

Jeff Wyler Automotive Family

Deploys VoIP, Improves Customer Experience

Photography by Wes Battoclette



Left to right: ATC's Clayton Connor and David Goodwin, Wyler's Brian Hoffman and Jeff Wyler.

With 41 automotive franchises spread across 14 locations, selecting and deploying a cohesive phone system to support varied constituents can be a daunting task. This is the dilemma the Jeff Wyler Automotive Family faced in the Spring of 2012.

A native Cincinnati, Jeff Wyler launched his first dealership – Chevrolet – in 1973 in Batavia, Ohio, where “cars, like eggs, are cheepeer in the country.” From this single site, Wyler has expanded his automotive empire to 16 distinguished automotive brands with dealerships located in Ohio, Kentucky and Indiana. The Jeff Wyler Automotive Family is one of the top 50 dealership groups in the nation, employing nearly 1,000 people and retailing nearly 30,000 new and used vehicles annually.

For a dealership as large, comprehensive, and established as Wyler, synergistic communications are vital to the business. Faced with aging phone systems and disparate platforms throughout the dealerships and the corporate office location, Wyler engaged Advanced Technology Consulting (ATC).

“We’re in the business of selling cars,” says Brian Hoffman, Director of IT for Wyler.

“With ATC acting as a single point of contact, conducting the upfront legwork, and providing budgetary projections, we were able to make informed decisions regarding features and functionalities. ATC took a tremendous load off of us. It was a huge time savings.”

The proposed new phone system for Wyler, which constituted approximately 715 handsets across all locations and dealerships, needed to be stable, flexible, and scalable. It needed to integrate with mobile, and provide inter-office connectivity with greater efficiency of call handling.

ATC went to work determining requirements and identifying solutions. Ultimately, ATC provided viable options, including hosted VoIP, premise-based VoIP, and a hybrid system. Five different VoIP providers were specified and submitted quotes. One of the five providers was ShoreTel, which offered a robust premise-based system with a purpose-built IP architecture that makes it perform like a single, unified platform. Wyler chose the ShoreTel solution.

Wyler’s system scales and grows as needed, across sites or dealerships. An intuitive browser-based administrative interface gives Wyler’s IT staff the ability to easily maintain the system. What once took five people to maintain now only requires one.

“The new system is so easy to manage,” said Hoffman. “It has decreased maintenance costs by far. We have been

able to get entire dealerships up and running in a half day.” Due to the age of the old systems in place, Wyler has progressively rolled out the new system to each dealership location via a staged implementation plan.

ATC also piloted a thorough review of the network services, including local, long distance and data/internet, for each of the 14 locations. Competitive quotations were solicited from five different carriers. Cincinnati Bell was selected as the carrier of choice. Pricing was updated and contracts were consolidated—both voice and data—for the entire network, providing significant savings.

Most importantly, Wyler’s customers are also experiencing benefits, including much more efficient call routing and optimized one-call resolutions for improved customer satisfaction. ShoreTel’s mobility feature permits integration with smartphones and tablets allowing Wyler to incorporate BYOD (bring your own device) communications, making salespeople and customer-facing personnel much more accessible.

“Eventually it will allow us to link all of our locations on one system,” says Jeff Wyler. “So instead of making all these calls phone calls, I can dial an extension and talk to my guy in Louisville or Springfield. Being able to communicate to multiple locations by just going to the extension is a big deal.”

Wyler adds that the new phone system enhances the customer experience as well. “Say a customer calls in and maybe dials a wrong store. It’s now easy to transfer them to any store they need. Rather than asking them to call a certain number for a person at a different location, we can just transfer them directly. It’s a huge time save for everyone involved.”

Noting ATC’s commitment to customer service, Wyler says, “Their reply is almost instant. If we have issues with the carriers, ATC follows up with it so we don’t have to worry about it. It’s a hand-off. And, when the issue is resolved, ATC calls us to let us know it’s resolved.”

ATC is located in Mason. You can reach them at 513.299.1177 or visit their website at www.4atc.com





Cloud, VoIP and Fiber Equals More Bandwidth

Bandwidth Consumption Set to Explode for SMBs

Written by Louie Hollmeyer, Advanced Technology Consulting

T1s used to be considered “fast.” Now as cloud adoption continues to rise and our media becomes richer and heavier, T1s, or even bundled T1s, will not suffice. Small to mid-sized businesses (SMBs) and organizations are increasingly adopting cloud services. They realize they are not in the data center business. They would much rather get out of it and focus on their core competencies.

The cloud is dramatically transforming how SMBs operate. The operational benefits and efficiencies of cloud-computing are becoming increasingly accepted and adopted. Migration to cloud technologies has not only involved production servers and software, but also business-critical applications such as VoIP business phone systems.

With the proliferation of these cloud services, and others, accessed via the Internet, the demand for bandwidth is increasing rapidly. In fact, according to Cisco’s most recent Visual Networking Index, “business IP traffic will grow at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 21 percent from 2012 to 2017.”

There are many reasons to implement a hosted or premise-based VoIP phone system (see Wyler). For many SMBs, the “hosted” VoIP option, in particular, is a way to get enterprise-class features and functionalities at an SMB price. Regardless, VoIP inherently consumes bandwidth since voice data is transported via an Internet connection rather than an analog line. Hosting your phone system becomes just another application for the cloud.

Bigger Pipes, But Lower Costs Overall

The rise in cloud computing, bandwidth-intensive applications, and heavy media mean even more data will be produced and consumed by businesses. This will require SMBs to have bigger pipes—larger, dedicated circuits (usually fiber) providing more bandwidth and, hence, more reliable connectivity.

You can only push and pull so much data to and from the cloud over your local broadband connection. In addition, employees are accessing the Internet thru the company network. They are streaming music, watching video, and conducting bandwidth-intensive webinars and video conferences.

Make the Bandwidth Work for You

The good news is the cost savings and efficiencies derived from cloud initiatives exceed the costs of cloud services, not to mention the elimination of some serious CapEx. Moreover, bandwidth—in most cases—can be obtained at a fraction of previous costs. Net net: most SMB leaders would rather get out of the data center business, diminish IT infrastructure, and acquire more bandwidth.

Fiber Footprint Expands

In addition, the availability of fiber connectivity is progressively expanding. Fiber-ready office environments are becoming more commonplace. With its inherent speed, performance and scalability, fiber makes an SMB’s transition to the cloud that much smoother.

This convergence, Cloud-VoIP-Fiber, has led to unprecedented levels of bandwidth consumption. Fortunately, the “per unit” cost for bandwidth has decreased significantly. And, with fiber circuits, SMB’s can quickly dial up additional bandwidth, if need be, faster and more cost-effectively than ever before.

