

Got reservations? APCC 2009 details inside.

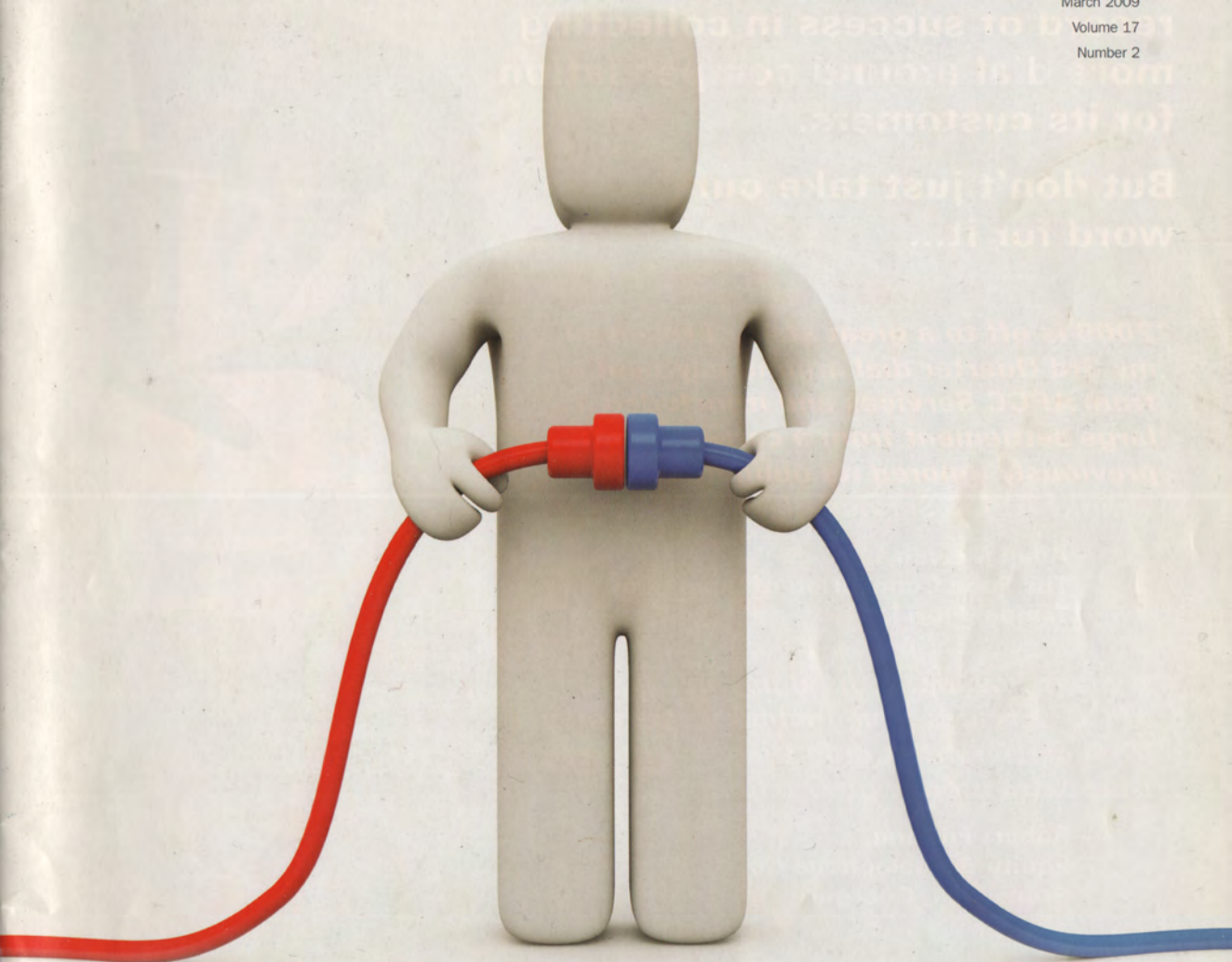
PERSPECTIVES

ON PUBLIC COMMUNICATION • OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE APCC®

March 2009

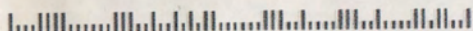
Volume 17

Number 2



To pull or not to pull

PSPs weigh a variety of factors before deciding to pull a phone



*****SCH 3-DIGIT 100
MR MARK THOMAS
PO BOX 181
NEW YORK NY 10185-0181

PRSR STD
U.S. Postage
PAID
Columbia, SC
Permit No. 74

COLLECT MORE!

