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Strata CIX VoIP Business Communication System

Summit Bank Counts on Toshiba's IP Business Telephone System to Maximize Customer and Inter-branch Communication

Summit Bank opened its doors in February 2000 with a dedicated group of people committed to "doing banking better." With a philosophy that "people work hard for their money, and the bank should work just as hard to protect it and make it grow," Summit Bank has grown into a 22-branch network serving Central and South Arkansas.

With a focus on personalized service for consumer, business, mortgage and investment accounts, Summit Bank offers a wide variety of banking products that are managed by experienced bankers who are well-known in their communities and care about their

customers. The bank prides itself on being a responsible corporate citizen by supporting both the people and the organizations of the communities it serves.

When the bank decided to improve its business telephone communications to handle the several hundreds of calls it receives each week, it turned to Steve Kane, vice president of Telecom Management Inc., a telecommunications consulting firm based in Little Rock, Arkansas. Kane invited Authorized Toshiba Dealer Network Services Group Inc., also of Little Rock, to participate in the bid process. Network Services Group has been an Authorized Toshiba Dealer for more than 20 years.



From left, Ryan Flynn of Network Services Group (NSG), Justin Rhymes of Summit Bank, Steve Kane of Telecom Management Inc (TMI), and Gary Flynn, also of NSG, worked together to create a Toshiba system that networks 22 Summit Bank branches.



Justin Rhymes of Summit Bank, with Ryan Flynn of NSG at right, oversees the 1000-port system that is spread out over 22 branches in Central and South Arkansas.



Justin Rhymes of Summit Bank and Ryan Flynn of NSG, at left, designed the Toshiba CIX telephone system that meets the bank's goals of maximizing customer service and improving inter-branch communications.

Mission: Network 22 Bank Branches in Nine Cities to Maximize Inter- Branch Communication and Customer Service

Justin Rhymes, vice president and IT manager at Summit Bank, oversees the bank's communications systems. He said, "We wanted a business telephone system that would seamlessly network the telephones at all our locations, improve our inter-branch communication, and be a reliable, long-term solution for the bank."

Telecom consultant Kane worked with Rhymes to determine the bank's specific telecom objectives, identify needs and evaluate the long-term communication plans. He invited business telephone system dealers to bid, including Network Services Group. Kane said, "Very quickly, it became apparent that Toshiba was the best solution for Summit Bank."

Ryan Flynn, major account representative at Network Services Group, recommended that Summit Bank utilize Toshiba's Strata® CIX™ IP business communication system to meet its goals of maximizing customer service and improving inter-branch communications. Flynn said, "Toshiba's Strata CIX can be networked at all the bank's branches, utilizing the system that is sized right for each branch."

Also of importance to the bank was having a reliable system it could count on. "Toshiba Strata CIX

systems are among the most reliable and durable business telephone systems available today," Flynn said. "In fact, because Toshiba systems are so reliable, Toshiba is able to offer the longest manufacturer's extended warranties in the industry."

Prior to installing the Toshiba Strata CIX systems, the bank had a hodgepodge of older systems, which could not be networked together.

Solution: Toshiba Strata CIX Systems Network 22 Bank Branches

Installed by Network Services Group, Summit Bank has a network of Strata CIX IP business telephone systems at 22 bank branches in nine cities.

There are more than 1,000 ports spread across the 22 Toshiba Strata CIX IP business telephone systems, including three Strata CIX670 systems at the bank's corporate offices/operations center and at two large branches located in Arkadelphia and Hot Springs.

The bank also has eight Strata CIX100 mid-size business telephone systems at branch locations and 11 Strata CIX40 smaller systems at its small, drive-through branches.

Toshiba's Strategy® iES32 voice processing handles the bank's voice mail needs. Summit Bank opted for Toshiba's five-year manufacturer's warranty to protect its investment.

Result #1:

Networked Systems Improve Inter-branch Communication While Reducing Travel Time and Expenses

"Having a networked system for all 22 of our locations has enabled us to rely more effectively on our telephones for conference calls and inter-branch communications," Rhymes said. "Instead of spending time and expenses on travel, our executives now do much of their communication on conference calls, which helps increase their productivity."

Kane pointed out that many of the executives were driving one to three hours each way to reach the branches, which meant that a two-hour meeting could easily take them all day. He said, "With the Toshiba system, the executives can do most of their meetings via conference call rather than spending the time and expense driving out to the individual branches."

According to Rhymes, reducing travel has contributed to savings in travel expenses and has significantly contributed to the productivity of bank executives and others.

He said, "Being able to do our monthly branch manager meetings by telephone saves us more than \$1,000 each month."

Result #2:

Direct Extension Dialing Between Branches Eliminated Long Distance Costs

Also helping the bank save on costs is the system's five-digit dialing plan for bank employees. Regardless of their branch locations, the direct extension dialing plan allows bank employees to dial each other directly just as if they were in the same building.



Together, the NSG/TMI team, with Justin Rhymes, seated, created an IP business communication system that saves the bank more than \$1,000 every month.

Rhymes said, "We had been dialing long distance between many of the branches, and now with the Toshiba system, we can just dial the five-digit extension to reach anyone in any of the branches. This has helped us eliminate most of the long distance charges between branches."

Result #3:

Seamless Communication for Customers

One of the benefits of the new Toshiba business telephone system is seamless communication for the bank's customers. Kane explained, "In the past, if a customer called into one location and needed to talk to someone at a different location, they would have to hang up and redial. Now with the Toshiba system, customers can be transferred between branches without any delay."

Rhymes added, "Having seamless telephone transfers for our customers helps us appear more unified and saves customer frustration. It helps us provide really great, smooth customer service across all the branches."

Result #4:

Remote Administration Saves Time and Reduces Travel Costs

Using Toshiba's Network eManager® remote administration tool, Rhymes can now remotely manage the entire telephone system from his desk. He said, "I used to have to travel to each branch to make changes to the telephone systems, but now I can do them all from my desktop. This saves a lot of time and means I can make changes on the fly."

Toshiba's Network eManager provides remote administration ranging from adds, moves and changes to more complex programming. According to Rhymes, the Toshiba telephones are also very user-friendly, so the users can easily program their own telephones for basic functionality such as speed dial and button functions.

Bottom Line:

Thousands of Dollars in Cost Savings Plus Improved Customer and Inter-branch Communication

Toshiba's Strata CIX IP business telephone system with Stratagy iES32 voice processing has helped Summit Bank meet its goals of improving its customer and inter-branch communication and of having all 22 locations networked together.

The Toshiba business telephone system helps save the bank thousands of dollars each year in eliminated long distance by enabling a direct-extension dialing plan between all branches. It also contributed to more than \$1,000 a month in savings of travel expenses by enabling executives and branch managers to communicate via conference calls rather than driving hours for meetings.

Rhymes said, "We bank on our ultra-reliable Toshiba business telephone system and the great service from Network Services Group for exceptional customer and inter-branch communication capabilities."