

CASE STUDY:

The Gift of Life Donor Program

Plymouth Meeting, PA

Philadelphia's Gift of Life Donor Program (GLDP) is the federally designated non-profit agency that coordinates donation and transplantation in the eastern half of Pennsylvania, southern New Jersey and Delaware. The agency works with close to 150 area hospitals and receives 45,000 – 50,000 calls per year, all reporting patient deaths that may become potential organ or tissue donors. It supports more than 5,000 people in the region awaiting transplants. The company's phone system carries a huge burden: The sole way a hospital can report a potential donor is via Gift of Life's 24-hour 800 number.

THE SITUATION

Upon moving to a new facility, GLDP needed effective communications technology, including streamlined telecom carrier services; recording capabilities (to document sensitive calls to donor families); and an efficient, accountable call center. It was imperative for any vendor under consideration for the project to understand the urgency of the tasks at hand. Expert Technology Associates (ETA), a technology integrator which has built a reputation on fitting customized business solutions to each client's individual needs, became a front-runner due to its analysis of GLDP's requirements, which weighed the sensitive nature of the agency's work into all aspects of its solution.

SOME OF GLDP'S CHALLENGES:

- IT Director Jason Soley wanted to move away from separate contacts for his local carrier, long distance service and telecom hardware vendor.
- The agency was unable to track how efficiently calls were being answered by its 10+ person call center, called The Transplant Information Center, which had bearing on its ability to improve response times.
- Bills for a much-used, third-party "bridge" conference line were escalating.

THE SOLUTION

ETA determined that conferencing equipment would be more cost-effective than the thirdparty bridge line. In-house conferencing capabilities now saves Gift of Life approximately \$1,000 per month, with return on the investment in eight to 10 months.

"The added efficiencies, the increased ROI, the ability to simplify their carrier dealings, these were the elements that Gift of Life valued, so we made them our priority," said Craig Marowitz, ETA's President. "Most of the time, the best solution isn't based on a specific technology as much as it's based on the ability to pinpoint the needs of the company."

The integrator also offered Gift of Life a Call Center Suite that reports statistics on how long calls are in queue, and routes them appropriately. GLDP is using this data to speed response rates to the hospitals that contact them with information. "The goal is to make sure our hospitals get through to a live person as rapidly as possible," said Soley. "We can't lose calls. Who knows how many lives could be saved from one call?"

ETA's Marowitz continued: "Technology is similar from manufacturer to manufacturer. It's listening to the client that allows you to make the solution accomplish the right goals. We don't just sell phone systems, we're looking for an appropriate home for a total solution, one that will be effective for the client throughout life of the project. With Gift of Life, there are dire consequences if their technology doesn't let them perform to the best of their abilities. Knowing that we get that fact, and consistently address it, is what made Gift of Life confident about our services."

WHY ETA

"Of all the solutions we considered," Soley said, "ETA is the company that understood what we do here and what we need. Because of that, they were able to provide the services that worked best to support our mission."

ETA's Dan Rehrer consulted with executives at Gift of Life for an in-depth review of its business goals, current carriers, phone bills and legacy technologies. ETA was able to become GLDP's single point of contact for its multiple carrier vendors, understanding and settling issues between the three companies. (Without a mediator, the carriers experienced difficulty resolving problems amongst themselves.)

"A single point of contact is key," said Soley. "Whenever there's been an issue or an emergency, ETA has been there and has taken care of it, saving us critical time."