



Playing for Keeps

Boston Celtics Score Big with the Avaya™ IP Office Solution

When sports fans want tickets, or season ticket holders need service, the Boston Celtics organization must be able to turn on a dime and respond quickly and efficiently. To keep their office game in shape, the Celtics rely on the Avaya™ IP Office solution.

Industry:
Professional sports

Challenge:
Support staff communications and a call center for ticket sales

Solution:
Avaya™ IP Office

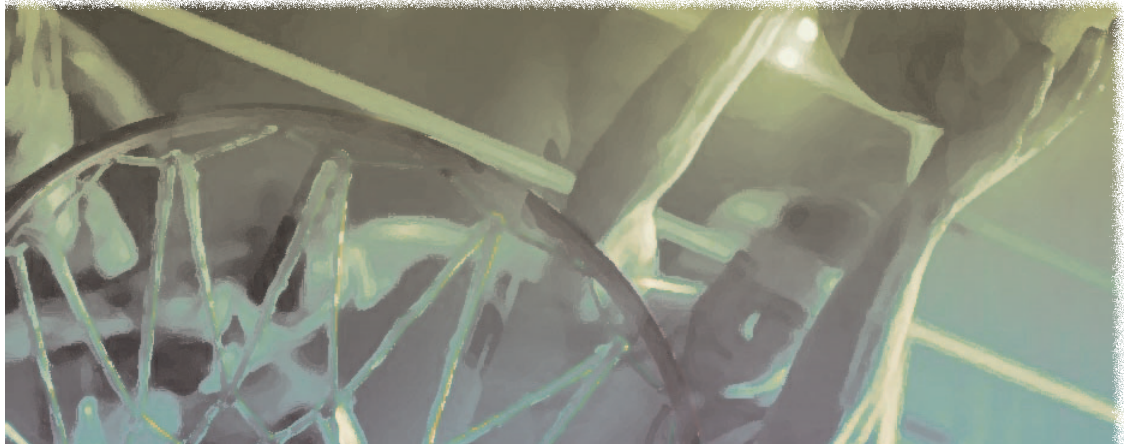
The organization supports the renowned Boston Celtics, the most successful franchise in professional sports history. Although the Celtics have known tough years, no other professional sports franchise can match the team for its record of success. Both on and off the court, the entire Boston Celtics organization has a long-standing legacy of achievement.

Business Challenge

In November 2001, Celtics Director of Technology Jay Wessel realized that it might be time to start shopping for a new telephone system. The organization was using an 18-year old Executone system that, although still adequately managing the Celtics'

needs after almost two decades of use, was beginning to show signs of its age. Individual handsets were failing, and parts were difficult, if not impossible, to obtain. Wessel feared the day the entire system itself would fail—possibly during a busy season—leaving the organization unable to receive and process ticket sales or resolve customer issues.

Wessel needed to replace the Executone before it disrupted daily business, failing the organization and disappointing the fans that would be unable to purchase tickets. Wessel took almost a year, researching various products and planning how each might be deployed in the Celtics organization.



“The Avaya IP Office was the best way to get next-generation technology and a path for the future of the Celtics’ telephone needs in a cost-effective manner. It had all of the features offered by competitors, but gave us the flexibility to use standard digital handsets rather than IP-enabled ones. I didn’t need to re-wire the building in order to deploy the solution, saving us real dollars.”

Jay Wessel, Director of Technology, Boston Celtics

Avaya’s Solution

Wessel scrutinized Avaya’s solutions, as well as those offered by Cisco. He also took cursory looks at the platforms offered by second tier competitors, such as Nortel and NEC. He gave Avaya’s products priority in the search, based on the company’s heritage as a provider of reliable phone systems and call center solutions.

In narrowing down the product field, the Avaya IP Office solution was the clear choice.

“The Avaya IP Office was the best way to get next-generation technology and a path for the future of the Celtics’ telephone needs in a cost-effective manner,” Wessel explained. “It had all of the features offered by competitors, but gave us the flexibility to use standard digital handsets rather than IP-enabled ones. I didn’t need to re-wire the building in order to deploy the solution, saving us real dollars.”

