

Telecaribe, closer to its audience with Avaya solutions



How much do we listen to our audiences? Or rather, what technological tools do we provide for them to have an effective communication with us? Well, Telecaribe tells the success story of a TV channel, which, six years ago, embarked on a transformation process which led this regional media to discover, alongside Avaya, the benefits of digital communication.

With 33 years of existence, audiences in seven departments and about 11 million people being impacted, the well-known channel in the Colombian Caribbean region is not inexperienced in network convergence. In fact, it was the first public channel to emit its high-definition signal 100% digitally.

Nevertheless, up until 2013, Telecaribe experienced the limitations, restrictions and other disadvantages of fully analog communications in a framework in which many other TV channels already had a digital infrastructure, also known as an IP. Therefore, that year, the channel's inner structure started to undergo a complete technological transformation.

Jorge Lema, Telecaribe's Chief Technology Officer for more than 16 years, claims that "since 2013, we decided to fully take advantage of the virtues and benefits available in the market. Avaya accompanied us since the beginning, alongside one of its staff members, who was in charge of all the revolution process and technological deployment which has enabled us to grow considerably in many aspects".



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Simultaneous calls and teleconferences

The proximity of Telecaribe with its audience through channels such as telephone calls required a high-performance technological infrastructure which would allow the interaction in stable conditions, in an uninterrupted way and with good audio quality.

However, the analog systems which the regional media had at that time made them experience difficulties when handling those calls which Telecaribe received from its viewers and which needed to be aired in the preparation and production of its contents. Such interaction was, until then, very limited.

Therefore, Telecaribe acquired the Avaya IP Office solution with 90 fully operational extensions, which allow to create teleconference rooms, route them through an audio console and generate interaction between the presenters and the viewers.

“The IP Office solution also allowed us to begin handling the channel’s live broadcasting differently, as the possibility of taking two or three simultaneous calls in some cases (which is what we needed at that time) made our workflow concerning live broadcasting easier,” Telecaribe’s Chief Technology Officer pointed out.

On the viewers’ side, the change was seen as positive, as now they had a line with which they could permanently communicate with the channel and which been enhanced by the efficiency of a trunk (SIP) and a fully digital PBX, which ensures the concurrency of calls.

“The percentage of missed calls as opposed to what we had before has become, approximately, 90% effective.” Furthermore, the implementation of Avaya IP Office technologies reduced by 50% call management costs.”

— **Jorge Lema**, Telecaribe’s Chief Technology Officer pointed out.

Savings and efficiencies

The deployment of Avaya solutions had a very positive impact on Telecaribe. Among the most evident results, there was an effective communication with the viewers, who, before the technological transformation, underwent by the channel, were not able to communicate nor interact efficiently with the TV programs as a result of the telephone line congestion.

“The percentage of missed calls as opposed to what we had before has become, approximately, 90% effective,” Jorge Lema points out.

Likewise, the quantification of benefits provided by this technological transformation reveals that the deployment of Avaya IP Office technologies reduced by 50% call management costs, which for a company of the size of Telecaribe, represents a fairly high figure.

It should be highlighted that the IP Office solution is used in conjunction with another Avaya technology solution: VoiceMail Pro, a voicemail management software with automated attendant and call recording.

“At that time, we increased that optimization almost to 60 or 70%. What is now being paid for telephony services is minimum as compared with the costs from six years ago. This is one of the most important savings,” Telecaribe’s Chief Technology Officer said.

The advantage of a strategic ally

At first, Avaya solutions in Telecaribe lacked the fine tuning and customization which was needed to optimize the IP Office digital communications in order to make the most of it. Everything was part of the adaptation process.

According to Jorge Lema, “the beginning of the process was not easy. We were at a point where we didn’t even take advantage of the platform potential by more than 30 or 40%.”

