



UPS Store streamlines service with TalkSwitch

The challenge

Audrey Washington had an enviable problem. Her UPS store in suburban Chicago had become too successful. Her already-busy staff was spending so much time on the phone answering routine questions about store hours and directions that they were finding it difficult to handle the rush of customers at the desk. Washington needed to find a way to help her staff improve customer service, while increasing the number of customers the store could handle at any given time — especially around the busy holiday season.

The solution

Felton Armand, the President and CEO of computer consulting company Advanced Information Resources (AIR) Inc., was a regular customer at Washington's UPS Store. Armand noticed how the constant interruptions to answer routine phone queries were interfering with customer service. Armand, whose company also consults on telecommunications solutions, had been recommending TalkSwitch telephone systems to his clients, and he knew it could be the ideal solution for the UPS Store.

"I know first-hand the impact that a high quality phone system can have on a business," says Armand. "My own business is made up of employees working from home offices, which in the past was something of a negative. We couldn't transfer calls between locations, we didn't have a centralized voicemail system and we had trouble staying connected. We just didn't look professional. Once I installed a TalkSwitch system, that all changed. The mix of features, functionality and the extreme flexibility of the system took my business to a whole new level. Seeing how busy Audrey and her staff were at the holiday season, I knew it could make a difference for them too."

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Armand spoke to Washington and introduced the TalkSwitch system to her. "When I told her that she could set up the built-in auto attendants to answer each incoming call and provide automated answers to store hour and location questions, her eyes lit up. To say the least, she was excited about the possibilities."

Washington's UPS Store has two incoming telephone lines, one of which is used for her fax machine. Armand recommended the 2-line/4-extension TalkSwitch 24-CA.

Armand says that one of the best things about the TalkSwitch system is that it's not a product that requires a lot of hand-holding. "TalkSwitch is designed so that a small business user can do much of the support and configuration work themselves. It's a powerful system, yes, but it's how user-friendly it is that really sets it apart."

"The system was incredibly easy to install," says Washington. "We opened the box, loaded the configuration software and immediately started setting up the phone system. Within an hour of taking it out of the box we were using it to answer calls!"

Auto attendants

Washington's callers are now greeted by a standard message that gives them the option to speak directly to a staff member or access a message with store hours and address/direction information.

“It’s really increased our efficiency, and improved the service we provide to customers in the store.”

“My staff always had to interrupt customers so that they could answer the phone, and the vast majority of callers were simply looking for our store hours or the best way to get here,” she says. “Now TalkSwitch delivers that information for us. It also ensures that people who call after we close are able to access the information as well. It’s really increased our efficiency, and improved the service we provide to customers in the store.”

“It’s also allowed us to ensure that all calls are answered exactly the same way. That ensures consistency and improved professionalism.”

Phone freedom

Washington was concerned that using a PBX would force her to use expensive, proprietary telephone sets. She had already invested in telephones and a fax machine and didn’t want to have to replace them. With TalkSwitch she didn’t have to, as the system is designed to work with any standard analog telephone set.

“One of the reasons companies install a professional telephone system is to help them make money,” Armand says. “But if they have a lot of upfront costs associated with them, it takes longer to see that return on investment. With TalkSwitch, there aren’t a lot of those upfront costs. The ability to keep using the telephones you already have is a huge advantage. Little touches like that really demonstrate how well TalkSwitch knows its customers.”

Call transfer

Being able to transfer calls between store extensions has been a real benefit too, Washington says. “It simplifies operations and increases efficiency. The fact that the system gives a reminder if the transferred call is not picked up is great. I love that feature.”

Day and night modes

“We used to have a lot of calls that would come in overnight with people looking for store information,” she says. “With TalkSwitch, we were able to program a different auto attendant greeting that plays when the store is closed. That message gives the caller our store hours, which is often what they were calling to ask about, and allows them to leave a voicemail message for us if they need to. It’s all part of improving the customer experience at our store.”

Results

Audrey Washington experienced immediate benefit from the use of her TalkSwitch system. Since installation she’s been able to:

- Improve customer service by allowing employees to give their full attention to customers in the store. They aren’t interrupted by telephone calls.
- Ensure consistency in the way calls are answered. The auto attendant answers each call the same way and provides simple instructions on how to access the information a caller wants.
- Reduce staff costs by not needing to bring in extra employees to answer the phone during busy periods.
- Ensure late-night callers are still able to access store information.

About TalkSwitch

TalkSwitch® designs and develops award-winning phone systems for small, multi-location and franchise businesses. Since its establishment in 1990, TalkSwitch has dedicated itself to developing PBXs and IP PBXs that tens of thousands of small businesses across North America rely on. With a growing global network of resellers, distributors and partners, TalkSwitch phones and phone systems are changing the way small businesses communicate. For more information, please visit our website at www.talkswitch.com, or call us toll-free in the United States and Canada at 1.888.332.9322. In all other markets call +1.613.725.2980.