

# ShoreTel administers care center excellence to School Health



Leading medical supply company chooses ShoreTel to modernize business communications system and improve call center capabilities



## CHALLENGE

- *Replace obsolete phone system with a modern business communications system that supports advanced virtual call center capabilities*

## SOLUTION

- *ShoreTel Unified Communications (UC) system with ShoreWare Contact Center application, ShoreGear 60 and 120 Voice Switches and 80 ShorePhone IP Telephones*

## BENEFITS

- *Distributed call center across remote offices with backup agents to help improve customer service*
- *In-depth monitoring and reporting functionality provides vital insight for planning and management*
- *Rich communications features help boost productivity*
- *System manageability saves resources and time*
- *Integration capabilities provide strong platform for growth*

Whether treating students for minor injuries or handling major epidemic outbreaks within the community, every school has the responsibility to be prepared and follow health official guidelines. For more than half a century, Illinois-based School Health Corporation has been helping school nurses, athletic trainers and other specialty healthcare providers ensure they have the proper supplies to manage and improve the health and well being of those entrusted in their care.

From bandaids to vision screening equipment, privately-held School Health Corporation supplies more than 7,000 general healthcare items to more than 60,000 schools across the United States. At the heart of the company's 50+ years' of success lies its dedication to customer satisfaction, which includes educating and training customers and sales representatives on how to best use each product.

Building these kinds of long lasting relationships requires a reliable and highly efficient communications system. However, the company's previous voicemail system on its outdated Avaya PBX was prone to frustrating outages, risking the delivery of important messages from customers. When the vendor announced it would no longer

support the system, School Health executives decided it was time to look at more modern, innovative solutions.

"A key criteria for the new communications system was the ability to improve our call center," explained Linda O'Brien, Director of IT at School Health. "We realized that by distributing calls across our remote offices in North Carolina and Florida, we could improve customer service with backup agents to ensure every call is answered." Improved reporting and call routing capabilities were also important to School Health, as vital tools to help organize and manage the call center, and keep up with the growing customer base.

## ShoreTel prescribes low TCO

The School Health team, which included Customer Services Director, Krist Seckinger, decided to issue an RFP, which they sent out to five major vendors and subsequently shortlisted to three: Cisco, Avaya and ShoreTel.

Working with Advanced Telecommunications of Illinois (ATI), the team visited each vendor, saw demonstrations, reviewed product information and diligently checked references. "ATI's Aaron Walsh guided us through every step of the





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School Health*

evaluation process, and really understood our needs,” Mrs. O’Brien said. “The ShoreTel ShoreWare® Contact Center application had all the features we were looking for on a communications platform that is incredibly user-friendly. Plus, when we looked at the total cost of ownership of the ShoreTel UC system, the choice was obvious.”

After ATI had conducted an in-depth network assessment, School Health installed a ShoreTel UC system comprising two ShoreGear® Voice Switches, a voicemail server and about 80 ShorePhone™ IP Telephones—40 for the call center, and the rest in the remote offices and warehouse. ATI also trained School Health users, providing phones they could try in advance, and cheat sheets to make the process quick and easy.

“The ShoreTel system was so easy to install that phones were placed on desks at 5 p.m. on a Friday evening, and within two and a half hours, the system was completely live,” said Mrs. O’Brien.

### *Vital signs improve at call center*

With six supervisors and about 35 agents in the call center, Director of Customer Service, Mrs. Seckinger, uses ShoreWare Contact Center for complete visibility into activities at the individual, group and company levels. Customer care teams cover about 10 territories across the country, so when a call comes in it is first directed to the regional team that supports that state; if nobody answers, then the call bounces to back-up groups.

“I can see how fast a group of agents is able to answer a call, move people into different groups quickly, and modify queues in real-time to quickly react to different situations,” Mrs. Seckinger explained. “The external assignment feature allows agents in remote offices to easily connect to the contact center for overflow during peak periods, greatly helping to improve customer service.”

ShoreWare Contact Center enables Mrs. Seckinger and her team to monitor calls for customer care training purposes. The ability to review call abandon rates is also important since School Health continues to measure its position in the marketplace in terms of market share and the satisfaction of customers,

suppliers, and manufacturers. Each day, the system enables the call center manager to generate an e-mail that shows the activity of the call center, including call abandon rates. This enables employees to see performance improvements and has proved a valuable motivator for the entire team. “Our customer care group has goals that they try to meet, and Contact Center allows them to put controls in place that are consistent with their bonus models.”

Managing the customer care center is a lot easier with the ShoreTel UC system, and the automated call distributor (ACD) feature in ShoreWare Contact Center. “It’s easy to change the message on the ACD so callers know right away if our company hours have changed, or we’re shutting down for an afternoon. The flexibility of the ACD means we can close for holidays or just shut down one office, and leave others open without the risk of frustrating our customers.”

### *Sports team gain a competitive kick*

In addition, the ShoreWare Contact Center Workgroups application enabled School Health to establish a separate division and queue for the sports health team group. This group has four-digit dialing and a dedicated number to handle all sports health related calls, but is also set to overflow to the main customer care group, to ensure that calls are answered. Similarly, School Health is using Workgroups for their internal IT help desk, so that IT experts can quickly help employees.

For Mrs O’Brien, ease of management and maintenance of the ShoreTel UC system has been a major time-saving benefit. Out of 100 employees, School Health employs just one part-time person to trouble shoot the ERP and phone system. “The administration tools are so user-friendly that we can easily manage the system within the IT group,” she said. “ShoreWare Director makes it simple to set up new users, move folks around and make other changes. Even as we’ve grown, we haven’t had to add staff to manage the system.”

Voicemail failures are also a thing of the past. ShoreTel’s distributed architecture has enabled School Health to implement their backup plans and meet their 99.999 percent reliability goals.



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For a growing middle market company which takes more than 80,000 phone calls per year, School Health depends on its industry-leading technology and human resources to support its vision to grow sensibly, and to reinvest in its customers professional growth and in worthy causes that improve the health and well being of the nation's children.

### *Productivity shows symptoms of improving*

For employees, the ShoreWare Call Manager application that comes standard with the ShoreTel UC system offers significant productivity boosting features. The Find Me feature helps ensure that important calls are received, and features like Directory and History make it quick and easy to look up phone numbers and forward calls.

“Our staff is constantly working on revenue-generating projects, so our time is limited,” Mrs O’Brien said. “The ShoreTel UC system has improved productivity by allowing them to communicate more efficiently, save time in finding the right people, and see voicemails in their Outlook e-mail. Our sales folks can give out their direct phone numbers to customers, rather than having to provide them with several numbers, so they can be reached regardless of their location—on the road, at home or in one of our remote offices.”

For Mrs Seckinger, the ability to reorganize the call center to improve efficiency and customer service means the company now has a solid foundation for growth. Ms Seckinger has already taken advantage of ShoreTel’s flexibility and designed some customized reports to help monitor and improve customer service. Moving forward, she is already considering ways to integrate the CRM system with ShoreTel.

“ShoreTel has enabled us to do things on our own that we could never do before,” Mrs O’Brien said. “We’re confident that ShoreTel has given us a strong communications platform that will help fulfill our vision of improving operational processes and strengthening our ability to take advantage of new strategic opportunities going forward.”