

- IP Telephony
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- Mobility
- Services

CASE STUDY



How Avaya Maintenance Services Puts Dollar Rent A Car in the Driver's Seat

Challenge:

Dollar Rent A Car requires constant uptime from its contact center services; even an hour of downtime can cost the company a significant amount of money and negatively impact its bottom line.

Solution:

In order to maintain maximum uptime and remain running at peak efficiency, Dollar Rent A Car chose Avaya Maintenance Services and monitoring by Avaya EXPERT SystemsSM Diagnostic Tools.

Value Created:

- Dollar Rent A Car saved approximately \$500,000 in a single day thanks to Avaya Dedicated Technicians who, under the Avaya Maintenance Agreement, were able to swiftly replace and repair equipment struck by lightning in one of the company's three main contact centers. The technicians got it back online quickly – without Dollar needing to purchase new equipment, which would have been a surprise in the year's IT budget.
- Dollar Rent A Car's operations are also more secure and reliable thanks to Avaya Maintenance Services. The Avaya Dedicated Technicians are able to remotely monitor the network and can often resolve problems remotely, before the automatic notifications alert Dollar staff to the issue.
- Having Avaya Maintenance Services allows Dollar Rent A Car to make smarter use of IT resources. While it still manages easy tasks in-house, Dollar simply outsources larger or more complex maintenance tasks to Avaya – allowing the in-house staff to handle more business-critical IT projects.

With annual revenues exceeding \$769 million and the highest profit margin of any car rental company serving airport customers, Dollar Rent A Car's results-oriented culture has given it

the added distinction of having the most efficient cost structure in the car rental industry.

The average Dollar customer is right at home with this cost-efficient philosophy – with more than 400 worldwide retail locations and a fleet of over 140,000 vehicles, Dollar Rent A Car has gained its market leadership by addressing the needs of the value-conscious business and leisure traveler segments. Dollar Rent A Car is also an industry standout when it comes to leading-edge technology. In addition to being the first car rental company to offer wireless service access to its Web site, Dollar is a "CIO Magazine" award-winner for its easy-to-use-interface. Given its two-pronged strategy of offering competitively priced vehicles together with a superior customer service touch, it's no wonder that the Dollar Rent A Car brand has become synonymous with customer value and convenience.

The Competitive Value of High-Performance Communications

When it comes to business-critical technology, Dollar Rent A Car's market success depends squarely on the performance of its two Oklahoma-based contact centers, each supported by

Avaya DEFINITY[®] Communications Servers. The importance of Dollar's communications network is keenly appreciated by Christopher Gallegos, Director of Contact Center Technology, who said: "Dollar Rent A Car's market success is directly tied to the reliability of our communications technology. If our contact centers can't communicate with customers, there is an immediate impact to the business. We have a good understanding of the customer retention and revenue impacts of downtime, and I can tell you it's a pretty stiff number. Consider customers that need roadside assistance. If they can't get through to a member specialist for help, that's definitely not a good thing. Bottom line, we're in a highly competitive industry and, if callers get frustrated because they can't get through, we run the risk of losing that customer. One of Dollar's main value propositions is superior customer servicing. High performance communications is at the heart of our competitive positioning and differentiation."

Avaya Product Support – A Business "Must Have"

Given the business requirement for "always-on" contact centers, Gallegos turned to Avaya to provide key maintenance support.

"We've utilized Avaya for Product Support for many years. In addition to all the day-to-day benefits of keeping the network humming at peak performance levels, the Avaya Product Support (Maintenance Agreement) also provides an ultimate safety net for one of Dollar's most fundamental business processes – our end customer communications. Just like a safety net of any kind, you hope you never have to use it. But believe me, when trouble strikes, it's an absolute lifesaver.

"Let me give you an example. A few years ago, we took a direct hit to our Tallaquah, Okla., Center from a lightning strike. It pretty much took out an entire shelf on the switch. Because we had our Avaya 'safety net,' the right resources and equipment were flown in to get our system back up and running ASAP. We would never have come up as quickly if we didn't have Avaya there with us. Avaya Product Support saved us about a half-a-million dollars that day. Had I needed to do an outright purchase of the needed equipment to get us up and running, not only would that have been out-of-pocket money for Dollar Rent A Car, but it would have been a very unpleasant surprise to my IT budget."

Transparent Trouble Resolution

A key aspect of the Product Support that keeps Dollar's network "humming" is around-the-clock Avaya EXPERT SystemsSM Diagnostic Tools remote monitoring and resolution capability.

"If some part of the network hiccups during the night, we'll typically arrive in the morning and be greeted with a voice mail from the Avaya Network Operation Center in Denver, Colo., letting us know they've already fixed it or that a technician has been dispatched to take care of it. When it comes to remote system surveillance

and resolution, Avaya has got some super sophisticated capabilities. Their ability to remotely clear troubles is especially impressive. Typically by the time we are aware of a problem, it's already been resolved."

