



CONSULTANTS IN GASTROENTEROLOGY

Case Study and Success Story

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CUSTOMER PROFILE

Consultants in Gastroenterology (CIG) is a health care organization committed to delivering the highest quality care in the field of gastroenterology, making them the first choice for GI care. CIG is an eleven physician, two nurse practitioner practice of gastroenterologists serving the greater Kansas City area since 1994. In addition to seven office locations in the Kansas City Metro area, CIG provides outpatient procedures at their two Endoscopy Center locations and serves eight hospitals. Both ambulatory surgery centers are state licensed and JCAHO accredited.

Being a larger practice offers benefits to both their patients and referring physicians. It allows CIG to accept more insurance plans from patients and gives them an experienced and knowledgeable support system. Patients using the Endoscopy Centers for their endoscopic procedures will find that most major insurance plans will cover the procedure with better benefits than if the patient had the same procedure done at a hospital.

Education is a high priority to the physicians and nurses at CIG. Patients are offered information videos to view prior to procedures. Pamphlets, diagrams and books are also available regarding liver and digestive disease, medications and procedures. Following procedure and recovery, the physicians consult with patients and their families to explain their disease and the ambulatory endoscopic experience including discharge instructions and other recommendations for further recovery.

TELEPHONY CHALLENGES

Consultants in Gastroenterology (CIG) has 8 locations within the Kansas City metropolitan area. As is typical in the health care industry, some of these offices are not staffed full time. Doctors, nurses and office staff frequently "float" between locations. The current communications setup for CIG was a management nightmare. They had 8 different telephone systems, from several different vendors, with different maintenance agreements. Each office had its own phone lines, and its own phone numbers – it was very difficult for company personnel or patients to locate someone within their own company. Additionally, an employee in each office was required to function as the system receptionist.

David Schulman, Manager of IT for CIG, began working with Brian Gregory to assist them in analyzing their telephony challenges. Brian is the President of Network Innovations, a company specializing in converged communications and a long time authorized AltiGen Reseller. Together they examined the entire hodge-podge of different phone systems and service providers that were implemented in the various locations, as well as the current voice and data infrastructure. The analysis showed that the company needed a unified telephone system,

with centralized telephone lines and a centralized receptionist. Further, they desired a system that would not only better support their patient care and scheduling workgroups, but a system that could also be maintained by their in-house IT staff. The system would need to be able to cost-effectively support remote offices ranging in size from 3 to 35 phones. Additionally, CIG saw this as an opportunity to choose a flexible system that would support their growth and simplify office moves in the future.

ALTI GEN SOLUTION

The AltiGen solution was ideal in meeting Consultants in Gastroenterology's infrastructure, self-maintenance and business telephone system feature requirements. Today, CIG has one large AltiGen system installed in their business office. They chose an AltiGen AltiServ OfficePlus server, with AltiServ Contact Center software for their patient care and scheduling workgroups. The server supports 48 analog extensions, 100 IP extensions, and 2 SBC PRI trunks, for a total of 46 trunk lines.

To improve employee productivity, CIG 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 the 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 3 digit system-wide dialing and One Number Access are huge benefits to the CIG employees who travel between offices.

The AltiGen solution has also helped CIG address the need for better self-management and efficiency. Implementing AltiGen's solution 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 company from the main business office. They can now make all extension and system moves, adds, and changes for any location 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 Consultants in Gastroenterology 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.

Implementing the AltiGen solution has not only delivered all the functionality originally requested by CIG, it has also provided a significant return on investment. First, with all eight sites utilizing centralized phone lines, CIG has drastically cut down their communication costs. By installing a telephone system that used the existing data network to also carry voice communications between offices, CIG reduced the number of hardware and software devices needed to support the

telecommunications infrastructure and was able to reduce toll charges by thousands of dollars each month as a result. According to David Schulman, Consultants in Gastroenterology's Manager of IT, *"Utilizing IP extensions and centralized phone lines, we are saving a significant amount of money per month in line charges. We are also saving around \$2,000 per year in maintenance charges. Also, with a centralized operator and Altiview software, we have definitely seen productivity gains."*

Utilizing Altiserv Contact Center and a Altigen Triton Resource hardware, the call center supervisors can closely monitor the workgroup agents.

Linda Carroll, Triage/Scheduling Manager added, *"I love Altigen's Altiserv Contact Center product. Being able to see what is going on in the workgroup is wonderful, and it is so easy to use."* Finally, as a result of implementing the Altigen solution, CIG achieved improved call routing and utilized Altigen's powerful voicemail system company wide.

Additionally, the powerful, easy-to-use features allow users to have more control over their individual preferences and improve customer service.

"Before Altigen, our nurses would get two to three calls per day from patients complaining about our phone system."

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. Consultants in Gastroenterology's Manager of IT, David Schulman, indicated that, *"We love the ease of installation and the support by Network Innovations. We've been through a lot of installations of other systems that had lots of glitches, no post-sales support, basically get sold something that doesn't do what they said it would and costs more money. Your product does everything you said it would do, and there were no hidden or added costs."*

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