



Challenge

The medical center needed a reliable, easy-to-manage enterprise communications solution that would seamlessly interconnect its seven (soon to be nine) locations on a single VoIP platform. Goals were to provide outstanding patient care and customer service, improve access by physicians and patients, and increase productivity for clinical and administrative staff.

Solution

Avaya Communication Manager with S8730/S8500/ S8300 Servers and G650 Media Gateways. Avaya Modular Messaging and Avaya Basic Call Management System (BCMS). Avaya one-X Deskphones (9620 and 9630); VPNremote™ for Avaya 4600 Series IP Telephones; and Ascom FreeNET i75 wireless handsets for mobile communications. End-user training and Avaya Global Services three-year maintenance agreement plus Software Support + Upgrades (SS+U).

Value Created

- Outstanding patient care
- Improved customer service
- Enhanced supervisory control of contact centers, especially with regard to workflow management and staff scheduling
- Mobility
- Quieter hospital environment for accelerated patient comfort and recovery
- Enhanced productivity
- Cost savings
- Ease of management
- Scalability
- Access to expert support personnel

Bert Fish Medical Center Improves Productivity, Customer Service, and Patient Care with Avaya IP Communications

As an extremely dynamic and constantly expanding health care complex serving New Smyrna Beach, Florida, and the surrounding area, Bert Fish Medical Center strives to provide its patients, physicians, nurses, technicians, and other staff members with state-of-the-art communications capabilities.

About two years ago the Medical Center's IT staff supplemented an older Avaya phone system that served four of their facilities with a Nortel VoIP system that was trialed at three additional sites. However, the lack of connectivity between the two systems was a constant problem for the IT staff, and it drew complaints from users.

IS Director Debbie Burgess explained, *"We had two phone systems that basically weren't 'speaking' to each other, and the problems related to that were becoming more and more difficult to handle. We saw that the situation was inconsistent with our IT philosophy of providing the best possible service to our staff and patients. This was the main driver of our seeking a new telecommunications solution. We wanted a system that would seamlessly interconnect all of our seven sites and have the capability to grow with us as we continue to expand."*

The IT team considered standardizing on an enterprise-wide Nortel system but decided to conduct a due diligence effort by looking at current Avaya offerings as well.

“When we learned that our existing Avaya system had a viable migration path, we wanted to compare the Nortel and Avaya offerings, side by side,” Burgess said. “As it turned out, our experience with Avaya was extremely positive because they made it easy for us to visualize their latest technologies through hands-on demos with live equipment at their lab in South Florida. We could see that the Avaya system would meet our needs quite well, and we did not have that confidence when we saw the Nortel offerings.”

Extensive preplanning leads to a successful implementation

The Bert Fish Medical Center IT team engaged with Avaya in a preplanning process that was extensive and thorough. *“Avaya consultants spent a tremendous amount of time with us, covering all of our areas of concern. There was a lot of emphasis*

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*- Debbie Burgess, IS Director,
Bert Fish Medical Center*

on making sure that the connectivity with remote locations was optimized, and on planning where to use VoIP and where it would not be used. Avaya listened to all of our ideas and did everything that was needed to make it all work.”

The implementation was managed on a staggered, planned downtime basis, with very accurate estimates provided by the Avaya team on how long each phase would take. Most work at the main hospital was done after 5:00 each night so that daytime functions would not be interrupted.

Burgess stated, “The engineers who worked with us during the planning stages were terrific, and a lot of the prep work was done in advance. And the implementation team was absolutely awesome. Our own staff was stretched out on other projects during the rollout period, but the Avaya team just hung in there with us, like the ‘troopers’ that they are, and made sure everything was done on schedule. If they hadn’t stepped up to the plate they way they did, we would have had to delay the implementation.”

