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Global Expansion - "It's a Small, Small World"

By Tim Wise,
Co-Founder & Co-President,
Advocate Networks, LLC

2010 has been another significant growth year for Advocate Networks - 64% growth in revenue; recognized by Inc. Magazine as one of the 5000 Fastest Growing Companies in the United States; and expanded our geographic presence in New York City, Washington, DC, Houston, Texas and the Carolinas. However, the most significant area of growth has been our clients with a global presence. These clients are based in every major region around the globe: North America, South America, Europe, the Middle East, and Asia Pacific regions.

Operating in multiple global regions creates significant challenges for IT organizations, especially in terms of communications services. A globally focused company must deal with different service providers (typically by region), varying standards and interfaces, differing service availability as well as language and culture issues for managing communications. The complexity of this varying environment can be daunting to manage for many IT organizations.

By utilizing a common methodology and framework, we have been successful in assisting clients with normalizing this seemingly complex, global environment. Recently, we completed an audit of a major foreign airline recovering nearly \$1M US in billing errors by a foreign PTT (historical in-country monopoly). Similarly, we completed a global strategic sourcing effort across each major region - North America, EMEA and AsiaPacific - resulting in over \$9M in annualized savings. Finally, we have worked with several clients in planning global WANs (wide area networks) across multiple regions and vendors. The common thread for success in these global engagements has been a disciplined methodology of assessment, planning, design, optimization, strategic sourcing, implementation and management.

The key to success in a global environment is marketplace knowledge by country and region to apply to your communications services objectives. Knowledge helps to create simplicity in dealing with the complexity of global operations. To learn more, please contact Tim Wise at (678) 987-5995 or tim.wise@advocatenetworks.com.

Giving Back at Mountain Top Boys Home

On Friday, September 10, 2010, a team of volunteers from Advocate Networks worked with the Staff at Mountain Top Boys Home in a day of service in memory of the tragic events of September 11, 2001. During the day, the team worked on a wide range of grounds maintenance, painting and other landscaping projects. With 488 acres total and about 10 acres developed, the maintenance of the grounds is a big task, and the team from Advocate Networks was glad to pitch in! We were blessed with a beautiful day to work outside. The staff including Dave, Rich, Marty, Desmond and Patty prepared a wonderful lunch, and worked shoulder to shoulder with us during the day. We are very grateful to have the opportunity to serve at Mountain Top, and look forward to our next visit.







Customer Spotlight: Premier Inc.

On behalf of Premier, Inc., I would like to personally thank Advocate Networks for their guidance in defining our Enterprise VoIP technology roadmap in addition to assistance through the RFP process in selecting our voice communications provider for the future. With all of the ambiguity surrounding Avaya's acquisition of Nortel in addition to the fact that we are an existing Nortel customer, it was clear that we needed external, vendor-agnostic, assistance in determine the most optimal path going forward.

First, we looked to Advocate Networks to provide a written assessment of Avaya/Nortel and to then outline all viable options including remaining with Avaya/Nortel. We then collaborated with Avaya to finalize a written technology roadmap that could not only aid in decision making, but also provide written justification to support the final decision.

Secondly, we understood the complexity and burden of managing a multi-vendor Voice RFP and decided to have AN manage the entire RFP process. Advocate aligned the proper resources that not only brought years of telecommunications expertise, but also extensive experience in managing the Voice RFP's. With Advocate's help, we were able to narrow down the finalists and make a final vendor selection that the entire team was confident in.

Overall, the services that we utilized from Advocate Networks proved to be a sound investment and we will certainly look to Advocate Networks in the future if we are in need of their other service offerings or require assistance in traversing the complex waters of what is known as Unified Communications.

Best regards,

*Scott H. Graham
Manager of Network Engineering Services, Corporate IT Services
Premier Inc.*

The Art of Capacity Planning

By Marco Kuysten, Managing Consultant, Advocate Networks, LLC

It is critical for any IT organization to ensure adequate capacity on its infrastructure to meet the evolving demands of the business. In today's business climate, nobody is excited to hear a new product or service roll out has to be postponed because of required network upgrades or an unforeseen increase in cost.

To manage capacity effectively, a model to understand the available and required capacity is essential. The available bandwidth is a function of the network capacity (e.g. T1, Fast Ethernet). This function can become significantly more complicated if multiple networks are in use (e.g. separate backup network or high performance network for TelePresence or eCommerce).

The required bandwidth is a function of applications and users. Where are the users, how many will use the application simultaneously and what capacity requirements does the application have? Add inbound/outbound and day/night to the equation and the model can become something that requires some serious attention, especially if multiple applications need modeling.

The capacity planning tool should enable you to better anticipate capacity requirements and set expectations with the business (bandwidth changes may take considerable time, money and possibly a new contract). It also provides the ability to right size, both up and down. These days, not many companies are willing to afford over sizing the network 'just to be sure'.

Interested in capacity planning and a capacity planning tool, please contact Marco Kuysten at 678-987-5965 or marco.kuysten@advocatenetworks.com.

