



CASE STUDY

Woods

SOLUTION SUMMARY

- Eastern DataComm analyzed Woods' needs and recommended a solution that would support analog and digital phones as well as IP handsets.
- The Alcatel-Lucent system provides enterprise-class functionality and investment protection in a highly reliable, scalable platform.
- Real-time voice, video and conferencing features and mobile device support enhance communications and the user experience.
- Centralized administration enables Woods to handle moves, adds and changes in-house, eliminating the need for a third-party phone system consultant.
- Emergency notification capabilities help to ensure safety and security in a blended healthcare and education environment.
- The IP phone system provides intercom capabilities in the organization's schools, replacing an antiquated intercom system.

Eastern DataComm helps Woods replace an aging Nortel phone system with an enterprise-class Alcatel-Lucent platform that provides IP communications functionality while supporting analog and digital phones.

Woods provides services and advocacy to enhance the quality of life for those with exceptional needs and challenges. The focal point for Woods' services is its 300-acre campus in Langhorne, Pa., which provides residences, education and healthcare facilities for children and adults with complex disabilities. Woods also collaborates with affiliate organizations that collectively employ more than 4,300 staff and provide a wide range of support and services to more than 3,600 clients.

The nonprofit organization had an aging Nortel phone system that had reached end of life and needed to be replaced. Sheila Fitzpatrick, Director of Information Systems, began researching the various options that could support Woods' complex requirements. The organization had 600 analog and 200 digital phone sets, and wanted to retain some of that hardware rather than convert to all IP phones.

"We have digital phones strategically placed throughout the campus in case the network goes down," Fitzpatrick said. "The analog phones are for our clients — they can use them to call our 24x7 switchboard operator. Some of our clients have behavioral issues, and phones often get damaged. It's much cheaper to replace a \$12 analog phone than a \$400 IP phone."

The system has a flexible architecture that is robust and scalable, ensuring high availability and performance. Centralized management helps to reduce operational costs and headaches.

Fitzpatrick was also looking for a network integrator that could assist with the phone system implementation, and was referred to **Eastern DataComm**. After visiting the **Woods** campus and analyzing the requirements, **Eastern DataComm** recommended an Alcatel-Lucent phone system that would provide a unified infrastructure while supporting diverse handsets in a hybrid environment.

“The Alcatel-Lucent system had the ability to handle analog, digital and IP phones – it was the only one that could do that,” said Fitzpatrick.

ENHANCING COMMUNICATIONS, STREAMLINED OPERATIONS

The Woods campus includes 80 buildings, making for a complex deployment. Once the equipment was ordered, the **Eastern DataComm** team began working on the configuration so that it could be uploaded when the hardware arrived. The implementation process went very smoothly and the new system was up and running in three or four months.

The Alcatel-Lucent platform provides users with up-to-date features that were not available on the old Nortel system. Real-time voice, video and conferencing are integrated with collaboration tools such as instant messaging and desktop sharing. Native offsite mobility support allows users to have a single contact number, with calls automatically routed to any mobile device.

“If you have one of the IP handsets, you can transfer calls to your cellphone. Technically you could be calling my work number and talking to me on my cellphone and not have any idea,” Fitzpatrick said. “The system also brought in web conferencing. We used to pay an outside vendor to have conference calling and online meetings set up. We were able to eliminate that expense because we have that capability onsite.”

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“We didn’t manage the old Nortel system onsite – we had a consultant who would come out and take care of any moves, adds or changes that we needed,” said Fitzpatrick. “Now one of my staff is in charge of the phone system. He has gotten training and is responsible for doing all those kinds of things.”

MEETING UNIQUE REQUIREMENTS

The organization took a slow, systematic approach to upgrading phone sets so that disruption and user confusion would be minimized. After the phone system was implemented, **Woods** purchased additional IP phones so that office staff could gain sophisticated features such as high-definition video displays and a smooth multimedia user experience.

Alcatel-Lucent’s solutions for healthcare and education environments provided the emergency notification features **Woods** needed to enhance safety and security. **Eastern DataComm** set up group numbers so that emergency calls could easily be sent to multiple extensions.

Woods is now working with **Eastern DataComm** to further improve communications. **Eastern DataComm** has come up with a way to use the new phone system as an intercom in the organization’s schools, replacing an antiquated intercom system.

“As with any school, you have the morning bell, morning announcements and other broadcasts,” said Fitzpatrick. “**Eastern DataComm** is setting it up so that the announcements are heard just in the school buildings, not the whole campus.”

Eastern DataComm helped **Woods** take advantage of a modern IP communications system that met its requirements and provided a platform for future growth. Seamless implementation enabled rapid time-to-value while minimizing business disruption.

“Alcatel-Lucent is an enterprise-level system and, for our size, I really wanted something with that scale and something that was going to be around for a while. Some vendors require you to refresh the hardware every five years. We were making a big investment and needed it to be around for 10 years,” Fitzpatrick said.

“**Eastern DataComm** handled the complex implementation very well and met our unique requirements. They did a great job for us.”