



Arlington Chamber of Commerce

The chamber of commerce is a public symbol of a city's business vitality. For the [Arlington \(Texas\) Chamber of Commerce](#), adopting leading edge technology was the key to positively positioning the city in the minds of members and prospecting businesses. Adopting an integrated solution from NEC enabled the chamber to reduce communication costs, increase employee productivity and foster a more collaborative working environment with Arlington's business community.

CUSTOMER

- Arlington Chamber of Commerce

INDUSTRY

- Government

CHALLENGES

- Outdated TDM infrastructure (at capacity)
- Expensive system management
- Decision latency
- Inter-building connection

SOLUTION

- Communications framework: UNIVERGE®360
- Communication server: UNIVERGE SV8100
- Unified Communications: UC for Business (UCB)
- Integration: Microsoft® Exchange®
- Connection: Point-to-point T1 over IP
- Design, implementation and project management: AIT Technologies, LLC

RESULTS

- Dramatically lowered total cost of ownership (TCO)
- Productivity enhancements from UCB applications
- Savings of \$1,200 thanks to fax application alone
- Streamlined business processes
- NEC solution savings: "Paid for itself in the first six months"

CHALLENGES

Randy Paine arrived at the Arlington Chamber of Commerce as IT Manager just after the organization's decision to expand in November 2008. The Arlington Chamber was taking over the Arlington Technology Incubator Building (now known as the Arlington Business Accelerator) and one of the first items on Randy's agenda was to upgrade the chamber's telephony and communications solutions.

At that time, the organization was being asked to take over telephone service and Internet access at the Arlington Business Accelerator about a block away. (The University of Texas at Arlington had provided those services to the unit for years; but the Arlington Business Accelerator directly serves the chamber's development mission.)

In addition, Paine noted employees would retrieve e-mail and voice messages from two different inboxes, and faxes from various fax machines spread over two floors. With many projects, maintaining relevant messages together in date order is crucial to documentation and project management. Once more, Paine became aware of the challenges employees faced staying in touch with one another: Time was often wasted as employees walked to another office to see if someone was in. Business decisions were often delayed because someone could not be reached. The sheer number of messages employees had to return was slowing the pace of chamber business. Employees would sometimes leave multiple types of messages in hopes of getting a quicker response.

SOLUTION

NEC associate AIT Technologies had been maintaining the chamber's NEC Electra Elite® key system for the last decade. Now Paine and AIT president, Andy Nguyen, began devising a solution that would answer the chamber's business challenges.

"We wanted to have the work-process and productivity enhancements that unified communications services, for example, presence and unified messaging, could bring to our employees," says Paine. "We also wanted to provide The Arlington Business Accelerator with cost-effective communications services without installing and managing an independent system there."

"We decided to install a UNIVERGE SV8100 Communications Server and NEC Unified Communications for Business at the chamber building, move the Electra Elite to the Arlington Business Accelerator, and upgrade it to an IPK II. This was the most economical and effective solution, providing the greatest productivity boost," explains Nguyen.

Nguyen noticed that the chamber's needs aligned perfectly with the UNIVERGE360 framework in which the role of individual employees determines the best communications method and technology.

For example, NEC UC for Business enables Allison Kinkel, Arlington Chamber receptionist, to be more effective when answering the phone. Says Kinkel, "If the person they want is out, I use UC for Business's presence function and look at the employee's status which is integrated with our Microsoft® Executive Insight calendaring.

Says Paine: "By hovering over the person's name, Allison can see where the person is and the scheduled return time. She can speak with authority now, and that makes a much better impression on callers and helps them estimate when they might receive a callback. That advance over the old method of passively taking messages is priceless," says Paine.

Another example: When John Weist, the director of the Arlington Chamber's Center for Government relations is in Austin while the

state legislature is in session, he can now forward calls to his cell phone or he can use UC for Business's unified messaging and receive his voice messages on this laptop's Outlook inbox. "Before we had this NEC solution," says Weist, "my only option was to forward messages to my administrative assistant which often delayed action on important issues. Now I can be far more responsive and effective thanks to our NEC communications solution."

As the Arlington Chamber continues to evolve and develop its services, its UNIVERGE solutions will continue to unify its business communications.

RESULTS

Chamber staff located at the Arlington Business Accelerator use IP phones connected to the SV8100 over a point-to-point T1 connection. "Not only is this the most affordable solution, it is the one I feel most comfortable servicing in-house; as a result, we save on service and support," says Paine.

Sergio Bento, Arlington Business Accelerator director, says he is amazed that he receives "all pages" at the same time as other chamber employees. "I share all the features and functions of the other chamber employees, yet I'm nearly a block away. It works perfectly!" he says.

Paine says he uses the WebPro management system to perform about eighty percent of the system management functions. "We save quite a bit just on those kinds of management chores," he says.

Paine also reports that AIT Technologies just installed the UC for Business fax function, saving the chamber on communication costs. "We had a bunch of old faxes that needed to be replaced. Instead of replacing them, we upgraded to the UCB fax function. We saved \$1,200 right off the top, and now we have all faxes delivered to our employees' Outlook inboxes along with voice mails and e-mails. Overall, the solution has paid for itself in the first six months approximately."

"Overall, thanks to the NEC solution AIT installed, we get more done and are able to provide better service to both our members and the other stakeholders we work with. At every turn, AIT and Andy have been tremendous to work with. You could not ask for a better informed and responsive technology advisor," Paine concludes.

- [Read more about the UNIVERGE SV8100.](#)
- [Contact NEC to find out more.](#)