The Value of Outsourcing TEM

By John Johnson, Managing Director, Advocate Networks, LLC

As organizations compete across the global marketplace, the communication channels between customers, partners, vendors, and suppliers grow. With this growth comes an increasingly complex telecommunications environment filled with complicated contracts and a perpetually changing telecom inventory. These realities drive organizations to develop a Telecom Expense Management (TEM) solution to control cost and manage their Telecom environment.

However, many organizations don't have the people or expertise to effectively execute a TEM program and they end up paying too much for the telecom services they receive. Other organizations apply internal staff to TEM functions. However, with competing priorities, assignment to special projects, and heavy workload these staff members are often not able to perform the breadth or depth of activity needed to drive the TEM value.

A well executed Telecom Expense Management (TEM) program will reduce total telecom cost by identifying billing errors, optimizing services based on usage and needs, and actively managing the Moves, Adds, Changes and Disconnects of the communications environment. A mature and effective TEM solution should be self-funding; the total cost recoveries and reductions should be greater than the cost of the program.

The questions below will help you assess your organizations "TEM Maturity:"

1. Are 100% of your Global telecom invoices reviewed on a monthly basis against contract rates, contract terms and conditions, and your communications inventory?
2. Do you recover 7% to 15% of the total telecom spend annually? Is this actively measured?

3. Is your organization auditing mobile device usage against your corporate policy? Against your mobile carrier contracts?
4. Does your organization perform regular mobile rate plan optimizations for voice messaging and data services to reduce costs?
5. Are your mobile and fixed line provisioning processes integrated with your invoice audit processes?

If you answered "no" to any of the above questions, outsourcing your TEM program will likely provide a greater value than your current TEM processes.

Outsourcing TEM doesn't require an organization to give-up control. Instead, an outsourced solution allows an organization to lower risk by paying for TEM results instead of making heavy investments in servers, software, staff and training to become TEM experts.

Through an outsourced TEM program, professionals with deep telecom expertise leverage cutting edge technology to provide full invoice processing, audit & optimization capabilities, and full life-cycle inventory management. Outsourced TEM accelerates the ROI, delivering greater value to the organization.

If you are interested in assessing the value an outsourced TEM solution can bring to your organization, please contact John Johnson at 678-987-5950 or john.johnson@advocatenetworks.com.

Thank you to our Summer Interns!

Conventional wisdom ties the definition of "summer intern" to coffee, copies, clean white boards and open mail. Advocate Networks defies conventional wisdom.

We employed two interns for the summer of 2010. We challenged Cory Swanson and Priya Boyington, both Industrial Engineering students from Georgia Tech, to contribute every ounce of their intelligence and talent to our team. The results were a hugely successful experience for our team, as Cory and Priya were able to produce high quality deliverables and results for our customers.

Cory developed new analytical tools to support our Audit and Optimization services, and also provided spend & trend analysis to several of our customers. Priya conducted research projects and wrote white papers, held a key role in data collection efforts, catalogued and manipulated data via analytical models, and generally supported clients in a thoroughly professional manner.

For those who believe summer interns are good for only office chores, never underestimate them. They are smart, motivated, talented and can contribute significantly to your business success.

It is with big THANKS that we send our interns back to Georgia Tech to complete their studies and earn their much deserved degrees. From the excellent contributions to our team, we know they will be successful in their future endeavors, and we wish them well.

Look For Us!

Inc. 5000 Conference

September 30-October 2, 2010

Location: Gaylord National Hotel & Convention Center

Washington, DC

Web site: <http://www.inc500conference.com>

SIMposium - The Charm of IT

October 3-5, 2010

Location: Omni Hotel, CNN Center

Atlanta, GA

*** Special Rate for Friends of Advocate Networks ***

We have negotiated a special registration rate. Regular rates are \$1195 for SIM members and \$1395 for non-SIM practitioners. We are extending a special rate of just **\$695** (All Food and Beverage Included).

Go to www.SIMposiumConf.com and register with the code: **ADVOCATE10**

2010 Wireless Infrastructure Show

October 4-7, 2010

Location: Westin Diplomat Resort & Spa

Hollywood, FL

Web site: <http://www.wirelessinfrastructureshow.com>

APR Grand Slam Conference

October 20-22, 2010

Location: Kiawah Island Resort

Charleston, SC

Web site: <http://aprecovery.com/conference>

Women of the Year in Technology Awards

Advocate Networks' Co-President, Scott Fogle is a judge November 10, 2010 at 5:30pm

Location: Renaissance Waverly Hotel

Atlanta, GA

Web site: <http://www.mywit.org/signature-events/women-of-the-year/about-the-award>

Referrals are always appreciated (and rewarded)! Please contact Susan Schroeder at susan.schroeder@advocatenetworks.com for information about our referral program.

To learn how Advocate Networks can reduce your communications expenses, please contact Scott Fogle at (678) 987-5990 or scott.fogle@advocatenetworks.com.

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Advocate Networks
6525 The Corners Parkway
Suite 310
Norcross, GA 30092
Phone: 1-888-251-6789
Fax: (678) 987-5999

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