

business

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CONNECTIONS

IN THIS ISSUE:

Boosting Productivity Calls for ACS 3 • App-titude for Saving Money 4 • Business Customers Choose Smartphones 4
It Pays to be Well Connected 5 • Helping Ideas Grow Into Businesses 6 • Live Call Answering Around the Clock 7

**Pick Up The
Phone To Pick
Up Business**

IT'S
ALL
HERE



business CONNECTIONS

PHONE CONVERSATIONS take place so many times during each workday that you may not give them much thought. Yet even in our electronic age, there is something uniquely powerful about the sound of the human voice. These calls, whether with customers or colleagues, play an important role as businesses build relationships, manage projects, and meet challenges.

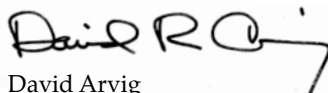
We showcase phone conversations and their related technology in this September issue of *Business Connections* magazine. On page 3, you'll meet the ACS team that helps companies like yours with business telephone systems and communications wiring. This team is well equipped to make sure your business conversations keep flowing. We shift the focus on pages 4 and 5 to wireless phones. Whether you need to upgrade from a feature phone to a smartphone, add more wireless phones to your business plan, or get help using a new feature, count on Tim Sullivan with the ACS-Verizon group for professional guidance.

Speaking of phone calls, one business that will answer yours for you anytime is Time Communications, a subsidiary of Arvig Enterprises, Inc. It provides customized call center services, live call answering, and order taking—all handled by United States-based representatives. Take a minute to read about Time Communications on page 7.

Also in this issue, we shine the business spotlight on M-State's Business & Entrepreneurial Services. This program helps new businesses grow, and ACS is pleased to foster this growth by providing them with quality communications solutions.

Please call us whenever you have a question about your current ACS services or want to discuss the possibility of making updates. We always enjoy answering the phone.

Sincerely,



David Arvig
Vice President, COO



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Editorial and Circulation Contact:
Carmen McCullough
150 Second Street SW
Perham, MN 56573
218-346-8161

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Contact:
Carmen McCullough
150 Second Street SW
Perham, MN 56573
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ACS Business Telephone Systems and Communications Wiring Team

Front row: Grace Schertler, Amy Wolf Back row: Tracy Schmidt, Troy Salo, Al Schumacher



BOOSTING Productivity Calls for **ACS**

Talk to our team about business telephone systems and communications wiring

Telephone lines are like lifelines for your business. Finding just the right business telephone system that fits both your needs and budget is essential in order to effectively manage conversations with customers, colleagues, and suppliers.

It Starts With the Right System

When it's time for a new business telephone system, your first call should be to Grace Schertler, Communications Consultant. Schertler has more than 13 years of experience in the telecommunications industry with a special emphasis on business telephone systems. She'll use this expertise to uncover the best solutions for you by listening to you about the role of telephone calls in your business, your typical calling patterns, and what is and isn't working well with your current system.

Says Schertler, "Most often, this process includes a site visit which lets me look at the existing wiring and see what the business is now using for their system. I'll talk with the customer about challenges they are experiencing, and explain how new

equipment and features can address these issues. Later I return to the business with our recommendations and discuss them. Besides a new business telephone system, these recommendations might include adding phone lines or changing how lines come into the business."

She adds, "Sometimes businesses are reluctant to think about changing or upgrading their existing system. I can help them understand what updated technology can do for them in terms of increasing productivity and saving money."

To meet the needs of businesses of all sizes, ACS offers forward-thinking, totally customizable business telephone systems from Panasonic. "Our selection ranges from systems with two lines and three phones all the way up to a system with hundreds of phones. Available options include IP technology, voice and data communications, wireless capability, and a long list of productivity-boosting features and functions."

Installation and Training Complete the Package

To ensure a smooth transition from one business telephone system to the next, the ACS team of certified and licensed technicians will expertly install your new system and communications wiring. They include Alan Schumacher, Tracy Schmidt, and Troy Salo.

Following installation, your entire staff will become familiar with the equipment with the help of Amy Wolf, Training Coordinator. Wolf will answer any questions you have and make sure everyone is using the system with ease and confidence. To keep your system running smoothly, ACS provides on-call service and repair, 24 hours a day.

**To start a conversation
about your next business
telephone system,
call Grace Schertler at
866-371-4227.**

App-titude for Saving Money

Your smartphone can help you cut costs

If you're one of the many people who use a smartphone for business, you've no doubt come to appreciate the many ways it makes your life easier. Being able to make calls, check email, or browse the Internet from any location is so convenient, not to mention the GPS, texting, and document-viewing functions that you now can't live without. And then there are those apps! They can help you do practically everything.

Granted, no apps have been developed that can straighten up your desk or write reports for you ... yet. But apps can do something else you may not have considered: save you money. Here are some popular cost-cutting apps to consider:

BillMinder

Paying bills late can cost you due to late fees and higher interest rates. Make sure you never miss a due date with this handy app.

