

Strata CIX & CTX Digital Business Communication Systems

Toshiba Helps AppOne Inc. Keep Auto Loans Zooming Along



Richard Peak of Preferred Telephone, at right, helps Ronnie Bennett of AppOne maximize his Toshiba Strata CIX IP business communication system.



Together, Richard Peak of Preferred Telephone (left) and Ronnie Bennett of AppOne created a Toshiba solution that saved AppOne thousands of dollars.



Dawn Hunt of AppOne takes advantage of the Toshiba Strata CIX to deliver exceptional customer service to AppOne's 1,000 auto dealer clients.

Photo Credit: John Ballance Photography

For AppOne Inc. of Baton Rouge, La., processing hundreds of auto loan applications is something they do on an everyday basis. Founded in 1997, AppOne provides financial and management services to more than 1,000 independent auto dealers in 16 states throughout the southeastern United States.

AppOne Inc. provides a variety of solutions, including Dealer Management Systems software packages, access to financing options, insurance products and consulting services. Its advanced technology services platform operates a secure automotive marketplace for online loan processing, making it easy for its independent auto dealer clients to help their customers access and process car loans in minutes. The buyers are also happy to drive off in their new cars as soon as possible.

Mission: Use VoIP to Maximize Online Loan Processing and Customer Service

When AppOne's executives decided to rev up its tech support for online loan processing capabilities, they turned to Toshiba and Preferred Telephone Systems Inc., an Authorized Toshiba Dealer based in Baton Rouge, La.

Ronnie Bennett, AppOne's VP of Operations, said, "After 10 years with our dependable but outdated Toshiba Strata DK280 system and having grown from 4 to 30 employees, we decided to put the horsepower of the Toshiba Strata CIX IP business communication system to work for us." His goal was to add a call center that would help them improve the customer service capabilities both internally and externally and allow them to keep up with the company's fast-paced growth."

Solution: Toshiba Delivers an IP Call Center Connecting Three Remote Sites

Installed by Preferred Telephone Systems Inc., AppOne's Toshiba Strata CIX670 is a 64-port IP business communication system with Strategy iES32 voice processing, Strata ACD call center application and a mix of Toshiba DKT digital telephones, Toshiba IPT VoIP desk telephones, and NetPhone VoIP softphones. The Strata CIX670 system is installed at the company's Baton Rouge headquarters, and three remote locations are connected via NetPhones.

Richard Peak, sales manager for Preferred Telephone, said, "Using VoIP is a smart and affordable way to connect remote offices. For AppOne, it connects the finance office in Sugarland, Texas, and offices in two homes of the executives with its headquarters for a seamless communications solution that works just as if they were all located in the same facility."

AppOne's system has both on-site and remote ISP firewalls, keeping sensitive customer information secure and confidential. "Maximizing the security of our communication system was essential to making this work," Bennett said. "The Toshiba system works beautifully with the firewalls, keeping valuable information safe while being transparent to callers and our call center agents."

Adding the Toshiba Strata ACD call center application enables AppOne to do many things they could not do previously, including the ability to completely manage its call center. "We now have the ability to queue callers for the tech support ACD group, track peak calling periods, improve staffing forecasts, and measure incoming calls," Bennett explained. "Our agents can receive Caller ID names and numbers, monitor DSS via the NetPhone, speed dial using the NetPhone, and access real-time views of ACD calls in process."

Result #1

Result #1: Call Center Capabilities Improve Call Routing, Reporting

One of the most important benefits has been the ability to track the call traffic through the reporting function. “We can now see how many calls are coming in at any given time, plan for peak periods, and better manage the calls to maximize the service we provide our customers,” Bennett said. “Over all, Toshiba’s call center solution also helps us provide shorter hold times for callers, transfer calls faster and answer their questions quicker.”

Result #2

Result #2: Improved Customer Service via Remote Access

“Connecting remote and home offices allows us to provide extended tech support hours, especially during non-office hours and exceptionally busy times,” Bennett said. “The agent simply plugs the NetPhone into any Internet source and logs into the call center.” Adding more IP telephones or moving them also becomes easier with the Strata CIX because it’s just a matter of adding a NetPhone or moving it to almost anywhere there’s an Internet connection.

Because they are located in Baton Rouge and service areas that have already been hit hard by recent hurricanes, AppOne’s NetPhones can help keep the company operational even if traditional telephone lines are down and roads are impassable. “Our people can work remotely from home over the NetPhones to help the auto dealers sell cars, an important issue when there’s a disaster like a hurricane that damages vehicles.”

Result #3

Result #3: Remote Management Keeps System Current

Remote management is also a benefit for Bennett, who said, “Changes to the system are easy, can usually be performed remotely and are often transparent to the users. We can add features when it makes sense without having to shut down the system, so workflow is not inhibited in any way.”

Result #4

Result #4: Cost Savings of \$25,000

A Toshiba customer for more than 10 years, AppOne migrated to its current Strata CIX IP system from its older Strata DK280 digital telephone system. With the migration, AppOne added Automated Attendant, centralized voice mail and the Strata ACD call center application. It was able to keep much of its original equipment including telephone interface cards and digital telephones. AppOne saved more than \$25,000 in its first year of using the new system. Bennett said, “Toshiba’s products are expandable, upgradeable and migrate to new technologies. Since the system grows with you, the investment you make keeps working for you.”

Bottom Line: Toshiba Strata CIX Improves Customer Service, Saves \$25,000

Toshiba’s Strata CIX IP business communication system with Strategy iES32 voice processing and the Strata ACD call center application has helped AppOne meet its primary goal of improving customer service while saving the company more than \$25,000 in its first year of use. Using the Toshiba system, AppOne can now manage its call center and agents no matter where they are located on a NetPhone or the Toshiba digital telephones.

“Processing hundreds of auto loan applications every day sounds like a daunting task, but it’s done with ease over the Internet as supported by our Toshiba Strata CIX IP business communication system and call center solution, which handles 200 to 300 calls every day,” Bennett said. “You absolutely can’t beat Toshiba for its dependability, ease-of-use and simplicity of design. Toshiba keeps us zooming along!”

