level. It is one of the oldest and largest voluntary health agencies in the United States, with over two million Americans united to conquer cancer through balanced programs of research, education, patient service, advocacy, and rehabilitation.

TELEPHONY CHALLENGES

There are 14 Divisions within the American Cancer Society (ACS) across the entire United States. The Heartland Division consists of 22 facilities in Kansas, Missouri, Nebraska, and Oklahoma. These facilities range in size from the small telecommuter sites consisting of two or three extensions, to the Heartland home office in Kansas City, Missouri consisting of nearly 150 extensions. The Heartland Division faced their first telephony challenge when their Merriam, Kansas site began preparations to move into a new office location. ACS recognized this as a perfect opportunity to evaluate their corporate phone system technology and the telephony challenges across the entire division.

Debbie Bailey, Sr. Director of IT for American Cancer Society's Heartland division began working with Brian Gregory to assist them in analyzing their telephony challenges. Brian is the President and CEO of Network Innovations, a company specializing in converged communications and an authorized Altigen Reseller. Together they outlined the entire hodge-podge of different phone systems and service providers that were implemented in the various locations across the Heartland division. The analysis showed that some systems were being outgrown while others were out of date and lacked the basic business telephone system capabilities necessary to support employee productivity. For example, even basic business telephone system capabilities like voice mail were often times either non-existent, too expensive to add, or housed in separate "boxes" that were difficult and expensive to manage.

American Cancer Society wanted to find a system that could allow them to standardize the communication between all Heartland division locations on a single platform. The platform needed to be flexible and economically scale, to cost-effectively support locations with fewer than 5 people, as well as sites with more than 130 extensions. ACS saw this as an opportunity to future proof their phone system and bring savings through increased efficiency, simplified training, supplier consolidation

and guaranteed interoperability. Additionally, ACS sought a system that would enable its own in-house IT staff to administer and manage all offices from a central location. Debbie Bailey performed a traffic and maintenance evaluation of the current legacy phone system at the corporate office and compared those statistics and costs to what they could be with an AltiGen system. The results were significant and she presented a fact sheet to the CFO outlining all the opportunities where ACS could save money by using AltiGen. With the help of Brian Gregory and the Network Innovations team, American Cancer Society recognized the benefits of AltiGen's IP-PBX solution across the Heartland Division's multi-office environment and decided that it was the best phone system to meet the telecommunication needs of their organization.

ALTI GEN SOLUTION

The AltiGen solution was ideal in meeting American Cancer Society's infrastructure, self-maintenance and business telephone system feature requirements. Today, the Heartland division has 11 AltiGen systems installed across four states, supporting offices ranging in size from 2 to well over 100 extensions. Six of the 11 sites utilize AltiGen's T-1 technology to support high capacity access to the public telephone network. Every system, regardless of the size, is able to utilize AltiGen's VoIP technology and ACS's pre-existing data network to provide seamless integration with every other office location. All together, American Cancer Society's AltiGen solution supports the voice traffic of nearly 450 extensions.

To improve employee productivity, ACS installed AltiGen's AltiView desktop client software application giving users the ability to configure their own extensions to meet the needs of their daily schedules. For each live receptionist, AltiGen's AltiConsole operator attendant supports the efficient handling of all incoming or overflow calls to each location within the system. Finally, powerful features such as Zoomerang and One Number Access are a huge benefit to the ACS employees who travel. Zoomerang allows users to return all voice messages within a single call – including the automatic one-touch dialing of the person that left a message and then returns you to voice mail after the call is completed. The One Number Access feature enables users to configure their extension so the system will find them at up to four different telephone numbers so they never miss an important call.

The AltiGen solution has also helped American Cancer Society address the need for better self-management and efficiency. Implementing AltiGen's systems as a common system platform not only provides guaranteed interoperability but also allows for hassle-free remote management. Now, the IT staff can handle all changes across the district from their Kansas City office. They can make all extension and system moves, adds, and changes for any AltiGen system without having to travel to the site or having to duplicate high cost support personnel in multiple locations or the need for outside technicians.