Mint.com Personal Finance

Saving money starts with knowing where your money is going. This leading personal finance app lets you see all your accounts in one place, set budgets, and find personalized savings.

ShopSavvy

Be a shrewd shopper with this app, which will tell you if the item you're about to purchase can be found cheaper somewhere else.

Coupon Sherpa

With this app, you can find store coupons and exclusive deals. Search by category or store name, or locate shops in your area.

GasBuddy

No more driving around trying to find the best deal on gas. Just use this app to find the cheapest stations around, complete with distance and time estimates to each location.



eReader

This app gives you free access to thousands of classics and eBooks, and allows you to purchase books as well.

Pandora

This popular app streams music you like for free.

About **60 Percent** of Business Customers Choose **SMARTPHONES**

Tim Sullivan, ACS Business Wireless Account Manager, has seen tremendous growth in smartphone sales in recent years. He notes, "Two years ago, only two or three percent of the wireless phones we sold at ACS were smartphones. Today, that's up to around 45 or 50 percent; among our business customers, it's even higher—more like 60 percent."

As a Verizon Authorized Wireless Retailer, ACS offers many options to suit your wireless phone needs. They include a wide variety of smartphones as well as basic feature phones.

What would Sullivan say to those still intimidated by smartphones? "Smartphones are SIMPLE. And they help make life and business so much more convenient. Some people have a phobia about smartphones being too complex to reap enough benefit. At ACS, we show by example how simple these devices can be to operate. The more ways we show customers how smartphones can save them time and money, the more they want to know," he explains.

It **PAYS** to Be Well Connected

Tim Sullivan is your go-to guy for answers on wireless phones

ACS is a Verizon Authorized Wireless Retailer and proud to bring the convenience and reach of a national wireless carrier into the local community. You can count on Tim Sullivan, ACS Business Wireless Account Manager, to help your business maximize the incredible power of wireless.



Tim Sullivan

Q. My business needs new wireless phones, but I'm not exactly a techie. How can you help me choose the right phones and plans?

A. I would start by visiting you at your business and asking a series of open-ended questions about your wireless needs. For example: How would your business benefit from improved customer service from your wireless provider? This would start a dialogue that leads us to solutions and ultimately a happier and more profitable business experience for you. Verizon has focused on the business customer with the addition of its 4G network. It offers faster data speeds, which open up many more efficiencies to an organization. Verizon has the network in place to handle very sophisticated devices, including the latest smartphones, and ACS has a great selection of them. It's the perfect combination, and I'm here to help you navigate through all of the options.


Q. What advantages does the Verizon Wireless 4G network offer compared to other networks?

A. There are many advantages, including better coverage, higher reliability, and faster speeds. Verizon has invested billions of dollars each year into their network and northern Minnesota has greatly ben-

efited from Verizon's improved wireless reception and increased data speeds. When Verizon bought out Unicel (Rural Cellular Corporation) more than two years ago, the network in Minnesota was very strong. Since that time, dozens of new towers have been added to increase wireless services in rural Minnesota and nationwide. Because of the reliability of Verizon's network, we have seen superior growth and loyalty in the market ACS serves as a Verizon Authorized Wireless Retailer. The fact that the network is 4G LTE (Long Term Evolution) is key to continued growth and reliability for our customers. Wireless data speeds are changing the way consumers and small businesses operate in rural America, and Verizon will keep up with these developments.

Q. Once we get new wireless phones, what kind of help can you provide?

A. At ACS, we offer continual support after the initial purchase. We want you to come back to us to learn more and discover a whole new way of staying connected to our world. Let's say you're interested in using video conferencing or Skype with your smartphones so you and your callers can see each other. Just give me a call and I'll help you set it up and you can start using this face-to-face communication on the go.

 For business plans featuring wireless solutions, call Tim Sullivan at 877-207-3759 or email tim.sullivan@arvig.com.





Left: Beth Priddy,
Director of Business
& Entrepreneurial
Services and Jill Mack,
ACS Sales Relations
Representative

design, sewing machine and clock repair, and pottery painting.”

While BES stays busy helping young businesses grow, ACS is behind the scenes helping BES grow. ACS provides cost-efficient and reliable communications solutions including a VoIP phone system, local and long distance phone services, 10 Mbps Internet connection, security services, and a key card system. Keeping everything running smoothly requires a team from ACS: Jill Mack, ACS Sales Relations Representative; Grace Schertler, Communications Consultant; Amy Wolf, Training Coordinator; and Eric Pilgrim, Security Solutions Sales Consultant.

“Anytime we call someone at ACS, they’re always helpful, flexible, and accessible. Jill understood our need to keep things affordable and gave us a price advantage since we got multiple services from ACS. Grace helped us upgrade our phone system and then Amy taught BES staff and tenants how to use it. And Eric worked with us to put together our security services,” says Priddy.

