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Custom Distributors, a Cincinnati appliance provider for more than 25 years, offers personal attention and service whether you are building a home, buying an existing home, replacing rental units, or remodeling. They carry all the top brands and specialty brands at contract distributor pricing.

With an emphasis on customer service and timely collaboration, Custom Distributors relies on communication to deliver valued products and services. After all, “buying appliances should be made easy.” When Custom Distributors started having reliability issues with its Internet Service Provider (ISP) and consequently lost email and web hosting services intermittently, which directly affected business operations, they began to look at alternatives. This spawned the decision to consider replacing an antiquated, analog phone system with a new service.

Custom Distributors engaged Advanced Technology Consulting (ATC) to conduct an audit, providing network and telephony expertise. ATC took a look at Custom Distributor’s network contracts and services – data only at the time – and future office phone system needs for its locations in Fairfield and Dayton.

After a thorough review and consultation, ATC provided Custom Distributors with options for a new voice and data network service in conjunction with a new VoIP business phone system. Moreover, Custom Distributors decided they wanted to move to a hosted IP-PBX (private branch exchange) and selected Cincinnati Bell’s eMerge, a cloud-based, managed VoIP solution. With eMerge, they replaced an aging phone system and gained enhanced features such as auto attendant, free calling between locations, extension dialing between locations, voicemail to email, and find me/follow me functionalities.

Custom Distributors doubled their bandwidth (through Cincinnati Bell) and replaced the old phones with Cisco IP handsets – 26 units in total. All this – including automatic disaster recovery, maintenance, and

upgrades – and their monthly costs decreased! But, according to Custom Distributors president Ken Rieman, the true value was the changes that incurred in the way they do business.

“The new phone system enabled us to service our customers at light speed compared to what we used to have.”

Custom Distributors inter-company communications, particularly between the Dayton and Fairfield locations, improved dramatically. Processes handling appliance deliveries for customers, which took four or five calls between locations and sometimes two or three hours, now are executed in one call in a matter of seconds. Custom Distributors uses a system feature called “hunt groups” to immediately locate departmental personnel whether the destination is customer care, shipping, sales, or accounting. Inter-company calls can be executed through a simple extension number to each hunt group. External, inbound calls funnel through an auto attendant and route to the proper hunt groups where skilled personnel can handle the call properly.

ATC’s senior consultant Clayton Connor supplemented the Cincinnati Bell eMerge training. Connor was onsite to make sure the phone system was performing and being utilized to its capacity.

“Whenever there’s company-wide change that affects all employees there’s always hesitation. After our initial training, Clayton stayed engaged to make sure all our departments were comfortable with the new phone system and its functionalities,” Rieman says.

Custom Distributors network issues were also resolved. No more outages, download issues, timeouts, or terminated sessions. According to Rieman, “When I’m on the road, or employees are in the field, we can all work and handle phone calls as if we are sitting at our desk in the office.”