

# CASE STUDY:

## Built In Resiliency:

### Why Business Continuity Isn't Optional

#### BUSINESS CONTINUITY – BUILT IN

At ETA, we understand that even the best technology and services fail at one time or another. That's why business continuity planning isn't optional – It's an integral and required component of every business communications solution we design with our clients.

The following case study is an example of how ETA's built in resiliency helped a company retain their reputation and stay up and running, despite some very challenging conditions.

#### THE PROBLEM

A Philadelphia-area company renown for their top shelf customer care was having difficulty communicating effectively “behind the scenes” in order to consistently deliver the high level of responsiveness that made them famous. For starters, their two locations weren't networked – Which meant that for employees at different locations to talk to each other, they had to dial the full number of the other location. This often caused delays in servicing customers because the lines were busy. Also, because they had no high speed Internet access, they were stuck using separate Point of Sale systems for transactions – Which meant spending unnecessary time and money reconciling multiple sets of books instead of one. For these reasons, they decided to upgrade their entire communications infrastructure, and found Expert Technology Associates (ETA) in the process.

#### THE SOLUTION

ETA worked with the company to design a comprehensive communications solution that would seamlessly network their locations together, give them 4 digit dialing between locations, and deliver high-speed Internet access that would enable them to upgrade to a shared Point of Sale system. This solution would help them boost efficiency, simplify administrative functions, communicate more effectively, and better control operating expenses.

This solution consisted of a T1 PRI that delivered high bandwidth voice and Internet connectivity to the company's main location, which was then passed along to the other site via a Point to Point T1.

While this solution delivered all the productivity and connectivity benefits the company was looking for, ETA realized that each connection represented a potentially critical point of failure that could render them unable to communicate with their customers and generate income if it were to go down.

That's why ETA installed POTS (Plain Old Telephone Service) lines with DTO (Direct Trunk Overflow) to backup the T1 PRI. This meant that if the T1 PRI went down, the phone company would automatically redirect calls through the analog phone network.

However, since the company's main site provided bandwidth and connectivity to their second site via a dedicated connection, if either the T1 PRI or the Point to Point T1 went down, the company's second location would be left completely without service. With this in mind, ETA worked with the carrier services provider to ensure calls would be automatically forwarded to POTS lines at the second location if there was an interruption in service to either connection. Additionally, if the POTS lines went down, calls would be automatically redirected to company cell phones. Once the connection was re-established, calls would be routed as normal.

These safeguards helped ensure that the company could continue doing business despite any interruptions in service. From past experiences, it looked like the perfect solution from every angle.

#### THE BEST LAID PLANS...

However, shortly after the solution was installed, the company started having a problem: Service would go down or get spotty when there was inclement weather. Thankfully, the company was never unable to make and receive calls due to their “built in” business continuity.

After an extensive battery of field tests spanning several days, ETA's subject matter experts determined the root cause of the issue was the substandard condition of the service provider's infrastructure, which continued to reveal itself to be unstable in certain conditions. Unfortunately, since the physical wiring was owned by the service provider, ETA couldn't make the repair itself. However, they took immediate action by leveraging their long-time relationship with the service provider to escalate the issue beyond the “help desk” and directly to senior level management. ETA ensured progress towards resolving the situation continued to remain front and center by participating in weekly conference calls between ETA's ownership and the service provider's senior management team.

#### WEATHERING THE STORM

While the company waited for a permanent fix, ETA spent many hours designing and implementing a communications monitoring service, free of charge, that could detect any interruptions in service and proactively alert the company as they were happening – Something not even the carrier service provider could deliver. While it didn't solve the problem, this service gave the company's employees enough advanced notice to know when “Plan B” would kick in and they'd need to communicate with each other via their backup service.

This helped the company function as best as they could until the problem was resolved. More importantly, ETA's built in business continuity ensured they could continue to provide the high levels of service they'd become known for - Without their customers ever knowing there was an issue.

# CASE STUDY:

## Built In Resiliency:

### Why Business Continuity Isn't Optional

#### BUSINESS CONTINUITY - ELIMINATING POINTS OF FAILURE

The following diagram provides a visual overview of the critical failure points in the company's communications solution, and the built-in business continuity ETA provided to help ensure they always remained up and running.