The solution consisted of Avaya Communication Manager 5.1 with S8730 Servers, S8500 Servers, S8300 Servers, G650 Media Gateways and Enterprise Survivable Servers (ESS). Applications include Avaya Modular Messaging and Avaya Basic Call Management System (BCMS). Avaya one-X Deskphones (9620 and 9630) and VPNremote™ for Avaya 4600 Series IP Telephones are used, and several departments utilize Avaya DevConnect partner Ascom’s FreeNET i75 wireless handsets for mobile communications. Avaya Global Services provides a 3-year maintenance agreement and Software

Support plus Upgrades (SS+U). Avaya Global Services also arranged training for all end-users with IP phones and for all non-IT users of Modular Messaging.

“Doing more with less”

Bert Fish Medical Center is especially attuned to the mandate for health care nationwide, which Burgess describes as “doing more with less.” She commented, “We are always being asked to perform more services with fewer people and less money. It’s the condition of health care everywhere these days. We are extremely pleased with our Avaya communications solution because it is helping us to fulfill that challenge at several levels.”

Ease of management and time savings for the IT staff stand out as some of the most important benefits of the Avaya system, both for IT staff and their internal customers. Adds, switches, and changes are handled quickly and easily, with almost no traveling required. Paul Bonanno, Telecommunications Coordinator, explained, *“Our new platform and the applications and equipment it supports are infinitely easier and quicker to manage than anything we had previously. We’ve seen instances where whole departments have moved and carried their phones with them, just plugging them back in when they arrived at their new areas. We’ve also had whole new phone stations added quickly by non-technical personnel. In cases such as these we can do the back-end work remotely right from the central location. The system saves on down time, it makes our internal customers happy, and it increases the productivity of everyone involved.”*

While the Bert Fish IT team can manage the communications infrastructure, applications, and devices independently most of the time, there are times when they do call on the Avaya support team. Bonanno said that he and his colleagues have noticed a big difference now that they are working with the Avaya team. *“They know their products more intimately than service people we have worked with in the past, and from the support standpoint there is tremendous value in that.”*

Customer service enhancements, which focus primarily on the contact centers, have also been dramatic. Patient scheduling, according to Burgess, was a chronic source of difficulties and complaints because there were wait times that were unacceptable to many people, especially physician offices that wanted to schedule services.

“The Basic Call Management System from Avaya and its associated reporting capabilities have helped to virtually eliminate all complaints that we previously had about dropped calls and wait times,” Burgess commented. *“We had some reporting ability before, but it was cumbersome, strictly on paper, and definitely not in real time—which meant that problems couldn’t be addressed on the spot. The system we have now is intuitive and comprehensive. Our managers can view the status of the entire call center right on their computer monitors, and they can react immediately. Over the longer term, they have been able to use their reports to identify peak calling times, and they have changed their staffing models accordingly. So lately we haven’t heard a single complaint from a doctor’s office about scheduling problems.”*

Scalability and the movement toward unified communications have been top of mind for the Bert Fish Medical Center IT team since the successful deployment of their enterprise system. They are already looking ahead to equipping two more sites that will be established in the near future. They are also trialing the integration of voice mail and faxes with e-mail to achieve a unified communications environment, with an anticipated rollout to administrators in the near future.

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Mobility options improve productivity and streamline communications to improve patient care

One of the most important advances related to patient care and staff productivity is the deployment of Ascom FreeNET i75 wireless handsets among the emergency, nursing, respiratory, transport, and dietary departments. *“The benefits of these wireless phones are huge,”* stated Bonanno. *“They save us a lot of money on cell phone bills, and they provide immediate contact among many of the staff members who provide direct care for patients.”*

Burgess added, *“In addition to streamlining communications among the patient care staff, the wireless phones contribute to a quieter, healing environment for the patient,*

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- Tom McKearney, Executive Vice President of Marketing and Business Development, Ascom (US) Inc.

which is an important initiative that we are pursuing aggressively.”