The Importance of a True Service Partnership

Dollar Rent A Car prides itself on the technological competency of its IT staff, and that makes for a perfect working relationship with the Avaya Global Services team.

"We're a hands-on organization with strong technical skills. Because all of our people have full certifications, we'll typically handle many of the day-to-day activities like call center vectoring and Moves, Adds, and Changes. And if something comes up that Avaya's remote systems can't fix, we'll often do the initial troubleshooting before the Avaya Global Services team arrives on site.

"From our perspective, it benefits Dollar for us to understand how the technology functions and be able to interact with it intelligently. The Avaya Product Support relationship is a perfect match for Dollar's approach to managing technology. The Avaya technicians know that we want to be involved in the up-front troubleshooting. They also know where our strengths lie, so they are able to complement us perfectly.

"The lightning strike incident is a perfect example of working hand-in-hand. In truth, it was our partnership that got us back up and running so quickly. All of us were in jeans down on the switchroom floor, working the problem together. We called it a night when the switch came up at three a.m., but the Avaya techs were back again a few hours later just to make sure everything was running smoothly.

They were fully committed to making sure Dollar was back in business. To us, that's real partnership."

Top Tier Support is Just a Call Away

In addition to utilizing the on-site support coverage provided by the Avaya Maintenance Agreement, Gallegos and his team regularly engage the expertise of the Avaya Dedicated Technicians.

"Dollar is a big user of the Avaya technical help line. Certainly our new technicians find it an invaluable resource as they become familiar with the equipment and applications. But the senior staff uses it as well, particularly for 'the tough questions' or just to brainstorm about some enhancements we're thinking about.

"One of the benefits of having access to multiple tiers of support is that there's always a specialized expert available to you. With the more difficult questions, our impression is the help line engineers enjoy these requests and view them as personal challenges. We've never been able to stump them – they've always brought on an engineer who knew the right answer."

Technical Expertise is Key

While Dollar's own technicians handle many of the routine communications tasks, Gallegos depends on the experience of the Avaya team to handle the more involved work.

"Beyond the support that's directly covered by Avaya Product Support, when we're deciding whether to perform a task in-house or engage an outside partner like Avaya, we look at two things: who has the greater expertise and is it most cost-effective to outsource it or do it ourselves? When we have standard equipment that needs to be installed, like cards in the

server, we'll do it ourselves. If it's an upgrade that's essential to our Avaya Call Management System (CMS), we'll look to the Avaya team. We clearly want to take advantage of their greater experience when it comes to the more complex and sophisticated tasks.

"Another area where the Avaya team shines is in their across-the-board expertise with communications applications. Whether it's our interactive voice response (IVR), our automatic call distribution (ACD), or computer-telephony integration (CTI), Avaya brings the right expertise to the table. Whenever we've wanted to push the 'applications envelope' at Dollar, Avaya has been there with a solution. In addition to their technical expertise, that also says a lot about the strength and flexibility of Avaya's technology."

There's No Substitute for Commitment and Teamwork

The advantages of Avaya Maintenance Services add up to a service partnership that Dollar Rent A Car considers best-in-class.

"Truthfully, we've had numerous overtures from alternative maintenance providers. And it's tempting because they often offer to do cheaper. But our experience with that kind of pitch has always been that we wind up losing something in the process. The personnel wouldn't be as dedicated, or they wouldn't behave as if they were part of the team. Most often, problems would take longer to fix. But we never forget that our communications is critical to our business. Because of that, we don't even consider these overtures. Given what's at stake, they're not worth the risk."

"When Dollar has a problem, Avaya gives us top priority, plain and simple. If there's a situation that is business impacting, we know that Avaya Global Services is going to take care of us fast. We've been very impressed with the commitment Avaya has for the wellbeing of our business. We've worked the numbers and, for Dollar, Avaya Product Support is a 'no-brainer'. Bottom line, you'd be hard-pressed to put a dollar value on a business relationship like this one."

Learn More

For more information on how Avaya can take your enterprise from where it is to where it needs to be, contact your Avaya Client Executive or Authorized Avaya BusinessPartner, or visit us at www.avaya.com

ABOUT DOLLAR RENT A CAR

Incorporated in 1965, Dollar Rent A Car has over 400 worldwide locations in 26 countries, with a significant presence in Australia, Canada, the Caribbean and Latin America, including 250 locations in the United States. The company and its licensees have locations at most major airports across the nation, and a fleet of more than 140,000 vehicles. Dollar's worldwide reservation centers are located in Oklahoma, and its corporate offices are located in Tulsa, Okla.. For more information on Dollar Rent A Car, visit www.dollar.com

Applications	Systems	Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avaya MultiVantage® Communications Applications• Avaya Call Management System• Avaya Interactive Response• Avaya Automatic Call Distribution• Avaya Computer Telephony Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avaya DEFINITY® Communications Servers	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Avaya Maintenance Agreement• Avaya EXPERT SystemsSM Diagnostic Tools

All statements in this Case Study were made by Christopher Gallegos, Director of Contact Center Technology.