

Vertical TeleVantage®

Case Study

Dracut Police Department Uses TeleVantage to Aid in Efficient Public Safety

“The decision to implement TeleVantage at the Dracut Police Department has been worthwhile on many fronts. It’s our responsibility keep Dracut safe. How we communicate – by receiving and distributing information – is directly tied to the sophistication of the technology and personnel we engage. Once the station went live with TeleVantage, almost instantly we realized vast improvements in productivity and costs savings. It’s a great feeling to now be recognized as a leader in technology with respect to other police departments.”

**Kevin Richardson,
Police Chief, Dracut
Police Department**

Responsible for the safety of its 32,000 residents, the Dracut, Massachusetts Police Department sought a more sophisticated solution for its communications network. A move to a new facility prompted an extensive review of newer technologies that could address the pressing need to improve department productivity and save money. The implementation of Vertical’s TeleVantage® system has allowed the Dracut Police Department to redirect personnel from tedious, time consuming tasks to more critical activities, saving hundreds of man hours with call recording capability and improved internal communications and public service.

THE CHALLENGE

In law enforcement, seamless communication has a direct impact on life and death situations every minute of every day, 365 days a year. The Town of Dracut, a suburban community of Greater Lowell in Middlesex County, is located north of Boston and borders southern New Hampshire. This Merrimack Valley community encompasses approximately 28 square miles and boasts a population of 32,000 residents. Responsible for law enforcement and public safety, the Dracut Police Department has 44 sworn personnel and 20 civilian employees.

An upcoming move to a new police department facility prompted officials to review their current telecommunications infrastructure. They viewed their existing telephone and voice mail system as basic and reliable, yet officials were extremely dissatisfied with the lack of service and support from their solutions provider. Aware that market

availability of new communication technologies could yield valuable productivity and financial benefits, the Dracut Police Department began to question its current communications network. Specifically, two important questions needed to be answered in order to assure the department had the right communication system in place:

- Was investing in new application upgrades for the current phone system cost-effective?
- With the entire Dracut Police Department moving into a new facility, should the phone system be re-installed in the current location or should the department invest in a new system?

Dracut Police Department IT experts knew that newer applications could improve efficiency so they began an evaluation of how the department’s productivity and financial performance could be positively impacted with a telephony upgrade. After compiling

Vertical TeleVantage®

data from monthly communications expenses and analyzing employee input regarding day-to-day activities, the police department experts uncovered and documented for resolution these key objectives:

- Implement a low cost alternative to the current time-consuming and costly process of locating and storing recorded calls and voice messages
- Improve call routing and customer service by utilizing Caller ID, Auto Attendant and other embedded telephony system features
- Eliminate long distance toll waste
- Upgrade and implement a sophisticated voice mail solution to eliminate the older, inflexible DOS system
- Implement any new changes without service response interruption

TeleVantage has an extensive array of customizable features, a highly intuitive Microsoft Windows-based graphical user interface, affordable scalability, streamlined administration and low cost of ownership.

A primary driver behind Dracut Police Department's decision to implement the TeleVantage system was its built-in call recording capability. All other competitive proposals recommended a third-party call recording solution that required a separate server and increased the overall purchase price.

After listening to department representatives detail the pros and cons of their current communications network, how they envisioned reassigning employee responsibilities and what productivity and financial goals they anticipated, mpire telecom devised a comprehensive implementation plan that highlighted how TeleVantage would meet today's business objectives while preparing their network for future needs.

