

Shared Experiences: Implementing a VOIP Inmate Phone System

Maine Department of Corrections
xwave Corporation

May 2008



Agenda

- **The Background**
- **The Solution**
- **Solution Benefits**
- **Implementation Approach**
- **Lessons Learned**
- **Questions**

The Background

Prisoner / Resident Phone Service Issues


- **Rates**
 - Too high (based on collect-call only)
 - Too complex – based on geography & time-of-day
- **Need to exploit telecommunications trends:**
 - Fixed-priced prepaid calling
 - Shorter telecom provider contract periods
- **Telecom Vendors exited the market**
- **CLEC Billing Arrangement Challenges**
- **Unable to accurately report expenses to PUC**
 - Telecommunications Service (the Carrier)
 - Call Processing and Security
 - DOC Commissions

The Solution

MDOC consulted with xwave to

- **Assess available technologies**
- **Leverage / Extend Existing OMS (CORIS)**
 - **Management for Adults and Juveniles**
 - **Community and Institutional Corrections**
 - **Determine new phone system integration plan into CORIS**
 - **Determine how to leverage existing offender information**
- **Provide a secure and more cost-effective telephone service**
 - **Additional levels of security**
 - **Providing additional & cheaper options**
- **Leverage Bell Aliant (xwave's parent company) expertise in the development and deployment of custom telephony solutions**

CORIS Phone System Features

- **Voice Over IP (VOIP) Technology**
- **State-of-the-art Security**
 - Eliminate the need for debit phone cards
 - Significantly reduced call fraud
 - Restricted calling lists
 - PIN access by Housing Assignment
 - *Voice Biometric Verification* 
- **Call Control via OMS Integration**
 - Offender Trust Account (Debit calling primary mechanism)
 - Call Detail Records and Reporting
 - Call List Management / Contacts (white list / black list)
 - Housing Verification - Unit-level privileges
 - Call Recording / Monitoring
- **Collect Calling options through PCS solution**

CORIS Phone System Components

- **Cisco (routers / switches / Call Manager)**
- **Hewlett Packard (servers)**
- **Diaphonics – “Spike Server”**
 - **Voice Biometric Verification**
 - **Call Recording and Monitoring**
- **Verizon – T1s, PRIs**
- **xwave - OMS Integration**
- **PCS – Collect Calling Services**

Realized Benefits – Offenders & Public

Offenders

- Flat per-minute rate option (Debit calling)
- No connection charge (Debit Calling)
 - Provides incentive to call back after call time expires
- Control who to call with phone funds
- Debit Calling 65% of overall total # of minutes
- Increased per-call duration due to reduced costs
- Increased total # minutes results in increased Benefit Funds

Increased outside contact = positive psychological impact on offenders

Public

- Enhanced security reduces possibility of unauthorized calls (i.e. calling a victim)

Realized Benefits – Friends/Families

- **Lower rates**
- **Increased call time (due to the lower rates)**
- **Increased “call backs” after call timeout**
- **If a call is dropped, new call will not incur connect fee**
- **No direct phone charges (Debit calls)**
- **No need to set up Pre-paid Collect Call account**

Realized Benefits - MDOC

- **Reduced non-collectable funds**
- **Eliminates need for carrier to block friend/family #'s**
- **Reduced operational costs via increased efficiency**
- **Integration with CORIS provides:**
 - **Enhanced call control**
 - **Call Details, reports, and recordings**
 - **More effective Investigations**
 - **Trust *and* Phone accounts**
- **Immediate revenues realized (for Debit Calls)**
- **Increased Security / Reduced Litigation Risk**
 - **Fewer mistakes due to inmate housing reassignment**
 - **Reduced instances where incorrect authorization might be granted for calls**

Implementation Approach

- **Pre-deployment Activities**
 - Equipment installation and testing
 - OMS configuration
 - Data Migration (calling lists, blocked numbers, etc.)
 - Offender / Families Communications
 - Receipt and Deposit of Funds
- Pilot real calls in the Test environment
- Pilot real calls in the Production environment
- Deploy low-volume, low-risk facilities first
- Gauge success, make adjustments
- Staged deployment – rest of facilities
- Goal: All facilities online before Christmas

Lessons Learned

- **Dedicated SMEs**
- **Communication Strategy and Pre-work**
- **Voice Biometrics Success**
- **Understand your baseline metrics**
- **Fully understand legislative mandates (e.g. Collect Calling requirement)**
- **Plan / conduct “hardening” activities in advance**

Lessons Learned

- **Plan and implement support model**
- **Create a fully-functional laboratory for modeling**
- **Conduct volume testing**
- **Failover capability is critical**
 - **Test this!**
- **Control Console in the OMS**
 - **Control call traffic**
 - **“Master Switch”**
 - **Control thresholds (e.g. Voice Verification)**
- **Intelligent DTMF “extra digit” handling**

Questions?



Contact Information

- Dave Packard – State of Maine, DOC
 - Agency Information Technology Director
 - Dave.Packard@Maine.gov
 - 207.287.4303
- Doug Rowe – xwave Corporation
 - Engagement Manager
 - Doug.Rowe@xwave.com
 - 800.566.9772 ext. 225