



The 3,000 employee Peninsula Regional Health System consists of a large regional hospital, a foundation and a group of for-profit clinics located in Salisbury, Maryland. The health care provider's 400 bed hospital and its clinics receive more than 62,000 calls a month, on average, from residents living in the surrounding Delmarva Peninsula.

IMPROVED CUSTOMER SERVICE THROUGH AUTOMATION

The Challenge

Since 1999, Peninsula began using Amcom's Smart Center™ platform before adding Smart Console™ and Smart Web™ for handling increasing call volumes and pages. Judy Bailey, communication supervisor for Peninsula, says, "the growing workload led the healthcare system to upgrade its technology so operators could handle increasing internal and external call loads."

The Objective

Peninsula Regional Health System had several goals for a new communications' platform:

- Improve customer service
- Absorb more calls per operator
- Increase accuracy of pages
- Answer all calls within three rings
- Separate internal and external calls
- Have multiple automated greetings depending on caller
- Have an online directory available at all the system's clinics and hospital

The Solution

Peninsula upgraded to the 4.0 Smart Center platform because it had a wealth of new screens allowing operators to better manage incoming calls and to accurately page physicians. The communication center also added five Amcom Smart Console workstations, Smart Web and Operator Saver™.

The Results

The hospital's 17 full and part-time operators especially like the 4.0 platform's ability to allow them to see whether a physician is on call and, if not, to automatically forward it to an on-call doctor. They find the new screens Amcom developed make it much easier to find pager I.D. numbers of staff and send them pages, says Bailey.

"That means the 9,000 pages Peninsula's operators send every week find the correct recipient 99.6-percent of the time," she says.

In addition, searching for employees' phone numbers and pager numbers has vastly improved in the 4.0 platform. "Operators no longer have to first find the group in which the employee works before being able to find their contact information, she says, because they can now search by name."

With Operator Saver™ offering automated greetings, the hospital's operators answer the phone within three rings nearly 100-percent of the time. "It has also improved call handling by separating calls based on their origin — externally or internally — while offering two distinct greetings," she notes.

Outside callers hear: “This is Peninsula Regional Hospital, how may I help you?” Internal callers hear: “How may I help you?” Bailey says the call separation and the shortened internal greeting allows operators to work more efficiently.

“I REALLY LIKE THE 4.0 PLATFORM, IT’S EXTREMELY USER FRIENDLY, THE TRAINING OF NEW EMPLOYEES IS SO MUCH EASIER, ITS SO USER FRIENDLY. THE 4.0 PLATFORM MADE THE DIFFERENCE—AMCOM REALLY GOT IT RIGHT THIS TIME. THE COMPANY REALLY MADE SIGNIFICANT IMPROVEMENTS OVER THE LAST VERSION, AND WE APPRECIATE IT.”

Judy Bailey, Communication Center Supervisor

“We’re very, very service conscious and we always trying to improve our service excellence,” says Bailey. “Operator Saver helped us improve our performance with consistent greetings to both customers and staff.”

Smart Web enables employees to locate one another quickly, to view and change on-call calendars, to update their availability and to leave and receive messages. After a slow start, Bailey has seen usage of the software take off.

“In the beginning we probably have five people who knew how to use Smart Web,” says Bailey. “But now we have at least 40 percent of our employees using Smart Web. Anyone can use it, including physician offices outside our campus, who can access it right from their computers. They can use the online directory to send pages and to handle scheduling.

Peninsula is considering adding Amcom’s Smart Speech™ application to the mix after the hospital finishes its new communication center. Smart Speech allows callers to simply speak the name of the person they’re calling or paging before the software finds the name and transfers the call.

For now, Bailey remains pleased with the progress her staff has made with the 4.0 platform.

“I really like the 4.0 platform, it’s extremely user friendly, the training of new employees is so much easier, its so user friendly,” she says. “It’s an easy product to learn. The Amcom products have been very well received. I don’t think the operators would consider going to another product. The 4.0 platform made the difference—Amcom really got it right this time. The company really made significant improvements over the last version, and we appreciate it.”



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