

Summit Handling Systems Embraces IP for Multi-State Inter-Branch Communications

New iPECS communication system paves the way for improved flexibility to quickly deploy time and money saving applications

Challenge

- Implement a multi-location networked environment while reducing communications costs and adding mobility solutions

Solution

- Implementation of iPECS pure IP Telephony platform with IP7000 IP desktop phones, Phontage soft client, PathFinder IP and WebPhone

Benefits Achieved

- Achieved \$2,400/month cost savings using IP
- Improved customer service
- Cohesive network projects unified corporate image and extends system functionality to all employees



Summit Handling Systems, headquartered in North Haven, Connecticut, provides affordable materials handling solutions, including lift trucks and big trucks, for large and small companies throughout the United States. For over 50 years, Summit has met customer's needs for equipment through convenient leasing, rental and purchase options. Summit's certified technicians, extensive parts inventory and dedicated fleet of vehicles allows them to provide on-site maintenance and delivery quickly – reducing costly downtime. Summit maintains office locations in Connecticut, Hudson Valley, NYC/Long Island and western Massachusetts.

Challenge

With a 15 year old telecommunication system that had served the business well, Summit Handling was thriving and opening new office locations throughout several states. As Summit's business grew, so did the challenges associated with building a cohesive communications network that would tie all five office locations together, project a unified corporate image and reduce equipment and transport costs. Any solution implemented would have to complement the company's core values of providing superior products that are dependable, durable and affordable while delivering exceptional customer service.

Summit's business dynamics were evolving to include a larger number of remote employees working at home, employees at dispersed locations across multiple states and mobile workers. With a new location opening, a closer evaluation of its voice and data communications needs determined the existing phone system was too outdated to support Summit's plans for adopting newer IP technologies. Migrating communications to a Voice over IP (VoIP) network would provide a single transport for all voice and data as well as deliver increased flexibility for this dispersed working environment, higher productivity, better customer service and increased cost savings.

"The iPECS solution has given us the flexibility to adapt our communications based on our business needs – quickly and affordably. Using the IP backbone has improved the service we offer our customers and given our employees a seamless, mobile work environment. Financially, the cost savings with this system and IP will offer us a quick payback period, making the decision that much simpler."

Paul Weymann

Vice President

Summit Handling Systems

The IP7000 desktop phones are located in the North Haven facility, but can also be used at remote locations such as an employee's home. There is no additional programming; it is simply plugged into the residential or remote office wall jack.

If an employee is on the road or in the shop, phone extensions are programmed to simultaneously ring the employee's cell phone. If the call to the cell phone needs to be transferred internally, the employee hits the * key to transfer to another extension. The ability to continue answering colleague and customer calls improves customer service and productivity. With integrated voice mail, employees are immediately notified on desktop or cell phones that a message has been left.

Additionally, iPECS gives Summit's traveling and remote employees the ability to use their PC for voice communications wherever there is a broadband connection. Using the iPECS Phontage soft client with their PC, they can place and receive secure, high quality voice communications like all other users on the system. Phontage is a multi-media tool that uses a PC, PDA or Symbian Smartphone-based application to provide the operation of a multi-button desktop phone utilizing communications-enabled PC devices. All features available in a desktop phone are available to the Phontage user and can also be linked so both the user's desktop and Phontage both ring when the extension is called. Using Phontage, the remote user can see the state of all callers on their iPECS system (on/off hook), dial calls using their Outlook™ contact base, share their desktop, video conferencing and IMS, as well as other presence and call management applications.

Business Results

- Installation of feature-rich communication system that inter-connects office locations across multiple states and remote/mobile workers on a single unified platform
- Improved employee motivation and productivity
- Improved communication among remotely dispersed workforce
- Approximately \$2,400/month recurring cost savings on long distance and migration to SIP trunking
- Flexibility to grow and add applications to iPECS system based on company growth and business needs
- Improved call handling at home or office results in enhanced customer service
- Ability to quickly and easily make moves, adds and changes via web-based maintenance and administration



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