Those security services involve motion detectors and security monitoring as well as a key card system in lieu of traditional keys. She adds, “Our off-site incubator in Frazee is not fully staffed, so the security system keeps tenants safe when they’re working in the building alone. And since the key cards are programmable for each tenant, we can program them for 24-hour or short-term access, depending on the circumstances.”

Helping Ideas Grow Into Businesses

M-State’s Business & Entrepreneurial Services is an incubator for innovation

If a brand new business is an entrepreneur’s baby, then it stands to reason that an incubator may be needed to help it grow and thrive. Business & Entrepreneurial Services (BES) at M-State – Detroit Lakes offers a nurturing environment to new and nearly new businesses in the tri-county area. It offers physical office space with affordable terms to small business owners and entrepreneurs, a research library, business counseling and on-site shared business services including conference room, teleconferencing, shared office equipment, and support.

Beth Priddy, BES Director, explains, “We’ve been operating for three years, but the idea began about five years ago. We noticed that many of our current students and recent graduates wanted to start their own businesses. Our mission is to help them achieve this goal.”

For communications solutions to help your business grow, call ACS at 866-937-4227.

BES provides the room and resources for a wide variety of entrepreneurs. Priddy notes, “Examples of the types of businesses at BES include authors, manufacturing, technology, health care training, statistical data and research, counseling, graphic

“Anytime we call someone at ACS, they’re always helpful, flexible, and accessible. Jill understood our need to keep things affordable and gave us a price advantage since we got multiple services from ACS.”

—BETH PRIDDAY, BES DIRECTOR

Not surprisingly, there’s growth in the future for BES. Announces Priddy, “We’re planning to add 20 more offices in the next six to eight months in two different locations. We already told ACS to get ready for more installations and I know they’ll help us through this next phase of growth.”



Live Call

Answering Around the Clock

Let Time Communications add the human touch to customer calls

When you have a question to be answered or an order to be placed, would you rather talk to a machine or a human being? We thought so. Your company's customers feel the same way.

Time Communications, a subsidiary of Arvig Enterprises, Inc., has been partnering with large and small businesses for nearly 40 years to provide call center services, live call answering, and order taking—24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year. That adds up to around-the-clock professionalism.

“Having a live person answer the phone for your business demonstrates a higher level of professionalism and commitment.”

—JAMIE DEJARDINS, PRESIDENT,
TIME COMMUNICATIONS

Exceptional Service

Jamie DeJardins, President of Time Communications, notes, “Many of our new clients are coming to Time Communications to give their customers the human touch they prefer. Having a live person answer the phone for your business demonstrates a higher level of professionalism and commitment. Businesses stay with Time

Communications because we provide exceptional service to both them and their customers. We are the extension of their business that helps them grow revenue and drive their service goals.”

Comprehensive Options

A United States-based answering service, Time Communications is also an award-winning industry leader and a full-service provider. You can count on Time Communications to meet all of your call center needs, including:

- 24/7 Live Answering Service
- Appointment Setting and Registrations
- Order Taking and Management
- Customer Service
- Emergency Dispatch
- Live Chat
- Additional Services

Customized Programs

Since every business is different, Time Communications will work closely with your company to develop a customized call center program that meets your specific requirements. Through the use of fully customizable telephone answering technology, your information will appear in real-time on the computer screens of the professional representatives. This means

your specific call management instructions remain at their fingertips, so they're always prepared to provide exceptional customer service to your callers.

“We provide a seamless and transparent bridge between your availability and your customers' needs, which translates to increased productivity and lower operating costs for your company,” explains DeJardins. She adds, “With help from Time Communications, your company can continue to sell even after regular business hours. In today's competitive business environment, you can't afford to miss customer calls; we can make sure you don't.”

Complete Call Center Solutions
TimeCommunications

Time Communications has extensive experience helping businesses in industries such as health care, real estate, direct marketing, e-commerce, catalog/retail, and utilities. Let us put this valuable experience to work for your company. For details on our services, visit www.TimeCommunications.biz or call 800-486-8581.

Our **Business** is to **Protect** Your Business



For a **FREE Business Security Assessment**, call 866-937-4227 or email answers@arvig.com

Availability is based on service area.

ACS offers a full range of affordable and reliable security solutions for your business:

Intrusion Detection and Security Alarm Systems – Monitor unauthorized entry and provide an excellent burglary deterrent.

Digital Video Security Systems – Provide visual security to reduce theft, monitor business processes, and provide protection for staff, customers and property.

Access Control Systems – Help ensure that only authorized individuals can enter your office or place of business without you knowing about it.

We also offer water monitoring, fire alarm system, and 24/7 alarm monitoring with low monthly fees.

