



Banner Health System Arizona is an integrated health system with four hospitals in the Phoenix metropolitan area: Good Samaritan, Thunderbird Samaritan, Phoenix Children's Hospital and Desert Samaritan Medical Centers. Formerly independent, these four facilities now share a centralized call center utilizing Amcom's computer telephony integration (CTI) technology.

REDUCING CALL CENTER COSTS AND IMPROVING EFFICIENCY AT BANNER HEALTH SYSTEM

The Challenge

Like many healthcare organizations today, Banner Health System has rapidly evolved in its role as a healthcare provider. Expanding its community and regional presence through alliances and acquisitions brought a need to integrate and streamline call center operations for better service and lower costs.

The Objective

Banner Health System Arizona had several goals in selecting a CTI solution:

- Reduce annual operating costs
- Improve customer service
- Standardize and enhance training
- Reduce call processing time
- Answer 80-percent of incoming calls within the first three rings
- Reduce call abandonment rate to 5-percent

The Solution

Amcom's CTI database and attendant workstation applications were installed at Banner Health System, providing an open standard solution that runs on an enterprise-wide network using one redundant server based on Oracle RDBMS, Windows 95/NT, TCP/IP and SCO/Unixware. Amcom's call center applications, integrated with existing phone systems and other communication components, form a universal communication workstation for patient information, in-house and area-wide paging, on-call calendars, answering service, and DDE (direct dial emergency) integration to other applications such as fire alarms.

The Results

Amcom's CTI system has improved efficiency and reduced operational expense while enhancing customer service at Banner Health System. "With the help of Amcom's system, we've transformed our operator services," says Julie Barr, Call Center System Director at Banner Health System. "We've reduced our full-time employee count by 18 and increased our efficiency by combining four independent call centers into one common, centralized call center."

Vince Johns, technology coordinator for Banner's communications center, credited Amcom, "Our smaller communication center operator staff now processes about 3,000,000 calls per year, compared with 120,000 calls per year prior to our communication-center consolidation."

Attendants using the integrated Amcom Smart Console workstations are able to answer calls and send pages faster and more accurately than before. Electronic directories are integrated into each workstation, making it easy to search for a particular individual. That means no more looking through paper directories to find hard-to-reach doctors.

Banner's newest Amcom addition is Smart Web™ online on-call scheduling, which serves approximately 115 on-call schedules that can be accessed from anywhere to see who's on call in a particular department.

In addition, applications such as Operator Saver™ pre-recorded greetings make it easy for Banner's combined call center to answer calls for several different facilities. "We couldn't survive without Operator Saver," says Barr. "It makes our attendants sound just as cheerful at four o'clock in the afternoon as at eight o'clock in the morning. A centralized call center with accurate answering would be impossible without it."

Future Plans

According to Johns, Banner will start to build a second communications center in Phoenix using Amcom technology to serve an additional four facilities, and the two centers will serve as back-up for each other. "As our organization has grown and because we've had Amcom's exceptional technology solutions for over 11 years, we've been able to maintain and support Banner's level of expected service and professionalism. We plan to eventually serve all of our facilities with centers based on Amcom's technology."

Amcom Products

SMART SPEECH™ APPLICATIONS enable you to process a majority of routine requests—such as directory assistance, messaging, and paging— independently of a live operator or touchtone.

SMART WEB APPLICATIONS enable any authorized employee to look up directories, send pages, and view and schedule on-call assignment via the Internet.

SMART CENTER RELATIONAL DATABASE helps administrators maintain up to date information to keep your call center operating accurately and efficiently.

SMART CONSOLE ATTENDANT WORKSTATION integrates PBX, paging services, and patient information into one workstation.

DIRECTORY SERVICES are available enterprise-wide to help Smart Console attendants locate healthcare professionals quickly and accurately.

OPERATOR SAVER™ provides automated greetings and salutation in the attendant's voice.

VOICE-ASSISTED TRANSFER announces the number to which a caller is being transferred so they may dial directly in the future.

SMART PARK allows operators to type in a caller's name and other notes when parking a call, and enables any operator in the group to view the information to finish processing the call.

ON-CALL CALENDARS enable authorized employees to view and change on call assignments via phone, TCP/IP, and/or WEB.

INTELLIGENT PAGING operates transparently to attendants, delivering in-house and area-wide pages quickly and accurately.

MEET-ME-PAGING provides physician-to-physician paging without attendant intervention.

PHYSICIAN REFERRAL enables operators to manage physician referrals with the same system and database used for other call center activities.

ADMINISTRATIVE MONITORING AND REPORTING provides real-time monitoring of call center activity and reporting procedures, including call statistics and messaging activity.



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