



Kyle Batts(l) of Batts Communications Services, NEC Associate, with Mark Eckman and Kurt Niemackl, owners of Dealer Preferred Warranties.

Customer

- Dealer Preferred Warranties (Shawnee, KS)

Market

- Insurance (Extended Auto Warranties)

Challenge

- Lower startup costs
- Lower total cost of ownership (TCO)
- Monthly savings
- Scalability for future expansion
- Fully featured phones
- Real-time call center metrics
- Full-featured functionality

Solution

- SIP trunking (savings every month)
- Elite IPK II
- InACD software
- EliteMail LX
- Dterm telephones

Results

- Low startup costs
- Low TCO
- Monthly savings thanks to SIP trunking
- Fully featured phones
- Real-time call center metrics
- World-class messaging
- Shorter cash-positive cycle time

NEC, Batts, BandTel Collaboration Becomes Dealer Preferred Warranties' Success Secret

NEC Associate installs IPK II with SIP Trunking

In November 2006, Kurt Niemackl called Kyle Batts of Batts Communications Services an NEC Associate located in Raytown, Mo., asking for assistance with a telecommunications system. It turned out to be an important call.

At the time, Niemackl and his partner, Mark Eckman, were launching Dealer Preferred Warranties, an extended auto warranties marketing company. Their business concept was sending direct mail to owners of cars about to go off factory warranties, generating in-bound call traffic and closing sales over the phone in a contact center environment.

The price of the call center equipment and software along with the number of agent positions and the monthly cost of telecom connections were all crucial line items in the company's financial plan.

THE CHALLENGE

After meeting with Niemackl and Eckman, Batts knew the challenge was cost control; after all, the company was a startup.

Besides being economical to install and having a low total cost of ownership (TCO), the system had to be highly scalable and flexible and provide long-term investment protection.

THE SOLUTION

Batts recommended NEC's Elite IPK II telephone system with ACD, the newest version of NEC's proven Elite key platform. The IPK II provides up to 456 ports and is available in either a 2U form factor chassis or a traditional server form.

The IPK II supports pure IP telephony, time division multiplex (TDM) service, or a combination of the two, giving SMB-market companies the freedom to migrate to pure IP communications solutions when they decide.

IPK II's ACD/MIS tracks Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) traffic and statistics in real-time while InACD call center software distributes calls among available agents. The system also turns either current or historic information into customized, printable reports.

“The system works flawlessly,” says Niemackl. “We were particularly impressed by the collaboration and coordination between Batts, NEC and BandTel. They were committed to delivering this solution, and they got it done in record time! We’re very grateful.”

Batts also recommended EliteMail® LX, a proven voice mail system combining automated attendant, audiotext and fax detect and notify functionality into a completely integrated business solution that helps employees communicate more effectively with customers and co-workers.

As for the system’s connection, using the incumbent local exchange carrier or a competitive local exchange carrier with traditional TDM would certainly work, but Batts thought he might have a better way—SIP trunking.

Batts knew Session Initiation Protocol was an open, mature protocol. SIP service providers offer call control and routing over VoIP trunks so enterprises can maintain a single, pure IP connection to carrier clouds.

In January 2007, Batts learned from NEC executive Jim Hogan that SIP trunking was commercially available from BandTel headquartered in Newport Beach, Cal. NEC had already tested the service in its lab and rated it an excellent interconnection option.

BandTel is strongly differentiated and preferred over other, smaller SIP providers: It is the only SIP trunking provider with a fail-safe architecture, high quality of service and complete echo cancellation. It can natively handle high call volumes, provide 99.999% uptime and ensure toll-quality VoIP calls worldwide. Its dialing plans are designed for any budget, and include both flat-rate and minute-usage agreements.

Batts compared the cost of a local CLEC’s primary rate interface (PRI) to TDM versus BandTel’s SIP trunking. He found SIP trunking was 10 percent to 40 percent less expensive.

RESULTS

The Dealer Preferred Warranties executives green-lighted Batts Communication Services’ recommendations and gave the NEC Associate only one week to install it.

Batts’ company met the aggressive deadline, installing a nine-agent contact center. It runs on an IPK II ACD-2U form with InACD software, and is set up with 12 trunks so all nine agents can be on line at once.

Besides serving as the company’s connection to the Internet cloud, BandTel reliably provides Dealer Preferred Warranties with secure, real-time, web-based access to call metrics such as call attempts versus completed calls and call duration. BandTel’s SIP trunking service has maintained a 99.5 percent call completion rate along with “five-nines” uptime.

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“Our immediate objective is to expand to 35 agents,” continues Niemackl. “We like the scalability of the IPK II. We like the low TCO, too. As a result we are able to conserve our investors’ seed capital going in and continuing month after month. That means we will be able to go cash-positive sooner than if we had gone with a PRI-TDM system.

“There’s no doubt that BandTel and NEC IPK II hardware and software form a powerful bundled solution NEC Associates can sell into SMB customers requiring dependable, scalable systems with tremendous investment protection. What NEC and BandTel have is exactly what the market needs,” says Kyle Batts.

According to BandTel CEO Chris Dunk, “I’m very proud that BandTel’s premier SIP trunking service can team with NEC equipment to provide a competitive edge to companies like Dealer Preferred Warranties and Batts Communications Services.”

“I’m not saying we wouldn’t have been able to go into business without BandTel, NEC and Batts, but their effective collaboration has contributed to our competitive success,” says Niemackl.