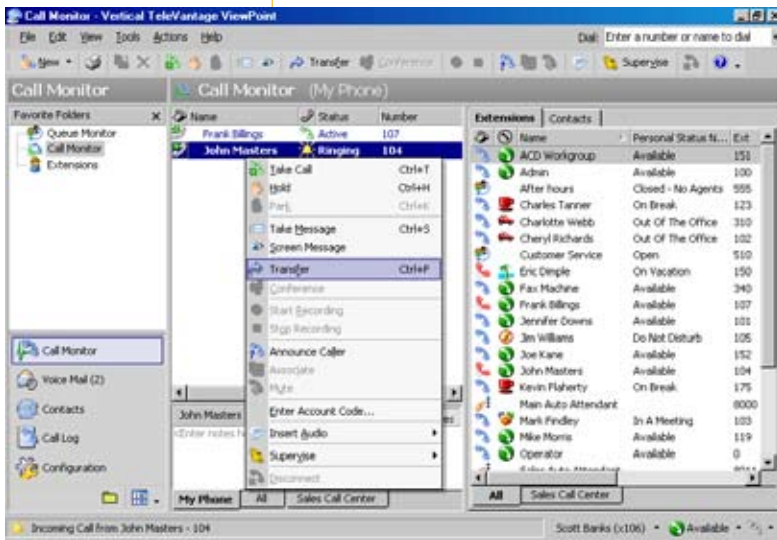
LATEST TECHNOLOGIES WITH QUICK PAYBACK

Had the department invested in adding newer technology onto their older system, the cost to upgrade would have equaled approximately 60% of the cost of purchasing the new TeleVantage system. Additionally, the older system platform would have been limited as to what newer functionalities could have been updated and supported. The investment payback analysis reinforced the decision to purchase a new phone system.

The move to TeleVantage has positioned the Dracut Police Department as a technology leader among nearby city police departments. The new system has significantly boosted efficiency, productivity and cost savings, resulting in a payback period for purchasing the entire TeleVantage telephone system network of approximately one year.

A NEW SYSTEM FOR A NEW FACILITY

The TeleVantage communications network at the new facility consists of 12 trunks, 25 stations and 8 ViewPoint™ clients. ViewPoint is TeleVantage's award-winning, PC-based, graphical user interface that allows people to use the full range of system features efficiently, creatively and powerfully in a familiar Windows-based environment. The eight



The award-winning ViewPoint™ desktop call manager makes it easy to place and transfer calls, set up ad hoc conferences, and check the availability of colleagues.

THE SOLUTION

Prior to relocating to its new facility, the Dracut Police Department released a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a new, state-of-the-art communication system. After reviewing several bids, the Dracut Police Department selected mpire telecom, based in Methuen, MA, as its communications partner. mpire telecom recommended that the police department implement the Vertical TeleVantage Business Communications System. TeleVantage is an innovative, user-friendly IP-PBX with high value voice applications including full-featured voicemail, personalized call handling rules and a robust set of call center capabilities. A software-based solution,

ViewPoint applications used within the department are assigned as follows: two for dispatchers, one for the shift officer in charge, one for the police chief, one for the administrative secretary, one for the deputy chief, one for gun permits, and one shared by other officers. The lines that support TeleVantage are a mix of standard phone lines and T1 lines, which are used for disaster protection.

CALL RECORDING SAVES HUNDREDS OF MAN HOURS PER YEAR

By law, all calls within the police department are recorded and stored for one year. In the past, calls were recorded on DAT tapes. Reels of these recorded calls were housed in a storage closet. For trials, lawyers often request copies of phone calls. Responsibility for these tapes was considered one of the most time-consuming tasks of the police department. Dispatch personnel had to physically locate the reel, listen to the calls on the tapes and then make copies of the tapes for the lawyers.

TeleVantage **Call Recording** saves the department hundreds of man hours each year and improves productivity by eliminating the need to sort through old tapes or assign someone to archive and change tapes. There's also no need to allocate facility space to store mountains of old tapes as all calls are now stored on network drives, each capable of storing two years of recorded calls. With the call recording archive browsing feature it only takes minutes to locate a call, rather than hours. With a click of the mouse, personnel can instantly browse the call's history, identify who took the call, where it was transferred, the duration of the call, etc. Once located, the specific call is simply cut, pasted and emailed or burned onto a CD for legal counsel.

A MYRIAD OF NEW PHONE FEATURES TO IMPROVE COMMUNICATIONS AND LOWER COSTS

Previously, all incoming calls into the station were answered solely by a dispatcher who would then transfer them to the appropriate department. Using **Auto Attendant** capabilities, TeleVantage provides voice prompts to incoming callers and immediately directs the caller to press a number on the keypad to reach the desired party. For example, callers requesting a gun permit can bypass a live

attendant and have their call immediately directed to the gun permits department. Auto attendant functionality allows the department to reassign employees to focus on more critical tasks.

Dispatch personnel find ViewPoint especially helpful with the high volume of daily phone calls and the potentially life and death importance of each call. TeleVantage allows personnel to listen to, quickly locate and replay calls, which is invaluable in dire situations. The prior system took 15 minutes to replay a call whereas with TeleVantage a call is replayed in 15 seconds.