Only **APCC Services** has a concrete record of success in collecting more dial around compensation for its customers.

But don't just take our word for it...

"2009 is off to a great start. I received my 3rd Quarter dial around payment from APCC Services and it included a large settlement from a carrier that has previously ignored its obligation to pay. Thanks APCC Services!"

—Allan Mezrah,
The Fone Connection of Tampa Bay;
Tampa, Florida

"My last few dial around payments from APCC Services have included settlements from carriers that didn't pay me before. That extra money goes a long way."

—Robert Furlong,
Equity Pay Telephone Co;
Brunswick, Georgia

It's Not Too Late to Make the Switch!

Be sure to mark your 2009 calendars:

APCC 2009: The National Conference

May 20 – 22, 2009

The Renaissance Hotel, Washington DC

APCC 
SERVICES



Lock Down Your Profits



Are you aware that the average county jail* bills over \$750 per phone per month in collect & credit card calls?

* City and county jails, half-way houses, work-release facilities and juvenile detention centers.

NCIC has developed a proprietary inmate platform that allows payphone providers to easily become inmate telephone providers. By simply placing a coinless payphone into the local jails or allowing NCIC to provide you with VOIP equipment you can tap into the inmate telephone market with no investment.

NCIC provides:

- The best web presence and obtains the leads for our customers
- The largest collect billing footprint in the operator service industry
- Credit card collect to cell phones
- Easy-to-use web reporting customizable for you and the jail
- International collect calling to Mexico, Canada and other countries
- In-house customer service 24/7
- A bi-lingual call center

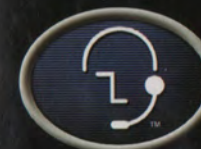
Features & Benefits:

- No expensive on-site equipment
- Call recordings with web access
- Personal Identification Numbers (PINs)
- Detailed call reports
- Multiple language support
- Live and automated operator services
- Live monitoring via web interface
- Asterisk based VOIP platform developed by in-house engineers.
- VOIP interface allowing up to 24 phones per single DSL line
- Prepaid collect and prepaid PINs

Don't Miss Another Day!

Call us now at **888.686.3699**

or email us at info@ncic.com



NCIC Operator Services

606 E. Magrill St. • Longview, TX 75601 • Fax: 903.757.4899
www.ncic.com

PERSPECTIVES

ON PUBLIC COMMUNICATION • OFFICIAL MAGAZINE OF THE APCC®
March 2009 — Volume 17 — Number 2

contents

6 To pull or not to pull

by Flori Meeks

It's never an easy decision, deciding which phones to pull.

10 OSP basics

by Dennis Williams

This article offers programming basics and testing tips.

psp spotlight

17 A positive focus

by Flori Meeks

Scott Brack is upbeat about both his business and the industry.

last word

28 Step away from the window

by Flori Meeks

It's tempting to toss your computer when it's acting up.
There is a better answer you might want to consider.



SHAWN D. HESKETH

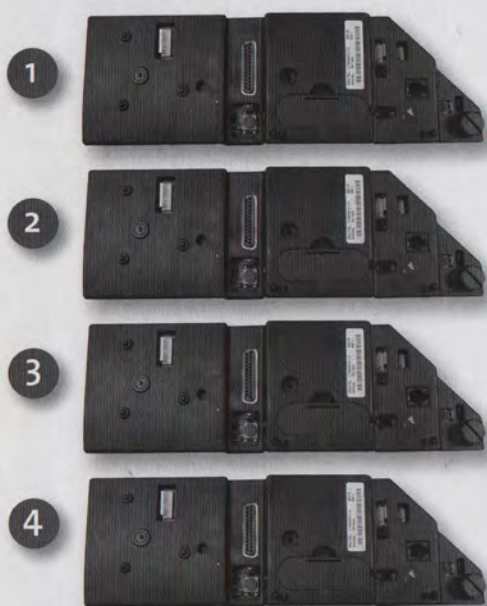
Smile for the camera

When you're friends with the publisher of a payphone magazine, you're always on the lookout for great shots. Such was the case for Randy Thompson (in photo) and Shawn D. Hesketh, who happened upon this payphone in Gatlinburg, Tenn. while on a hiking trip.

