University of Washington Deploys AVST's CX-E to 18,000 Users

Supporting 300,000 Calls per Month, CX-E Brings Reliability to Prominent University

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UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

THE BACK STORY

The University of Washington (UW) is one of the world's preeminent public universities, with its #1 ranked Medical School and other top colleges, according to *U.S. News & World Report of 2015 Best Colleges.* With an enrollment of 54,000 students, 18,000 faculty and staff, the UW has 16 colleges and schools that offer 1,800 undergraduate courses each quarter. The institution confers more than 12,000 bachelor's, master's, doctoral and professional degrees annually.

When the university's Octel 350 voicemail solution reached end of life, a replacement system was needed — but not just any replacement: The solution had to match UW's best-of-breed reputation. After a lengthy and in-depth evaluation process that compared competitive solutions, AVST's CX-E platform stood out as the only offering that could meet all of the university's stringent requirements.

"When it comes to our IT communications infrastructure, we're agnostic and look for only the best. We don't put all our eggs in one basket with one vendor. We chose AVST because they had the optimal solution, and they continue to deliver on that today," explained Steve Mack, UW Manager of Telecom Operations.

THE SEARCH WAS ON

When Mack initiated an evaluation of solutions to replace the university's Octel system, Avaya, AVST and Interactive Intelligence were included in the discovery process. A number of key factors played into the decision-making. First, UW needed a solution that could easily integrate with its existing Avaya IP and digital telephony systems, as well as deliver unified messaging to its mixed email landscape — Google Gmail, Microsoft Exchange, and Office 365 in the future.

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The university also needed a seamless transition with minimal disruption to its 18,000 faculty and staff members who are spread across different departments in more than 200 on-campus buildings and off-site groups, as well as research facilities abroad.

The new solution also had to be robust. With UW's extremely high call volume of up to 300,000 calls per month, the university needed scalability and resiliency.

Lastly, UW wanted a comprehensive collection of advanced Unified Communications (UC) mobile features that could take users to the next level of productivity.

When the evaluation period was completed, AVST stood out. "Not only did AVST's CX-E meet all of our initial requirements, it was hands-down the easiest to administer," Mack said.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

Rather than migrate all 18,000 UW users at once, university IT staff opted to first roll CX-E out to a select campus population. Mack said there was some concern users might be resistant to change, after all many hadn't touched their mailboxes in years.

The concern, however, was unfounded. "The cutover was pretty transparent. We got a lot of compliments about how easy it was," Mack said. Thanks to the Octel TUI emulation, the transition was painless.

Today, all 18,000 UW users are on CX-E, "from researchers over in Africa to the English department here on campus," Mack continued. UW's CX-E integration also includes voicemail support for nearby Harborview Medical Center. The hospital is the only designated Level 1 adult and pediatric trauma and burn center in the state of Washington and serves as the regional trauma and burn referral center for Alaska, Montana and Idaho.

Because downtime is not an option, UW deployed Neverfail with two Call Servers and a hot-standby System Server. Through proactive real-time monitoring of the UW hardware, software and network environment, the system predicts issues and corrects them before they have impact. When the university needs to conduct maintenance or upgrades, the multi Call Server architecture allows the CX-E system to continue to answer the phone, transfer calls, and take messages.

For maintenance assistance or troubleshooting help, UW utilizes AVST's Premium XpressCare, a service that allows campus staff direct access to AVST's technical support team, day or night. "AVST's Premium XpressCare has made a tremendous difference for us. We can always count on the team at AVST to come through in a pinch — even over the Thanksgiving holiday weekend," Mack said.

THE FUTURE LOOKS BRIGHT

Together, AVST and UW are paving the way for more to come. "Our initial rollout of unified messaging to a select group was a success, and now it's contagious," Mack said, explaining that a full rollout of AVST's unified messaging capabilities to UW faculty and staff is in place. Unified messaging brings an added level of expediency for UW users. The convenience of accessing voicemail messages through any email, mobile device or the web is

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appealing to busy staff members who are always on the move. Plus, the added flexibility of configuring CX-E with a secure web interface to access voicemails in all campus email systems — from Google to Microsoft — keeps UW IT staff smiling.

"AVST really listened to us," Mack said. "Even after 8+ years of working with the company, AVST is still listening and we look forward to the new upcoming features we have requested. It's just a joy working with a company that actually delivers."

CX E **Industry's Most Interoperable, Unified Communications Platform**
Ideal for Schools and Universities Around the World

CX-E is the industry's most interoperable UC platform on the market. The extensive interoperability of the CX-E platform was developed specifically to support organizations seeking to deploy UC in a rapidly evolving IT landscape – telephony, email and/or databases – on-premise, in a private or the public cloud and/or a hybrid configuration. By deploying AVST's CX-E UC platform as part of an overall UC solution portfolio, organizations can avoid single vendor lock-in, achieve high availability objectives and centralize UC infrastructure into a data center/private cloud configuration. CX-E delivers best-of-breed UC applications including: unified messaging, personal assistant, speech, mobile client, voicemail, automated attendant, IVR, call center, fax and other business process applications.