Long distance costs have also been reduced. Since ViewPoint is launched by log-in IDs, toll waste has ceased with only top personnel having access to long distance privileges.

With key personnel using ViewPoint, the department was able to merge different contact lists in different formats into one department contact file using Microsoft Outlook. Everyone now has access to a centralized contact list database in one common format.

TeleVantage also has the ability to attach a note to a recently recorded phone call. For example, a phone call is received reporting a car fire. If that call is determined to be a false alarm, TeleVantage lets personnel attach a note to the call record explaining that the call was a false alarm. The police officer still submits a paper incident report, but this feature provides an added check and balance.

With TeleVantage, **Call Routing** sequences are easily programmed and can be quickly changed upon demand to ensure that calls are routed to the appropriate party. If a caller needs specific assistance, his or her call is automatically routed to the person who can provide the best assistance.

Each shift has a designated commander officer in charge. If the commander is not at his or her desk, calls can be transferred to a cell phone. Locating the last shift commander is simplified and handled on the network as an internal call directly to a cell phone or other programmed number.

Vertical TeleVantage®

ABOUT VERTICAL

Vertical Communications is one of the largest telephony vendors in North America and a global leader in next-generation IP-based business communications systems and applications, with a current installed base of over 200,000 customers. Vertical combines voice and data technologies with business process understanding to deliver integrated IP-PBX and application solutions that enhance customer service and business productivity. Vertical's customers are leading companies of all sizes, from small to large and distributed, and include CVS/pharmacy®, Staples and Apria Healthcare. Vertical delivers its solutions through a worldwide network of over 1,800 business partners.

ABOUT MPIRE TELECOM

Based in Methuen, MA, mpire telecom, Inc. specializes in small- to medium-sized telecommunications services for clients ranging in size from the small office to the multi-building corporation. mpire telecom believes that telephone systems are not a "one size fits all" product; therefore, mpire telecom delivers cost-effective, customized solutions to fit the specialized needs of its clients. For more information on mpire telecom, visit www.mpiretelecom.com.

Caller ID allows incoming callers to be immediately identified. Even in situations where the call is forwarded to and from multiple extensions within the department, the ID information is passed along with the call. No matter who within the department answers the call, the calling party ID information is sent along with it.

Department personnel can also create custom rules for specific calls using Caller ID. For example, when the town manager calls the Chief's extension, he hears a custom greeting recorded specifically for him. His call is then forwarded to the Chief's cell phone. Additionally, when a family member calls a patrolman that call is automatically forwarded to the patrolman's cell phone instead of voice mail.

TeleVantage voice mail has delivered tremendous time and cost savings to the Dracut Police Department. Voice mail messages are consolidated within a single account for quick, easy retrieval and response. All department extensions can record and store voice messages or live conversations, and create personalized, targeted voice and broadcast messages that save time and enhance communication.

Dracut's previous voice mail system required the person retrieving messages to be physically in the building to access his or her voice mail account. TeleVantage voice mail allows any voice mail user to call a central number for messages anytime, anywhere. Voice mail messages can also be programmed and immediately forwarded to a designated cell phone.

SEAMLESS SYSTEM IMPLEMENTATION

The cutover to a new communications solution is a critical event. A police department without phone service could have serious ramifications, so a seamless system transition was essential. As planned, the new TeleVantage system implementation went smoothly. Almost immediately, the department alleviated prior problems and recognized the potential that TeleVantage offered as a highly productive tool.

STREAMLINED MAINTENANCE AND ADMINISTRATION

The intuitive TeleVantage system administrator interface makes it quick and easy for the Dracut Police Department to perform its own routine maintenance such as adding and moving phone lines. The flexibility and scalability of the phone system also allows them to efficiently support the requirements of the criminal justice system.

THE RESULTS

- Achieved ROI in approximately one year
- Eliminated approximately 3-4 hours per day of tedious, time consuming tasks; redirected personnel to focus on more critical public service tasks
- Saved hundreds of man hours each year with call recording capability
- Eliminated long distance toll waste
- Increased efficiency of incoming calls by correct routing and eliminating busy signals
- Improved customer service
- Produced faster call handling
- Reduced telephone system maintenance costs