DEPARTMENTS: • Editorial - 5 • Industry Briefs - 21 • Classifieds - 24 • Calendar - 27 • Advertiser Index - 27

Cover design by Ellen Custer,
2d - A design collaborative

Free is good!



Send in 5 boards for repair, pay for 4 and get the 5th one FREE*

*You must mention this ad to qualify for repair special.

COMMUNICATION CONNECTION

www.payphone2000.com

APCC  800.798.5616 

We have a LARGE inventory of payphones and parts for sale.
Also **We buy used parts.**

PERSPECTIVES

ON PUBLIC COMMUNICATION

PUBLISHER
Tracey Timpanaro

DESIGN
Sharon Cordell,
In Graphic Detail

CONTRIBUTING WRITERS
Dan Collins, Flori Meeks,
Sara G. Stephens, Dennis Williams

APCC PRESIDENT
Willard R. Nichols

APCC STAFF
Evelyn Bruggeman Daniel P. Collins
Ruth Jaeger Maria Kerr
Carol MacDougall Willard R. Nichols
David Rossé Helly Shareefy
Deborah Sterman Tracey Timpanaro

APCC BOARD OF DIRECTORS
Chairman James Kelly III
Michael Bright Don Goens
Mason Harris Lin Harvey
Janie Hughes Ray Kadingo
Tom Keane Rick Lubbehusen
Bill Manko Tammy Martin
Ray Mastroianni Howard Meister
George Niden Dennis Novick
Brian Oliver Gary Pace
Bruce Renard Walter Rice
Tom Rose Mark Shmickler
Ralph Tipple Vincent Townsend

APCC
625 Slaters Lane, Ste. 104
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 739-1322 • (703) 739-1324 (fax)
apcc@apcc.net

Perspectives magazine
625 Slaters Lane, Ste. 104
Alexandria, VA 22314
(281) 646-0051 • (281) 578-8423 (fax)
tat66@apcc.net

Display advertising
Classified advertising
Jannette Corcher
(864) 278-3013
jannettec@apcc.net

For subscriptions and address changes: www.apcc.net

APCC 

Official magazine of the American
Public Communications Council Inc.

Collecting all that you deserve ...

All of us know the FCC regulations regarding the carriers' responsibilities to pay dial-around compensation are terribly flawed. From the beginning, the FCC simply did not look realistically into how its regulations actually were going to work in the real world. Notwithstanding the absolutely overwhelming evidence, the agency did not give any recognition to the fact (or just didn't seem to care) that many resellers and prepaid card providers would thumb their noses at their payment obligations. Instead, the FCC adopted a regulatory framework that assumed these carriers would operate as, if not good then reasonable, "citizens" in meeting their obligations.

Of course, we tried from the very beginning to get the FCC to recognize its fallacy. But to no avail. And once the rules were in place, we had no choice but to try and make the flawed system work to the best that we could for our members and APCC Services' customers.

Today, most, but not all, major IXCs are meeting their responsibilities, at least to the minimum extent that they believe is necessary. But it was quite another thing with regard to the "Completing Carriers," particularly the prepaid card industry. For these operators, with a few notable and positive exceptions, they engaged from the very beginning in every manner of obstruction and delay possible, some going to incredible lengths to remain hidden from view.

Unlike other DAC processors, APCC Services believed it was going to be necessary to aggressively pursue non-payors. It simply wasn't going to be enough just to file a few CDs quarterly with the major carrier clearinghouses and then accept without any effective challenge whatever they deigned to pay.

Instead — uniquely — APCC Services determined that the only way to maximize our customers' rightful collections was to engage in an overwhelming litigation effort through "Complaints" litigation at the

editorial

FCC. Simply put, if the non-payors did not feel at risk, they were not, we believed, going to do anything to comply with their payment obligations.

