City of Independence

City of Independence migrates to cloud calling and contact center platform to enhance community services

Organization	Location	Market	Solution
City of Independence	Independence, MO	State and Local Government	AudioCodes, Five9, IntelePeer, Microsoft, Poly

The City of Independence, Missouri, sought to enhance and streamline inter-department and constituent service and communications due to outdated systems.

System upgrades became a more apparent need during the COVID-19 pandemic. Government officials had to re-evaluate the use of their on-premise collaboration technologies due to challenging remote work constraints. City officials were utilizing the Microsoft Teams desktop platform for internal communications. Upon further review, the City discovered Microsoft Teams could be used as a solution to enhance remote work productivity and user experiences.

Post-pandemic, the City wanted to transition its entire voice communications and collaboration infrastructure to the cloud to streamline

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team interaction and provide quality constituent user experiences. Pleased with Microsoft Teams, city officials required that its cloud solution be seamlessly compatible with and expand on its current Microsoft Teams license.

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Custom cloud voice platform utilizing Microsoft Teams and Five9

The City of Independence comprises the courthouse, fire, police, city utilities call center, and more. The new cloud calling and contact center solution had to enhance constituent user experiences and improve inter-department communication.

In addition, the City's utilities call center has the second highest-used phone number due to monthly payments and inquiries from constituents. As a result, city officials required that their cloud solution feature a robust system that could handle high call volume and routing.

These needs and the desire for systems to co-exist with Microsoft Teams helped AVI-SPL focus its efforts to provide the user experience the City envisioned for employees and constituents.

"That started us down the process of designing and developing what a Teams migration from an unbiased solution looks like," said Fran Culbertson, AVI-SPL Account Manager. "What components and solutions are needed to enhance team and constituent experiences?"

AVI-SPL explored Microsoft Teams-compatible platforms and tools that could bring constituent communications to the highest possible standard. The team explored call automation, contact center

platforms, session border controllers, and SIP Phones. AVI-SPL's holistic solution recommendation included IntelePeer, Five9 Contact Center, and AudioCodes to meet the City's internal and external goals.

IntelePeer's Atmosphere delivered seamless SIP trunking to the City's Microsoft Teams' voice solution. Also, by choosing Atmosphere, the City team realized substantial cost savings since they retired legacy telephony connectivity.

Improving the constituent experience with cloud calling

"The City wanted to provide a better service to its constituents. So, everything from service to constituent interaction had to be logged and

recorded. For the city utilities call center, we looked at several solutions. But we ultimately landed on Five9 CCaaS Contact Center," said Culbertson.

Five9 Contact Center enabled agents to manage team and constituent interactions, provide real-time reporting, save reports for on-demand review, and store call recordings in a centralized cloud portal. Five9 features and functionality provided a better user experience by enabling city utilities call center agents to interact more efficiently with constituents and internally. The new contact center enabled numerous communication channels to accommodate customer preferences, including IM, email, chat, SMS, and voice messages.
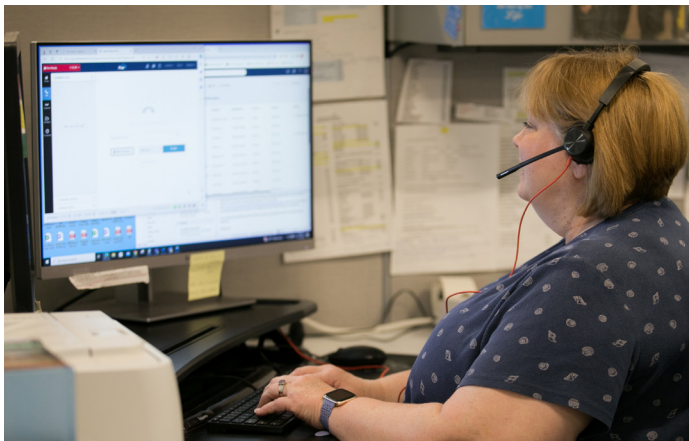
Managing high call volume and routing

AVI-SPL engaged AudioCodes for seamless cloud call routing between locations using high-availability virtual session border controllers (SBC). In addition to SBCs, AVI-SPL deployed AudioCodes SIP phones, Voca speech routing, and SmartTap 360 Live. These products natively connect to Microsoft Teams. SmartTap 360 Live helped police, fire, and others record all online voice, video, and IM communications.

