

Strata CIX & CTX Digital Business Communication Systems

Toshiba Puts The Pedal To The Metal At Pump's Tire Service Inc.



Ron Korb of Pump's Tire Service was pleased with the Toshiba upgrade path that allowed him to retain up to 80 percent of the original system cost.



From left, Chuck Karlen of Unitel and Ron Korb of Pump's Tire Service work on the telecom and data systems to ensure the best performance.



From left, Ron Korb of Pump's Tire Service and Fred Stoeger of Unitel worked together to connect the 60-plus stores and offices together.

Photo Credit: Mike Desisti Photography

Founded in 1939, Pump's Tire Service is one of the largest tire dealers in the Midwest with more than 60 tire sales and automotive service stores and manufacturing facilities located in seven states throughout the Midwest. Serving thousands of retail, commercial, and wholesale customers every month, the Green Bay, Wis.-based company offers a wide choice in sizes of brand name tires, as well as Bandag recapping, and a variety of other automotive services. With nearly 1000 tire professionals on its team, Pump's Tire Service keeps its customers rolling down America's highways.

Mission: Maximize Customer Service and Connect Remote Sites

To handle the hundreds of customer calls it gets every week, Pump's Tire Service turned to Authorized Toshiba Dealer Unitel Inc. of Appleton, Wis., for a new, technologically advanced business communications solution from Toshiba. Working with Charles Karlen advanced applications technician at Unitel, Pump's Tire Service's Ron Korb, service engineer, upgraded the company's existing Toshiba Strata DK telephone systems to newer Strata CTX and then Strata CIX systems with the goal of maximizing customer service by integrating remote locations with the corporate offices.

"We rely heavily on our telephones for customer communications. Customers call to buy tires wholesale, to make service appointments for their own personal cars, and to schedule professional trucking services." Korb said. "In just a few short years, we've nearly doubled in size, so with our aggressive growth, we needed a communications system upon which we could completely depend to deliver high quality customer service."

Solution: Toshiba Revs Up Pump's Telecom Performance

Korb created three regional telecom hubs, at corporate headquarters in Green Bay, Wisc., in the Greater Chicago area and in the Minneapolis-St. Paul area. Each of the hub locations has a Toshiba Stragy ES48 voicemail system that services the remote sites connected to it. The hubs are equipped with local and long distance PRI ISDN circuits.

Via the hubs, the sites are provided with local telephone service via a minimal number of loop start lines for incoming calls. In addition, 800 and 'dial 9' outbound calls are sent via the network connection to the hub where they access an appropriate PRI circuit that places the call. This allowed a dramatic reduction in the number of lines needed at smaller stores, thus reducing costs and maximizing the budget.

Result #1

Result #1: Toshiba's "Well-Oiled" Migration Path Smooths Upgrades

Pomp's Tire Service has been a Toshiba user since 1988 when it purchased a Strata Vle from Unitel. As the company grew, it added and upgraded Toshiba systems, including Toshiba's a Strata DK96, DK424i, CTX, most recently, Strata CIX systems. Today, the company has a mix of Strata DK, CTX and CIX systems, all of which are backward and forward compatible and network seamlessly together.

Like fine-tuning a car engine, migrating from its previous Strata DK systems to Strata CIX670 and Strata CIX100 systems empowered Pomp's Tire Service to maximize its original investment while greatly increasing its performance and capabilities. In fact, Pomp's Tire Service was able to utilize the telephones and the telephone interface cards that were purchased over the last 10 years, plus its voice processing solution and telephones.

Result #2

Result #2: Networked Across All Sites, VoIP Where it Makes Sense

Toshiba remote fiber optics cabinets were utilized to link the corporate offices, which are located in three separate buildings. The Strata systems were installed with Toshiba's VoIP cards, allowing Pomp's Tire Service users to transmit voice over the company's existing data network VoIP applications using MPLS, broadband, and Internet combined with Toshiba's Strata Net IP networking is used to network other sites in various states to the corporate offices.

The IT department users, plus some key employees, also have Toshiba VoIP desk telephones at their homes, so they can make and take business calls anytime.

Result #3

Result #3: 800 Number With DID Keeps Sales Spinning

Since Pomp's Tire Service also sells tires wholesale, it was important that commercial and wholesale customers could reach their sales people day or night. He said, "With the Toshiba system, our customers now have a direct line to their sales representatives. This gives us a competitive advantage by allowing more direct contact and is in keeping with our philosophy of developing personal relationships with our customers."

The system also enables external call forwarding, so many of our sales and service people have their DID numbers forwarded to cell phones, enabling customers to reach them immediately."

Result #4

Result #4: Toshiba National Accounts Ensures Consistency

"At every turn — be it for our headquarters or our smaller stores — Toshiba and Unitel have met our needs. Toshiba's 'mix-and-match' product policies ensure that we have total flexibility for the unique needs of our locations." Korb also appreciated Toshiba's National Accounts program, which afforded him the consistency of working with a single Authorized Toshiba Dealer — Unitel — allowing Korb the ability to do his own installations with assistance from Unitel when necessary. He said, "Toshiba's National Accounts program gave me peace of mind in choosing Toshiba."

Result #5

Result #5: Remote Administration Keeps Things Humming Along

Using Toshiba's Network Interface Card over the Wide Area Network (WAN), Korb is able to remotely administer the system, without having to drive across states to make changes on-site at each location. He said, "It's just like being there."

Dave Servais, network manager for Pomp's Tire Service, monitors the impact of the voice traffic on the network to ensure adequate bandwidth is available to all sites.

Bottom Line: Toshiba In The Winner's Circle

With Toshiba's investment protection and migration policy, Pomp's Tire Service was able to retain as much as 80 percent of the cost of its original Toshiba systems. The system also has helped it save thousands of dollars in long distance charges by using the VoIP system with MPLS, broadband, Internet and direct T-1 lines. In fact, the system virtually eliminated long distance costs between the connected sites.

"Toshiba's amazing investment protection policy, reliability, quality, and support are unmatched by any competitor. In today's economy, hard-earned money should get you a hard-working system. That's what Toshiba does," Korb said. He summed it up by saying, "Toshiba and Unitel are definitely in the winner's circle at Pomp's Tire Service!"

For more information about Pomp's Tire Service, please visit www.pomptire.com.