



Red Deer Public Library is Open for Discovery with the Avaya™ IP Office Solution

Converged Voice and Data Networks
Customer Relationship Management
Unified Communication
Supported by Avaya Labs and Services

Today speed is critical, accuracy essential, and efficiency expected. In this fast-paced environment, libraries—the world’s information repositories—must be innovative and on the forefront of emerging technology in order to satisfy the needs of the modern public. Established in 1914, Red Deer Public Library of Alberta, Canada serves more than 70,000 community members from two branches and is currently known in Canada as a forward-thinking organization. It prides itself on its strategic partnerships with businesses and participation in key regional initiatives that allow it to implement the very best emerging technology in each of the Library’s locations. While these partnerships allowed Red Deer Public Library to strengthen its computer network, its telephones were in serious need of upgrade.

The Business Challenge

At the end of 2001, the Red Deer Public Library was using another vendor’s telephone system, which was full to capacity. Extra handsets and trunks were needed, but the existing system couldn’t handle the expansion or traffic. Though library management didn’t realize it at the time, the at-capacity system was losing calls coming in from patrons, putting the organization’s much-valued reputation for high-quality customer service at risk.

Additionally, the existing system only offered a four-port voicemail system, which offered little flexibility in terms of call routing and answering by an automated

attendant. Consequently, calls were misdirected, resulting in less seamless customer service.

Problems in customer service and inadequate capacity were not the only drawback to Red Deer Public Library’s existing phone system. Under the old configuration, the two library branches were completely separate. If patrons called the Downtown Branch and were referred to a program located at the Dawe Branch, they were instructed to hang up and call the other branch at a different telephone number.

However, the installation in 2001 of a fibre link between the two branches—a result of the RedNeT partnership of the City of Red Deer, Red Deer Public Library and the two School Boards—provided the Library with a state-of-the-art network backbone





which could be used to deliver new telecommunications solutions that would resolve such issues.

Updated Infrastructure, Updated Telecommunications Goals

So the management team at Red Deer Public Library began to consider its alternatives. The ultimate goal? To add enough capacity to handle current telecommunications needs, have extra capacity to manage future growth, and integrate the library's two branches seamlessly, in order to provide excellent customer service to the Library's patrons. Upon defining these goals, Red Deer Public Library began its search for the best system to meet its needs.

The Avaya Solution

Avaya's new small to mid-sized business offer, the Avaya IP Office solution, would meet all of the Library's current needs while providing adequate capacity and scalability for future growth. The IP Office system would also integrate not only Red Deer's two library facilities, but could link the

libraries to other partners in the community that run programs in the library, such as the Family and Adult Literacy programs and the Computer Lending Program.

The Library considered some competing alternatives, but its decision to implement the Avaya IP Office solution was sealed at an open house during which the IP Office solution was demonstrated.

"I liked what I saw of Avaya's IP Office," says Scott Stanley, IT Librarian of Red Deer Public Library. "The architecture and design were solid as well as being easy to understand, and the ease of system upgrades was very attractive to me and my team. The phone sets were really slick-looking and provided quality service. So, I saw in front of me a total solution that provides end-to-end quality, from the system design right down to what sits on my desk."

Stanley, along with Library Director Dean Frey and others on the management team, agreed with Telebyte's recommendation and chose the Avaya IP Office system.

"Since we consider ourselves risk-takers, we were very willing to go with a newer solution," Frey states. "It allowed us to advance our reputation as using the very best in cutting edge technology, provided us with the additional trunks and flexibility that we needed in a new system, and has great capacity for future growth."

Customer Service Soars After IP Office Implementation

The Red Deer Public Library now has a sufficient number of trunk lines to handle the voice traffic coming in from patrons. With more calls reaching service staff than ever, customers' experiences and levels of service have improved, enhancing Red Deer Public Library's reputation for service and innovation.

The IP Office system not only integrates Red Deer's two library facilities, but can also link to other partners in the community that run programs in the library, such as the Family and Adult Literacy programs and the Computer Lending Programs.



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Scott Stanley, IT Librarian, Red Deer Public Library

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- Add enough capacity to handle current telecommunications needs
- Have extra capacity to manage future growth
- Enhanced customer service
- Integrate the library's two branches seamlessly
- Improve organizational efficiency

Avaya IP Office VoiceMail Pro offers the flexibility to implement several key features that enhance both customer service and organizational productivity. For example, the Library's previous call routing difficulties were solved through the addition of a "hoteling" feature, allowing users to program phones at various locations to temporarily become their extension. As a result, patrons are more likely to get to the appropriate department when transferred. The hoteling feature not only takes on the individual's extension number, but automatically programs the individual's preferred features onto the phone during their stay.

"The platform flexibility has really improved our customer service. For instance, we have a summer reading program for kids that doesn't have a permanent "home" at the library, it moves from space to space and branch to branch, depending upon the day," Stanley explains. "Under our previous system, there was no way to have a single telephone extension follow the group to each of the locations, and therefore no way to reach anyone working with the program at a single number. This made tasks like program registration exceedingly difficult."

'Hoteling' Offers Added Benefits

But through use of the Avaya IP Office solution's hoteling feature, the summer reading program is easily accessible to patrons, no matter where its coordinator resides on any given day. Program organizers can move freely among the libraries facilities, able to program their extensions to phones in any one of the facilities, thereby never missing a call or message; the reading program literature can now publicize the extension, allowing the program to grow.

In addition, phone extension transfers between branches are possible through the system, extension-only dialing is available between locations, and staff can easily move between locations or work remotely and still have access to necessary voice mailboxes in either branch.

"The solution's teleconferencing capability will be really useful to me personally," notes Frey. "Using the soft phone through the VPN, I'll be able to access my work telephone from home, allowing me to do business remotely when the need arises. It's simple and effective, and will increase my productivity."

The system actually helps us to achieve our goal of being “Open for Discovery,” which is our tagline. It’s up to us to reduce barriers to communication and truly make the library an open place that provides information easily. Avaya’s IP Office does that in spades.

Dean Frey, Library Director, Red Deer Public Library

Group functionality features, such as call queuing, will also benefit Red Deer Public Library. Auto Attendant will answer service desk phones. Calls coming in will be queued in the order that they are received, and the system will provide callers with approximate hold times. These features, planned for the near future, will offer patrons the type of service that the Red Deer Public Library is known for.

Clear Benefits with IP Office

Red Deer Public Library has realized quantitative benefits as well. It has been able to reduce its number of local phone lines since implementing the system; the Downtown Branch alone had seven dedicated voice lines and numerous fax and data lines, and the Dawe Branch had multiple lines as well. Currently, in both branches, only 16 total local lines are used, affording the Library a noticeable cost-savings each month.

Overall, Red Deer Public Library management is convinced that the Avaya IP Office solution provides patrons with better service and allows staff and volunteers to be more productive than they were with the old system.

“We are able to offer better customer service to our patrons since we implemented the system,” adds Frey. “Finally, the system actually helps us to achieve our goal of being “Open for Discovery,” which is our tagline. It’s up to us to reduce barriers to communication and truly make the library an open place that provides information easily. Avaya’s IP Office does that in spades.”

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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.

Benefits with IP Office

- Reduced monthly phone-line costs
- Enhanced customer service
- Increased employee productivity
- Increased capacity for future growth