



Customer Case Study

Lumber Company Cuts Customer Delays Down to Size

Executive Summary

Mountain Lumber Company

- Retail
- Boone, North Carolina
- 20 employees

Business Challenge

- Provide immediate response to customer order and delivery questions.

Network Solution

- Cisco Unified Communications and wireless solutions help ensure customer calls are routed efficiently and voicemail and advanced IP services like conferencing are available, so that hard-to-reach employees are always available.

Business Result

- Responses to customer inquiries that once took two days are now immediate; better messaging and call handling increases employee efficiency.

Mountain Lumber Company goes to great lengths to make it easy for customers to reach the right employee the first time.

Business Challenge: One Business, Three Phone Systems

When you're running a construction supply business, making your customers successful is critical to your success. When busy contractors call, they need to know that their lumber will arrive at a job site on time. With just-in-time delivery, contractors cannot have crews standing around. But your yard manager is across the street. How do you get your customers the immediate answer they need without giving them the runaround?



North Carolina's Mountain Lumber Company faced this situation daily, and even hourly. Business was booming, but the company found that its aging phone system just wasn't keeping up. Mountain Lumber had nine phone lines at its three locations, and when all these lines were in use, customer calls rolled over to a general voice mailbox. And other employees who wanted to reach someone at another location faced regular aggravation, winding up in voicemail several times a day. After a few tries, they would often give up and call an employee's cell phone, which increased costs.

Transferring calls to other locations was impossible, because each site had a separate phone number. Reaching someone at another site meant paging them using a separate intercom system with its own phones and lines.

"The overhead pages were very annoying because we heard them in all three locations," says Sandra Simmons, owner of Mountain Lumber. And maintaining the intercom system and extra phone lines cost more than \$300 a month.

Mountain Lumber needed a single, integrated phone system that would neatly tie its three sites together and make it easier for customers and employees to reach one another fast.

"The faster we can find out about product availability and shipping status, the better service we provide to our customer. With the Cisco solution, instead of waiting a day or two for a response, most of our customers get the information they need immediately."

– Sandra Simmons, Owner, Mountain Lumber Company

Network Solution: Right-Sized IP Communications

Working closely with AT-NET, a Cisco® Premier Certified Partner, Mountain Lumber installed Cisco Unified Communications with Cisco Unified CallManager Express, which provides IP phone service, voicemail, and automated attendant capabilities for all three offices. Voice calls and overhead pages travel over the same IP network that Mountain Lumber uses for data applications, and the solution is designed to grow and change when new phone lines or features are needed.

“Cisco was the best choice for Mountain Lumber because Cisco Unified Communications does everything the company needs—without requiring a large investment,” says Joel Sosebee, account manager with AT-NET.

Mountain Lumber installed a wireless network at a branch across the street from its main store, providing employees with Cisco Unified Wireless IP Phones 7920. Now, Mountain Lumber’s 20 employees work together more efficiently and serve customers better.

“Our yard manager has a wireless IP phone, and we can reach him more easily even if he’s some distance away from the building,” says Simmons. “We can transfer calls to any location, and we can send a page to any site using the same phones we use for regular calls.”

Checking messages is more efficient for everyone as well, thanks to quick, easy access provided by Cisco Unity® Express.

“Before, checking voicemail required dialing a separate phone number and access code,” says Simmons. “Now anyone can retrieve their voicemail by pressing a soft key on their IP phone.”

Cisco Unified Communications also eliminates the need for a separate intercom system. Employees can now send an overhead page to any one of the three locations by using their Cisco Unified IP phones to dial a special number. And paging just one location reduces overall overhead noise.

Business Results: Faster Response, Happier Customers, More Productive Employees

Cisco Unified Communications has dramatically improved customer service at Mountain Lumber, enabling callers to reach the people and information they need on the first try. Instead of taking a message and calling a customer back, a salesperson can instantly get the yard manager on the phone to find out whether an order was shipped.

“The faster we can find out about product availability and shipping status, the better the service we provide to our customer,” says Simmons. “With the Cisco solution, instead of waiting a day or two for a response, most of our customers get the information they need immediately.”

Employees at Mountain Lumber are also working together better with teleconferencing—a feature that wasn’t available on the old phone system. By conferencing in employees in different locations, the company saves drive time and travel expenses.

“Cisco Unified Communications is so easy to use that we set up our first conference call without even reading the instruction manual, just by pressing a key on the IP phone,” says Simmons.

Managing the system is easier as well. Employees can move a computer or phone to any location and simply plug it in, without waiting days for the phone company to schedule an appointment.

Mountain Lumber can continue to build on its network investment to meet new needs well into the future. For example, the company soon plans to merge its door shop with another business at a new location. The Cisco Unified Communications solution has plenty of capacity for

Product List

Routing and Switching

- Cisco Catalyst® Switch 3560
- Cisco 2821 Integrated Services Router

Security and VPN

- Cisco PIX Firewalls

Voice and Unified Communications

- Cisco Unified CallManager Express
- Cisco Unity Express
- Cisco Unified IP Phones

Wireless

- Cisco 1231G Wireless Access Point
- Cisco Unified IP Phone 7920

new lines and phones at the site. Mountain Lumber could even add customer relationship management tools to its network to further improve customer order tracking and service.

“We are ready for the future because Cisco Unified Communications has the features and reliability we need today as well as capacity to add new lines as we grow,” says Simmons.

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Unified Communications, visit: <http://www.cisco.com/go/cuc>.



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