

CUSTOMER BRIEF

Century Furniture



Century Furniture opened its doors in 1948. Today, the company is one of the premier manufacturers of fine quality furniture and is recognized as the industry leader for its expertise in design, finishing and superior craftsmanship. Many of the finest homes in the U.S., including the White House, own Century Furniture.

Nearly all of its furniture is manufactured in Hickory, North Carolina. The company prides itself on never closing a factory in its 60-year history. Its subsidiaries include a large case goods facility, multiple upholstery factories, a world-class chair facility and a highly advanced technical center for product development and testing. To learn more, visit www.centuryfurniture.com.

Challenge

Century's executive management launched an initiative to analyze the company's target market, its customer service approach, and key areas of opportunity for growth. One result of this initiative was the pursuit of a new channel: the design industry, in which Century could promote its high-end products to studios and interior designers. Dedicated representatives were assigned to manage these relationships. At the same time, all 1,800 employees were engaged in efforts to redefine customer service at the company. Century realized it had best-in-class products; it now needed a best-in-class infrastructure to match.

With eight locations in Hickory, North Carolina, four others in Valdese, North Carolina, and 12 showrooms throughout the U.S., Century's small telecommunications staff of just two is kept extremely busy. Over the past few years, Century had replaced several legacy systems with Avaya Servers and Avaya Media Gateways, and had chosen Avaya Modular Messaging. With this IP network platform, Century also updated many of its showrooms with IP Office systems. With more sites left to upgrade and no plans to add more telecommunications staff, Century had to find a way to maximize productivity.

Solution

The Avaya Authorized Platinum BusinessPartner recommended Avaya 24 x 7 Remote Hardware Support for all of Century's locations, and Century values the Avaya Expert SystemsSM ability to identify and fix minor issues independently.

"We start early in the morning and need to have someone to reach if there is a problem in the middle of the night." said Teenya Gantt, telecommunications manager at Century Furniture, *"Avaya has been excellent about taking care of problems, often before we even knew there was an issue."*

With its intimate knowledge of the Century Furniture solution, the Avaya Authorized BusinessPartner recognized the benefit Century would derive from Avaya IP Support Services (IPSS) with Software Release Management (SRM) and Proactive IP Support for the company's largest locations. Gantt called the proposal "very cost effective."

"There wasn't a significant difference compared to what we were already paying for maintenance. The benefits being offered to us were impressive." Gantt says. Among the benefits Century valued most were upgrade/update management, gaining a single point of responsibility and accountability for troubleshooting and maintaining its IP communications issues, and having an expert in its corner through the complex course of IP upgrades.

With 24 x 7 Remote Hardware Support and IPSS, Century's entire network is monitored and issues are resolved quickly and efficiently. "If there are errors that impact voice or data," says Teenya Gantt, telecommunications manager at Century Furniture, *"I receive a ticket from Avaya telling me where*



the errors occurred. Both our telecommunications and the IT departments have years of experience, but sometimes we don't have the cross-discipline technical depth to resolve an issue, especially with IP. So it is good to have someone like Avaya on our side."

Through SRM, Avaya manages the identification, risk assessment, schedule and implementation of updates. *"SRM takes the guesswork out of the equation. It is very daunting when you try to handle these updates on your own," Gantt says. "I no longer have to worry. Our Avaya single point of contact alerts me of potential updates and then gives recommendations. Avaya allows me to make choices without dictating what needs to be done. I tell them what I want and when I want it and they let me know when updates are completed."*

When asked what she would tell anyone considering IPSS, Gantt responds: *"I would tell other customers do it, do it, do it! We have better service and the most up-to-date software and technologies at our disposal. Knowing that someone is watching our network gives us a sense of security we didn't have before. I am very pleased with Avaya IPSS."*

Applications and Services

- Avaya Communication Manager 3.1
- Avaya S8500 Servers
- Avaya G350 Media Gateways
- Avaya G650 Media Gateways
- Avaya G700 Media Gateways
- Avaya Modular Messaging
- Avaya Extension to Cellular
- Avaya IP Office
- Avaya Expert SystemsSM
- Avaya Global Services
 - 24 x 7 Remote Hardware Support
 - Avaya IP Support Services (IPSS)
 - Software Release Management (SRM)
 - Proactive IP Support

Results

- **Permits focus on key projects.** Century Furniture's telecommunications staff is able to focus on the replacement of its legacy systems and enhancing its infrastructure. Limited staff is not "spread too thin" with support issues and systems maintenance.
- **Instills peace of mind.** Knowing its network is being monitored and issues are being resolved on its behalf, often without Century Furniture's knowledge, provides security. An expert is in its corner through the complex world of IP upgrades. Update management is handled by experts.
- **Provides single point of responsibility.** Having a single point of contact and direct access to technically astute Avaya services experts allows the telecommunication staff to get answers to pressing questions and assistance with complex issues.
- **Delivers ongoing cost effectiveness.** Century Furniture does not need to add additional resources even as it continues to migrate to IP telephony. Updates are cared for without having to incur additional expense or gain internal approvals.

For more information on how Avaya Intelligent Communications can take your enterprise from where it is to where it needs to be, contact your Avaya Client Executive or a member of the Avaya Authorized BusinessPartner program, or visit **"Do Your Research"** at www.avaya.com.

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— Teenya Gantt, telecommunications manager