IP Office Applications Provide Enhanced Functionality

The IP Office solution not only supports organization executives, but also the Celtics’ call center. The system was the perfect size to handle the small, yet critical 15-agent center that handles ticket sales and customer service with enhanced call center capabilities. For example, implementation of special call

routing is being considered. Using the strong call center capabilities that the IP Office offers, calls from season ticket holders can be routed to agents specially equipped to handle their requests. Also, IP Office’s computer-based call tracking tool—eConsole—makes center management a breeze. Wessel can leave the eConsole window open on his desktop, and glance at current call volume, transfers, or hold times as often as he’d like.

In addition to sophisticated call center functionality, the IP Office system presents users with many other unique, useful features that facilitate productivity and efficiency on the job. The Celtics will soon be implementing remote access servers, or RAS, for example. IP Office offers RAS as a standard feature of the platform. Implementing it will allow staff members who travel with the team to access the company’s network while on the road, making them even more productive. It also provides the opportunity for staff members to work from home, if needed.

“The detail of reporting available with the Call Center Manager is awesome,” Wessel states. “It’s much easier to route calls appropriately, manage the call volume and staff the center based on information from the reports. And they are easy to generate as well.”

Integrated networking is another benefit of the Avaya IP Office system that Wessel hopes to imple-

“Up-time has always been most important to me. The IP Office lives up to my expectation, offering rock-solid reliability and dependability. With Avaya’s IP Office, we haven’t missed a call yet. I’m very happy with the solution.”

Jay Wessel, Director of Technology, Boston Celtics

The Solution at a Glance

- Avaya™ IP Office
- Compact Contact Center application
- Call Center View
- Voice Mail Pro

ment in the future. Because both the FleetCenter, where the Celtics play, and the team’s practice facility in nearby Waltham, Massachusetts, use Avaya telephone systems, Wessel has the capability to network those facilities’ Avaya systems with the IP Office, offering fans easy access to the Celtics organization. Such open access to the organization will allow Celtics’ management to offer even better customer service than they already provide through traditional means.

Beyond the feature-rich platform that the Celtics’ organization now uses, Wessel was pleased by the smaller size of the physical unit within which Avaya’s IP Office is housed.

“This is a small, clean unit,” says Wessel. “The implementation allowed me to clear a great deal of clutter out of my phone closet, freeing up valuable real estate space.”

Implementation as Flawless as a Three-Point Shot

Wessel credits Avaya for a smooth cutover from the old system to new. Everyone worked to anticipate potential problems and solve them prior to the cutover date. The Celtics conducted an extensive testing process, bringing in a new T1 line, which could be used for testing purposes prior to the cutover. Avaya was very helpful, sending a technician who had in-depth knowledge of the IP Office to assist with the transition.

“The cutover went amazingly well, like clockwork, really,” Wessel said. “We conducted a great deal of testing on the system before the cutover, and Avaya was a great help in solving any issues that arose prior to my migration date.”

The Avaya IP Office system is a slam dunk for the Celtics. The solution offered a cost-effective way to upgrade the Celtics’ telephone system and better support its call center and Celtics’ fans.

“Up-time has always been most important to me,” Wessel stated. “The IP Office lives up to my expectation, offering rock-solid reliability and dependability. With Avaya’s IP Office, we haven’t missed a call yet. I’m very happy with the solution.”

Learn More

More than one million customers, including 90% of the FORTUNE 500® as well as many government organizations, rely on Avaya. Avaya is a global leader in developing, designing, building and managing voice and data networks for enterprises, with expertise in infrastructure, applications and services. To find out how Avaya IP Office can enhance your communications solutions, please contact your Avaya Authorized BusinessPartner or Avaya Client Executive, or visit www.avaya.com/learnmore/ip

For more about Avaya and our other award-winning solutions, visit www.avaya.com