



Case Study: IPCom Networks works with OrecX to save money, time and headaches.

Challenge: Reduce telecom costs for call centers while providing a flexible, open-source environment that keeps pace with changes in call center networks.

Solution: Use Digium switchboards and OrecX open source recording applications to create a VoIP-based solution, creating a call center environment that is easy to maintain, flexible to change and most importantly lowers operating costs sufficiently.

Finding the right combination of switchboards and open source, end-to-end software to manage in-bound and outbound traffic at an affordable price and provide the flexibility to upgrade the call center platform as needed is the mission of any telephony solutions provider.

To meet its needs, IPCom Network, a Miami-based provider of fully integrated VoIP solutions, turned to OrecX open source applications and Digium switchboards to create its desired call center solution. "Everything in the call center evolves around the architecture of the communications platform, which is constantly changing," says Alvaro Ramirez, vice president of Technology for IPCom Network. "Call centers need solution providers that can deliver upgrades at a low cost, but which enable them to keep pace with the changing architecture of the call center. OrecX and Digium have track records for providing the tools needed to build these types of solutions."

The advantage of VoIP over traditional T1 phone lines is that it allows the call center to integrate all in-bound and out bound communications into its network of databases and computer servers via a local area network. As a result, in-bound and outbound calls can be linked with CRM, voice mail, e-mail, and customer account databases, thereby eliminating the barriers that create information silos. Knocking down data silos makes it easier for call center managers to track campaign and agent performance data in real time, as well as feed more account information to agents in a timely manner and in turn boost their productivity.

According to Drew Kraus, research vice president for Stamford, Conn.-based Gartner Inc. in a recent article on VoIP technology in Collections & Credit Risk magazine that featured OrecX, the flexibility of VoIP technology, especially open source solutions, makes it easier and more cost effective for call centers to upgrade their communications networks. Said Krause: "VoIP brings a lot of phone network upgrades that tend to get overlooked such as increased flexibility in routing calls between multiple call centers and to agents that work remotely off-site, which can reduce staffing costs."

Unlike middleware which can lead to unforeseen problems downstream in the network as a result of custom coding, VoIP integration can be accomplished using XML (extensible markup language), a general purpose programming language that allows users to define their own elements for sharing structured data across different software platforms. As a result, XML eliminates data silos and allows more customer information to be fed to the agent in real-time.

By putting more information around a call, call center agents can make better decisions about how to handle the call and where to route it. At the same time, providing agents more information around the call frees them up to focus on conducting business rather than searching for information



that can aid them in handling the call. “VoIP makes it easier for any call center manager to route and manage their call volume more efficiently and cost effectively,” says Bruce Kaskey, founder and vice president of marketing for Chicago-based OrecX LLC. In addition, open source solutions enable the IT department to maintain the telephony platform. “When IT can address the problem, call centers don’t have to wait for the phone carrier or hardware supplier to get back to them to schedule an appointment or reply to a service inquiry about how to fix the problem,” adds Kaskey. “That provides flexibility.”

Using Digium switchboards and OrecX software, IPCom Network has developed cost-effective telephony solutions for call centers with 4,000 to 7,000 seats. Call centers of this size typically have high enough call volumes to warrant regular upgrades to their platform, but not necessarily the resources to make changes as needed to keep pace with advances in telephony technology. “Our clients can’t afford solutions that cost \$5,000 a seat,” says Ramirez. “After they make the initial investment in the platform they can be reluctant to spend money for upgrades six months later. With an open source solution, we minimize the expense of the upgrade.”

IPCom uses OrecX’s Oreka TR software to record all the telephony traffic for its customers from a centralized server in Miami. The architecture allows IPCom’s customers, which are located in Central and South America, to access the recordings from any Web browser. Solutions from Nice Systems and Verint Systems do not offer this type of flexibility. Digium provides high quality switchboards guaranteed to work with open source software, such as Oreka TR. IPComm uses Digium boards to support more than 600 customers. “Open source architecture is the big technology at the end of the day because it lets us come to market quickly with cost effective, value-added solutions,” says Ramirez. “There are a lot of players in the open source arena, but you want to do business with the ones that have the expertise and support structure to back it up.”