BENEFITS, FEEDBACK AND RESULTS

AltiGen delivered a networked, multi-site IP-PBX phone system implementation for American Cancer Society that transparently linked all locations together, could be centrally managed and provide the additional functionality needed to efficiently communicate externally with the public and between offices.

The result of implementing the AltiGen solution has not only delivered all the functionality originally requested by ACS, it has also provided a significant return on investment. First, with all eleven sites utilizing Voice over IP, American Cancer Society has drastically cut down their communication costs. The vast majority of the division's telephone charges – more than 90 percent – were for long distance calls between branch offices. By installing a telephone system that used the existing data network to also carry voice communications between offices, ACS did not have to add any additional hardware or software devices to expand the telecommunications infrastructure and was able to reduce toll charges by thousands of dollars each month as a result. According to Debbie Bailey, ACS's Sr. IT Director of the Heartland Division, ***“Utilizing VoIP between 11 AltiGen sites within the Heartland division, American Cancer Society has cut their long distance in half since we implemented AltiGen. Our long distance savings is around \$12,000 per year and we have gone from spending over \$22,000 per year on long distance to only spending \$10,000 per year now!”***

Secondly, because all sites are linked via VoIP, American Cancer Society can now easily manage the system themselves from one central location anywhere in the Division. Before AltiGen, moves, adds, and changes to the phone systems were handled by service calls to outside providers. The costs associated were significant and made management from a distance difficult. Now, AltiGen's Distributed Intelligence Network Architecture (DINA) Multi-System Manager provides ACS with a centralized tool to configure and synchronize extensions, routing and e-mail for all their networked AltiGen systems. ACS can now leverage their internal and remote IT staff to make any moves, adds, or changes anywhere on the system. According to Debbie Bailey, ***“The ability for ACS to self-maintain and manage our AltiGen solution is priceless. It is difficult to really determine how much money we are saving across all locations, but in just our two main divisional locations in Kansas City and St. Louis, we are now saving over \$25,000 per year just in maintenance costs alone. And that is just in two locations!”***

Finally, American Cancer Society achieved improved call routing and utilized AltiGen's powerful voicemail system district wide. Additionally, the powerful, easy-to-use features allow users to have more control over their individual preferences and improve customer service. ***“After implementing VoIP in all of our AltiGen enabled offices, we have reduced our operational costs and improved our efficiency. Through VoIP, we now have the ability to provide direct dial numbers and voicemail for our cancer patients staying at Hope Lodge,”*** said Debbie Bailey, Sr. Director of IT Services for the Heartland Division. ***“With access to voicemail through AltiGen's products, patients can receive confidential messages from their physicians and families, rather than having that information go through an operator. Patients now have the ability to use VoIP to call their loved ones – things like this can't be measured in dollars, they are so much more valuable.”***

DEALER VALUE

For over 14 years Network Innovations, Inc. has been providing small to mid-sized businesses with innovative technology solutions. From evaluation and design through installation and maintenance of the system, they provide a complete solution. Network Innovations, Inc. has been an Authorized AltiGen Reseller since 1997, and through their participation in the industry association CT Pioneers, they have taken an active role in shaping the industry. Their dedication to AltiGen and commitment to excellence is the foundation for their tremendous success in delivering comprehensive telecommunication solutions. They have been assisting American Cancer Society since they first installed the AltiGen solution in September of 2000. American Cancer Society's Senior Director of IT for the Heartland Division, Debbie Bailey, indicated that, *"We sought a relationship with a vendor that would allow us to build a team of both internal and external members responsible for installation and maintenance of our AltiGen system. Network Innovations delivered on our request. The Network Innovations team is very knowledgeable about the AltiGen product. Before every installation, they come with the system pre-configured to meet our specifications and this cuts our installation time in half"*. Debbie Bailey also indicated, *"Network Innovations has an excellent training program. I have never worked with an organization that places so much emphasis on user training. The training gives us the ability to make our own Moves, Adds, and Changes (MACs) and in the end, saves American Cancer Society both time and money."*

NETWORK INNOVATIONS, INC.

2012 Prairie Circle Suite B

Olathe, KS 66062

913-780-0494 * 913-780-0496 fax

www.netinn.com