



YMCA of the Foothills Takes Services to Community with Vertical Wave IP Mobility Solutions



Mobility Maximizes Community Impact

It may be fun to stay at the YMCA, but like a lot of employees these days, staff members at the YMCA of the Foothills are constantly on the move.

“Accessibility is a critical issue for our entire team,” said John Loussararian, vice president of social responsibility at the YMCA of the Foothills, one of the larger Y organizations in California. “We provide a huge range of services, from infant care to senior citizen programs and everything in between. As a community-focused organization, our employees are not chained to a desk or an extension. They’re out and about, involved in outreach activities at satellite locations like summer camps and schools, or involved in off-site activities with community members of all ages.”

Like everyone else on the go, staff at the YMCA of the Foothills used their own cell phones to communicate. Even so, staying in touch could be tricky. Staffers had to call in to their office to retrieve voice mail, which was often inconvenient and caused interruptions when working offsite. It also meant their personal phone numbers were visible to those they contacted during business hours and showed up as their call-back numbers.



Customer Snapshot

YMCA OF THE FOOTHILLS



LOCATIONS

La Cañada, CA
Tujunga, CA

SYSTEM USERS

300-350 employees
during peak summer
season

80 year-round users with
direct-dial extensions,
including
30 mobile users

VERTICAL SOLUTION

- Wave IP UC System
- ViewPoint Mobile
 - WaveNet

“That’s the reason we started looking for an upgraded system, to accommodate mobility and allow our employees to communicate freely and securely with the people and organizations they are involved with all day,” Loussararian said.

To better accommodate the Y’s mobility needs, Southern California-based Fusion Communications suggested the industry’s only true, built-in mobile solution for business. The ViewPoint Mobile application from Vertical Communications® comes embedded in every Vertical Wave IP unified communications (UC) system at no extra cost – something any budget-conscious nonprofit would appreciate.

YMCA employees can now bring up a mobile app on their phones and immediately connect to the phone system at the office. “They can call from anywhere and have it look like the call is coming from their office extension, not their personal phone. It’s private, professional and easy to use, and it allows our team to improve their access and efficiency,” Loussararian said.

Improving the customer experience, on- and offsite

Before installation of the Wave IP, the YMCA’s two main buildings had separate phone numbers, and no one had a direct extension, making answering and transferring calls both time consuming and cumbersome. Fusion worked together with the Y to implement a streamlined routing solution, one that would “let our people focus on performing their jobs and helping our members, not on answering and transferring calls,” Loussararian said.

Vertical’s WaveNet application was implemented with the new Wave IP system to connect the Y’s La Cañada and Tujunga locations on the same network. Now every staff member across the two sites has their own individual extension, and incoming calls to both locations are handled by a single operator who quickly routes callers to the correct person.

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John Loussararian
Vice President of Social Responsibility
YMCA of the Foothills

“We’re not a call center; we’re a services organization,” Loussararian said. “Now our people can focus on the task at hand, which is serving the public.”

Voice quality also used to be a problem due to the inadequate bandwidth of the Y’s old network. Fusion relocated the company’s data and voice paths onto separate lines, which significantly reduced “jitter” and improved voice quality while freeing up more bandwidth so members and visitors to the YMCA’s two offices can now stream music or surf the Web without impacting employee connectivity.

As a not-for-profit, the YMCA is always concerned about the budget. The project was negotiated as part of the singular licensing fee that Vertical offers. In addition, Fusion incorporated ongoing service and upgrades for the installation under a leasing fee program, making overall maintenance a part of the sale and creating additional incentive for the YMCA.

“That was one great thing that we really appreciated,” Loussararian said. “Fusion came in with a cost analysis of our previous operations, and then compared it to a projection of expenses after implementing the new system. By switching providers and upgrading to a VoIP system, we would save enough money to operate on just about the same budget after the upgrade.”

As the YMCA’s needs evolve in and out of the office, the Wave IP will be able to expand and evolve with them. Loussararian is already looking forward to exploring additional capabilities the system offers.

“It’s like a new cell phone. You start out using only about 20 percent of the functions and then realize it can do much more. We bought the system for its mobility, but we’ll be working with Vertical to utilize more functionality, like call conferencing. The solution is extremely sophisticated, and we’re excited about its full potential.”

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