Bercont, the company which served as Avaya solutions agent in Telecaribe, gave rise to a value-added after-sale service with which this company optimized the platform, improved some of its installations and which allowed the setting up of other equipment which made it possible to unify and monitor the user in the best possible way.

“This firm joined us after the deployment and it started to work very closely with us in the process of taking advantage of the tools, and, as from that moment on, a synergy around Avaya solutions was generated. Such synergy has enabled us to grow throughout this process”, Jorge Lema says.

On the other hand, Harold Crespo, Bercont’s commercial director, states that “we have built a good team with Avaya and Telecaribe, wherein we have learned each others’ common objectives . It is important to take advantage of the type of technology that has the best impact on the TV process and which makes external customer management easier.”

Avaya portfolio

Avaya integrated communications solution for Telecaribe mainly includes:

- Avaya IP Office™ telephony solution hardware, including analog/digital trunk interface cards.
- VoiceMail Pro. Voicemail management software with automated attendant and call recording.
- OneX-Portal. Unified communication platform, which enables the deployment of 'SoftPhone', through which the assigned users are able to use their business line extensions both in their physical telephone located at the workplace as well as in their mobile phone.

Comprehensive solutions

The good working experiences with Avaya turned into a trust relationship wherein Telecaribe has become a faithful ally of Avaya solutions. For this reason, the channel is always open to deploy other technologies of the Avaya portfolio.

Thus, Telecaribe also uses OneX Portal, a unified communications platform which enables the deployment of 'softphones', through which the assigned users are able to use their business line extensions both in their physical telephone located at the workplace as well as in their mobile phone.

"Furthermore, Bercont has complemented Avaya solutions by deploying equipment which enable communications through GSM (mobile phone) trunks, 'call billing software' to control internal use and IT safety settings to make sure that all 'softphone' users can get connected from anywhere in the world, without causing any vulnerability to the Telecaribe network," claimed Harold Crespo.

As regards the future, the relationship between Telecaribe and Avaya looks promising, since the channel is still undergoing its process of becoming a fully digital channel. This evolution, in which Avaya is expected to continue as the main partner, includes the replacement of many coaxial cables which can be found today at the audio and video consoles, in the communication network with cameramen or in the production 'master'.

Thus, the challenge lies in replacing all these cables and switchers with management systems which will make it possible to optimize the processes from and to the video or audio consoles. "When the analog systems which manually route the signals are out of operation, they are replaced with a convergent and safe 'software'-based network as it is easier to manage", Telecaribe's Chief Technology Officer stressed.

Ultimately, the Telecaribe case shows that the technological transformation is a short and long-term profitable investment which must be considered, mainly because of all the benefits which it offers in relation to the users. In most cases, the users will be the most sensitive to the change, although, later on, they will value all improvements made, especially when it comes to the interaction with companies cherished by the public.

Sometimes, the effectiveness is not measured in money terms when there are benefits which go far beyond, such as being able to open up to people's opinion and have the availability of giving them attention.



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About Telecaribe

Telecaribe, Televisión del Caribe's regional channel, was founded in 1986 in Valledupar. Nowadays, it is based in Puerto Colombia, near Barranquilla, and has impact on more than 11 million inhabitants in seven departments of the Colombian Caribbean Region. Telecaribe guides its actions towards the exaltation and development of cultural, social, political and economic values of the Caribbean Region. It promotes the integration and stimulates the education, training, recreation and entertainment of the inhabitants by means of the TV.

About Avaya

Businesses are built on the experiences they provide and every day millions of those experiences are built by Avaya (NYSE:AVYA). For over one hundred years, we've enabled organizations around the globe to win—by creating intelligent communications experiences for customers and employees. Avaya builds open, converged and innovative solutions to enhance and simplify communications and collaboration—in the cloud, on premise, or a hybrid of both. To grow your business, we're committed to innovation, partnership, and a relentless focus on what's next. We're the technology company you trust to help you deliver Experiences that Matter. Visit us at www.avaya.com.