

CASE STUDY: FREEDOMIQ HELPS TRAVEL AGENCY GO 100% VIRTUAL

THE CLIENT

Chris Louder, President & Founder
Cruise Adventure Travel Inc.

A travel agency specializing in cruises, resorts, and adventure travel.
www.cruiseadventuretravel.com

THE CHALLENGE

Cruise Adventure Travel, Inc. has seen several years of steady growth, a result of providing quality travel services at affordable prices. While Founder & President Chris Louder could not be more pleased with his company's overall performance, the journey has not been without some growing pains.

Cruise Adventure Travel started with a minimal staff in a small central office in Florida, increasing in size by recruiting local travel agents. In order to capture a larger market share, it began reaching out to independent travel agents over a more geographically-dispersed area. Recruitment efforts stretched across Massachusetts, Ohio, Maine, and elsewhere, including an internship program at Louder's alma mater: Andover College.

As the company grew, two of the greatest challenges for Louder were managing productivity and communicating with his remote agents. Louder knew a cutting-edge VoIP phone service would be a major role-player in solving these problems, using Voice over IP technology to connect with remote offices and allow agents to seamlessly share a single phone network. This would allow Louder to generate in-depth call reports and know whether his agents were staying on task. However, his first few experiences with VoIP fell short of the mark.

One service provider had worked well for the original staff, but had severe call quality and connectivity problems as it took on more users. This service also did not include an automated virtual attendant, so Louder was forced to route all calls through a 3rd party answering service in order to maintain a professional image. A second provider delivered a poor experience throughout, losing important phone number transfer paperwork and charging excessive rates to provide the features Louder needed to monitor the productivity of his remote agents. He had also purchased this service's proprietary phones, facing a loss on this investment if he ever decided to switch to another provider.

Increasingly unsatisfied, Louder began searching for a cost-effective and complete VoIP phone service that would allow him to run his company more efficiently.

THE SOLUTION

The answer came from a recommendation by Sameer Dattoo, President of Strategic Onsite Solutions, Inc. Dattoo's company had been providing Cruise Adventure Travel with various IT services, including sorting out their phone troubles, when he discovered FreedomIQ VoIP Hosted PBX at a major tradeshow. Dattoo had been so impressed by the service, he dropped his current VoIP offering and signed on as a FreedomIQ reseller.

Dattoo demonstrated the service to Lounder, who quickly realized FreedomIQ delivered precisely what his company had been missing: a professional automated attendant, high grade VoIP call quality, a phone system which could easily scale with his business, and, most importantly, a robust set of features and reports to facilitate remote call center management. All of these features came at a reduced monthly cost versus what he was paying with his former provider. Lounder was further pleased to learn that the FreedomIQ platform was developed from the ground-up by FreedomVOICE Systems, industry leaders in toll-free virtual office services with twelve years of small business telecom experience.

After brief consideration, Lounder abandoned his existing phone system in favor of custom tailored FreedomIQ service and a brand new set of industry-leading Polycom IP phones.

THE BENEFIT

As of August 1, 2008, Lounder reports Cruise Adventure Travel has gone "100% virtual," no longer having a need for a central office. Each employee or agent works remote from their SOHO (small office/home office), placing calls using their fully integrated FreedomIQ system. Inbound calls can be transferred seamlessly between extensions, simultaneously ring agents in multiple locations, and send voicemail messages to an agent's Inbox. New agents and phones, located anywhere across the country, can be integrated into the network in a matter of minutes.

For Lounder, the greatest improvement comes from the reporting capabilities of FreedomIQ. He can readily keep his agents on task by seeing when they are logged into their phones and measuring this against metrics like number and time of missed calls, average call duration, and more. If he wants a closer look, he can review recorded conversations or even listen in live to calls in progress.

THE TECHNOLOGY

FreedomIQ VoIP Hosted PBX is a managed phone system that uses voice over IP technology to place calls over the Internet. FreedomVOICE Systems, developers of FreedomIQ, have over twelve years of experience in the toll-free virtual office industry. As a result, the architecture of the FreedomIQ platform benefits greatly from exclusive feature advancements, call quality refinements, and infrastructure upgrades that FreedomVOICE Systems has created in over a decade of serving small business needs.



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