

A Transparent VoIP Migration in Ontario

Portico™ Telephone VoIP Adapter (TVA™) Extends Life of Existing PBX Telephones; Economics “Makes Finance Group Happy”

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For more than 90 years National Sales and Distribution Inc. in Ontario, Canada, has been serving the Yellow Pages Group as an exclusive distributor of telephone directories for Quebec and Ontario. The company sells advertising and other directory products primarily through a 20-person call center.

As the company’s Nortel Norstar® PBX began to show its age, Allan Kobelansky, a network consultant to the company, began to search for options to replace the system with an IP PBX. He wanted a system that would allow transparent migration for the call center agents and reduce the company’s total monthly operational expenditures. When he completed his analysis, most of the options were beyond the economic reach of his client. New handsets, wiring, upgraded LAN gear, disruption, and retraining proved expensive and cumbersome.

Based on its attractive low-investment and robust functionality, Kobelansky chose an Asterisk open-source IP PBX. But new handsets and other associated expenses were still an inhibitor. “I looked at the cost of new IP phones and saw it would be a significant expense,” he said. “What I really wanted was a device to connect the existing Norstar phones into the Asterisk IP PBX. I searched the web and came across Citel’s Portico TVA. It was exactly the solution I was looking for.”

National Sales and Distribution Inc. purchased two Citel Portico™ Telephone VoIP Adapter (TVA™) units, which were installed after the office closed on a Friday evening.

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No End User Training Required

“When the call center employees arrived for work Monday, everything was the same to them except for a slight change to the phone display,” continued Kobelansky. “No one even noticed I’d made the change to an Asterisk platform – it was completely transparent to the employees. We literally didn’t have to do any end user training.”

Kobelansky estimates new IP phones comparable in quality to the Norstar® handsets would have cost about \$200-\$250 per unit. And total deployment costs, including new LAN switching gear, wiring, and retraining would have added substantially more to the “per port” price of the deployment.

“Portico really is about making the finance group happy by extending the amortization of your existing phones,” said Kobelansky.

The Bottom Line

“I’m a telecommunications engineer and this is one of those products that you dream about developing yourself,” said Kobelansky. “This product is exactly what I was looking for and it does everything as advertised. You literally could set up a call center overnight with this technology.”

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.