In addition to ensuring city officials could communicate from IP phone to platform, AVI-SPL supplied agents with 150+ Poly voice headsets. Poly headsets gave agents more agility and flexibility in how and where they addressed team and constituent requests.

"Poly offered headsets for every end-user requirement," noted Culbertson. "Whether the need was in the call center or for a mobile worker, Poly offered a Microsoft Teams-compatible option. They are always the industry leader in developing and supporting the best-in-class headset products."

AVI-SPL designed a holistic voice cloud calling solution that offered seamless connectivity and new capabilities for City of Independence IT members, officials, and constituents. The solution was simply and systematically integrated with the help of our Microsoft Teams-certified professional services teams.

"All the requirements that we had laid out, which primarily was a seamless single interface for our users for all of their communications needs, including their chat, their messaging, telephone system, we wanted it all in one place," said City of Independence Manager Chris Johnson. "The solution that AVI-SPL initially presented was exactly what we needed," said Johnson. "It hit all the checkboxes for us."

AVI-SPL institutes simple, seamless, staggered cloud migration

AVI-SPL determined that a multi-phase migration process was the most efficient way to transition city voice solutions to the cloud.

"We architected a pathway that could smoothly and conveniently move groups to the cloud, taking stress off the client and ourselves," said AVI-SPL Collaboration Solution Engineer John Lanan. "Instead of moving 5000 people to the cloud simultaneously, we could pull 100 or 500 in real time."

Due to the City of Independence's size, departments, and number of phone lines, AVI-SPL technical experts worked hand in hand with city officials to organize and implement new systems. Together, our teams successfully migrated voice systems to the cloud. Consistent client communication, trust, and working around multiple project schedules and the City's

other projects helped the AVI-SPL exceed the city's project goals.

"The knowledge AVI-SPL brought to bear on cloud systems for this project was critical to our success," said City IT Manager Chris Johnson. "We were able to depend on them and trust them. It was huge for us as we worked through the project."

Results

The City of Independence's Microsoft Teams centralized cloud calling and contact center solution delivered speed, efficiency, and user-friendliness, enhancing work experiences. In addition, the transition to the cloud made it possible for the City's IT team to streamline practices by applying the right technologies for each need.

"Our focus is providing our customers the best level of support," said Johnson. "And it's not just about being fast and timely. It's about providing the right solution in the right manner so our employees can use it without additional support cycles. A big benefit of a common platform that centralizes service management is that our users can become proficient. Modernizing and moving to a system that's designed to be user-friendly has been critical for us. And our teams love its convenience and increased tool access and capabilities."

City employees and officials are not the only individuals seeing the benefits of migrating to the cloud.

"By investing in a new cloud calling and contact center system now, we're enabling and providing greater, more efficient, and communicative critical government services to the citizens of Independence," said Johnson.

AVI-SPL collaboration technology experts can support the management of or migration to various voice cloud calling and contact center platforms.

Contact us today to explore how our cloud-calling and contact center design, integration, migration, and management capabilities can help you.

About AVI-SPL

AVI-SPL is a digital enablement solutions provider who transforms how people and technology connect to elevate experiences, create new value, and enable organizations to thrive and grow. We are the largest provider of collaboration technology solutions, which include our award-winning managed services. AVI-SPL's highly-trained team works hand in hand with organizations worldwide – including over 86% of Fortune 100 companies – to strategize, design, deploy, manage, and support AV and UC solutions that are simple to use, scalable, serviceable, and measurable to ensure business objectives are achieved. Visit avispl.com to learn more, or connect with AVI-SPL on Twitter and LinkedIn.

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