

Case Study



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Kevin Allaway, Technical Services Manager,
Gardners Books

Gardners Books A multi-site IVR solution

If you are Britain's leading book wholesaler, stocking in excess of 300,000 titles from a range of more than 2,000 publishers and operating at a stock availability of over 95%, you need to make sure orders are accurate and managed correctly. Additionally, the resilience of any telephony system is paramount for a high profile customer service operation.

Customer Background

Gardners Books is an independent, family-run company since 1986 and has continued to grow and invest in the business to become the UK's largest book wholesaler servicing over 15,000 accounts world-wide. Its comprehensive stockholding, high fulfilment rate, next day delivery and a full range of customer services combine to offer an unparalleled source of supply for retail booksellers both in the UK and internationally.

Demanding service levels in the book wholesale market require the fast and efficient turnaround of orders by the wholesaler. At Gardners your books are picked, packed and ready for despatch within hours from receipt of order. The last fifteen years have seen a major investment by the company in the latest technology to compliment its first class service.

The Business Challenge

Gardners was already proud of its customer service techniques but is constantly looking for ways to further improve. With the recent developments in telecommunications technology, Gardners was keen to take advantage of these new features and undertook a company wide upgrade to its current telephony systems

Why Inter-Tel Europe?

After reviewing the different technologies available on the market Gardners Books turned to a leading Inter-Tel Europe reseller for the right solution. After deliberating on the myriad options available Gardners Books felt that only the Inter-Tel Axxess could deliver the functionality and flexibility they required from a telephony platform. Fundamentally however, it was the Axxess which provided the assurance of the required level of resilience demanded by Gardners Books. To compound an already comprehensive communications solution, Gardners Books received detailed training on the new system throughout the company and can rely on 24/7 support from their chosen Inter-Tel reseller.





The Solution

The new system has enabled complete call management and reporting to better track calls made inbound and outbound. Detailed reporting tools deliver real-time statistics to desktop wallboards around the call centre. Also, all the desktop phones have a display which will deliver incoming caller line identification.

The ATM backbone functionality of the Axxess allowed for a multi-site location solution to be implemented. This dual-location system meant extra resilience for Gardners Books, a key requirement for the company.

The Axxess Open Architecture Interface also allowed for tight integration into Gardners Books existing Interactive Voice Recognition (Gardcall) platform used for book orders. The flexibility of the switch means the customer can also migrate to the Inter-Tel IVR platform at a time they need to without concerns for software incompatibilities.

“Once we had agreed a solution we set in place extremely tight deadlines for delivery. We could not allow the system to be down for too long and as such needed the transition from the old system to the new one over a Bank Holiday weekend” commented Kevin Allaway, Technical Services Manager, Gardners Books.

“We had complete faith in our chosen supplier however. In fact they managed to install and thoroughly check the system with a day to spare. We were very impressed.” added Kevin.

Results

Since its implementation Gardners Books has noted significant improvements in both business processes and call handling efficiency. The installation of Callview, the award winning computer telephony integration software from Swan Solutions, has meant comprehensive call reporting can be produced. Gardners Books now know how long customers are waiting on the line and how many calls are missed, something they were not able to know previously.

“With the Inter-Tel solution we are now able to monitor all of our inbound and outbound calls and adjust our staff scheduling in our call centre accordingly.” concluded Kevin.



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