Ascom (US) Inc., the manufacturer of the FreeNET i75 wireless handsets, is an Avaya DevConnect Partner. Tom McKearney, Executive Vice President of Marketing and Business Development with Ascom, said, *“Ascom has a very good relationship with Avaya through the DevConnect program. It allows us to do interoperability testing with various applications and hardware, so that the integration with Avaya can be seamless and effective, as it is at Bert Fish Medical Center.”*

Charlie Nowak, an engineer with InfoLogix, Inc. (one of Ascom’s development partners), worked on the installation at Bert Fish Medical Center. He commented, *“The seamless integration between the Ascom wireless handsets and the back-end Avaya platform helped to ensure a successful*

deployment. It enabled the Medical Center to move from Nortel to Avaya without any interruption of service for the users.”

Nowak said that the Ascom handsets provide seamless integration for voice mail, text, PC-to-phone, and broadcast messaging. The emergency department uses a rapid-response messaging function to call emergency care teams. The phones can also deliver lab results quickly, as a supplement to paper copies supplied. Future applications for the wireless phones are being explored for use at the Medical Center.

At the end of the day, it all comes down to patient care

Burgess concluded that the ultimate goal of all the communications initiatives at Bert Fish Medical Center is to deliver the best possible patient care, efficiently and effectively. “What our Avaya solution has done for us is to open so many doors that will take us down paths for enhanced patient

care. All of the benefits—from productivity and unified communications to cost savings and ease of management—come together in an overall approach that greatly streamlines the communications functions. The net result is that health care is constantly being improved so that it is delivered accurately, quickly, and with all possible consideration for the comfort of the patients.”

Learn More

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.

All statements in this Case Study were made by Debbie Burgess, IS Director, Bert Fish Medical Center; Paul Bonanno, Telecommunications Coordinator, Bert Fish Medical Center; Tom McKearney, Executive Vice President of Marketing and Business Development, Ascom (US) Inc.; and Charlie Nowak, Engineer, InfoLogix, Inc.

APPLICATIONS, SYSTEMS, AND SERVICES

- Avaya Communication Manager
- Modular Messaging 4.0
- Basic Call Management System (BCMS)
- Call Center Basic software
- S8730 Servers
- S8500 Servers
- S8300 Servers
- G650 Media Gateways
- G350 Media Gateways
- Enterprise Survivable Servers (ESS)
- Avaya one-X Deskphones (9620 and 9630)
- VPNremote™ for 4600 Series IP Telephones
- Ascom FreeNet i75 wireless handsets
- Avaya Global Services
 - IP Network Assessments
 - IP Migration services
 - Implementation & integration services
 - 3 -year maintenance agreement
 - Software Support Plus Upgrades (SS+U)

ABOUT BERT FISH MEDICAL CENTER

Bert Fish Medical Center is a 112-bed hospital in downtown New Smyrna Beach, Florida, that offers intensive and progressive care units, an emergency department, and outpatient surgery, radiology, and oncology centers. The hospital complex also includes adjacent medical office buildings and several satellite locations. The more than 800 employees and volunteers of Bert Fish Medical Center are committed to providing services to improve the health, well-being, and quality of life for the residents of Southeast Volusia County.

ABOUT ASCOM (US) INC.

ASCOM (ascomwireless.com) is a leading provider of on-site wireless communications for key segments such as hospitals, manufacturing, retail and hotels. More than 70,000 systems are installed at major companies all over the world. The company offers a broad range of voice and professional messaging solutions, creating value for customers by supporting and optimizing their Mission-Critical Processes. The solutions are based on VoWiFi, IP-DECT, DECT, Nurse Call and paging technologies, smartly integrated into existing enterprise systems. The company has subsidiaries in 10 countries and employs 1,200 people worldwide.

ABOUT AVAYA

Avaya is a global leader in enterprise communications systems. The company provides unified communications, contact centers, and related services directly and through its channel partners to leading businesses and organizations around the world. Enterprises of all sizes depend on Avaya for state-of-the-art communications that improve efficiency, collaboration, customer service and competitiveness.

For more information please visit www.avaya.com.

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