

Citel's EXTender™ Suite Bridges El Dorado

New Functionality and Cost Savings Provides a Managed Migration to IP Telephony

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"After we installed the first unit, word amongst the various departments quickly spread and we couldn't put them in fast enough. It's been very gratifying to see the satisfaction level of employees with the phone system," said Dunn. "The EXTender has been very reliable and we're extremely happy with the product."

El Dorado County, based in Placerville, California, has 3,000 employees in offices from El Dorado Hills to South Lake Tahoe. Like many businesses and government agencies around the country, the County utilizes standard T1 circuits to serve the voice and data communications needs of its branch office employees. Although adequate for basic voice communications, the T1 circuits were very costly. More critically, the equipment utilized at branch locations could not handle advanced PRI signaling capabilities, and lacked the functionality to deliver features such as voice mail notification, caller ID information, and conference bridging. The county communications department was receiving frequent complaints from several county departments dissatisfied with the lack of functionality on their Avaya Merlin Magix® handsets.

Steven Dunn, El Dorado County senior communications analyst with the information technology department, knew a better solution was necessary. Based on a recommendation from Avaya, Steven and his team began evaluating the Citel EXTender™ 6000 and PBXgateway™.

The Citel EXTender 6000 is a multi-user remote client device that extends the features and functionality of a central PBX to branch locations over T1, E1, ISDN, frame relay, and IP circuits. One or more EXTenders are deployed at each remote location, and a compatible Citel PBXgateway is deployed at the central PBX location. Traditional PBX distance limitations are eliminated, as well as the need to support separate PBX or Key Telephone Systems (KTS) at remote locations. As a result, both capital expenditures and the need for support resources are reduced. The EXTender 6000 delivers business quality voice and advanced applications utilizing existing PBX infrastructure investments, without upgrading to an IP PBX. With the EXTender 6000, employees in remote county offices use the same full-featured digital sets as the central PBX site, as well as central messaging, call accounting, and Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) features.

Utilizing the robust RVPoIP (Remote Voice Protocol over IP) for transmission of voice and PBX features, the EXTender 6000 allows standard T1/E1 technology to deliver advanced PBX functionality to remote sites.

Robust Solution, Seamless Roll-Out

To prepare for deployment, Steven and his team lab tested Citel's EXTender and PBXgateway with 48 phone connections. Bandwidth stress was applied in an effort to make the equipment fail and to determine at what point failure would occur.

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El Dorado County began with a deployment of eight Citel EXTender 6000 units in 2005 to employees without a G3 switch in their satellite office. By the end of 2006, the county deployed another eight EXTenders.

"All new equipment has its little idiosyncrasies and can take some time to learn, but we were very pleased at how easy the EXTender was for us to roll out," continued Dunn. "After we installed the first unit, word amongst the various departments quickly spread and we couldn't put them in fast enough. It's been very gratifying to see the satisfaction level of employees with the phone system," said Dunn. "The EXTender has been very reliable and we're extremely happy with the product."

When the communications department at El Dorado County is ready to upgrade to an IP PBX, they plan to deploy Citel Portico™ Telephone VoIP Adapter (TVA™) units. TVAs will allow county employees to quickly and cost-effectively migrate to new feature-rich IP PBX functionality, while utilizing existing PBX handsets and wiring infrastructure.

About Citel plc.

Citel enables SMEs, large enterprises, and service providers to realize the cost and productivity benefits of IP telephony while at the same time leveraging their existing PBX infrastructure. Businesses with single or distributed locations and PBX vendors can now deploy next-generation IP applications and services at their own pace, with little business disruption. Service providers can deploy Hosted IP telephony services quickly, without having to "rip and replace" existing enterprise PBX handsets and LAN wiring. Citel is a publicly traded company with corporate headquarters in Seattle, and development offices in Calgary, Alberta (Canada) and Nottingham, England (UK). For more information, visit www.citel.com.