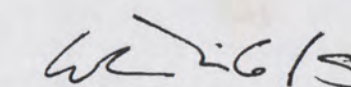
I hear sometimes that DAC processing costs are too high, that it's not fair that we have to expend so much time and money to enforce our customers' rights. Well, I couldn't agree more. But it's also clear to me that because we, unlike other processors, were able to develop a multimillion dollar data processing system that lets us look critically into the carrier networks and payment performance, we have the ability to effectively prosecute for our customers and collect more, much more, of the payments they are entitled to than do "cut rate" processors.

To date, our complaint efforts under the tollgate rules have resulted in something over \$6.5 million in additional collections for APCC Services' customers. Not to put too fine a point on it, that's millions of dollars our customers benefited from that other aggregators didn't even try and collect.

All of us would wish the time and expense and delay inherent in the FCC's system were not necessary, and that the FCC itself would realize the harm its regulatory framework is causing to the small business men and women still providing their critical payphone services to the American public. Having to go through the cumbersome and expensive process of complaint litigation at the FCC is something we wish could be corrected.

However, our complaints have paid off for our customers, and more continue to be filed every day. The bottom line: At APCC, we are not going to give up, and we are not going to concede to the cheapest way just to put some extra change in our own pockets. Instead, we are going to continue to make every effort to collect the most for our customers.

A footnote: With the recent elections, major changes are occurring in the White House, in Congress and at the FCC. Join us in Washington, D.C. May 20-22 at APCC 2009 for a unique opportunity to let the Washington policymakers hear what you have to say!



Willard R. Nichols
President

To pull or not to pull

Many factors are considered before a PSP decides to pull a phone

For most payphone service providers (PSPs) today, decisions about pulling phones have unfortunately become a routine part of doing business — right up there with polling and writing commission checks. But PSPs' approaches to evaluating phones — and the factors that lead to pulling them — vary greatly.

Some payphone providers have a detailed system for examining their route. Others bring in more human factors to the equation. "I think everybody has different criteria," says Pat O'Neil, owner of Pinnacle Public Services LLC, which operates throughout the western United States. "It depends if your business is all payphones. Payphones only provide 25 percent of our revenue."

On the radar

Victor Rollo, vice president of operations and part owner of Rollo Communications in Carlsbad, Calif., assesses his payphones every month while he is paying commissions. He considers revenue from coin calls, operator service calls, dial-around compensation and supplemental payphone programs, all by month, quarter and the previous year. (Supplemental programs would include advertising and speed dial programs.)

Rollo also considers nearby phones and what companies own them. From there, he factors in the cost to provide dial tone, along with service and maintenance. "How often are we servicing, collecting, and repairing on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis?" Rollo says. "Are we being subsidized?"

"Currently, if a phone makes money right now — even if it's just \$1 — we keep it in," he says. "Because to me, the potential for revenue is still there."

Another factor in the mix is the cost of storage. "If it gets to a point where I have pulled so much equipment that I have to pay for storage, then it is cheaper to leave break-even and low producing phones in place."

That said, however, Rollo says that once a phone stops making money, it is under his daily scrutiny. "I will watch those low-producing phones every day and see what is going on with calls," he says. "Then, I'll decide based on all the factors what to do."

O'Neil creates a list of his company's payphones twice a year, in the fall and the spring, to review their revenue. He requires payphones to bring in at least \$25 to \$30 a month, after expenses. "If it's making \$25 to \$30 now, next year it probably will be \$15," he says. "Every year they make less."

Gregg Waldhauser, president of Universal Telephone Inc. outside of Richmond, Va., evaluates his phones every few months. In today's market, he's hesitant to pull phones unless he feels he has no other choice. "You've got a phone that's making some money, right now we're keeping it," he says.

An optimistic eye

Mark Toms is the owner of Southeast Payphone Inc. in Longwood, Fla. When he and business partner Dennis Sabia review their payphones each month,

they look at coin and dial-around revenue, and also try to consider the factors that could impact their phones' performance in the future. "I think the first word that comes to mind is potential," says Toms, who estimates the company has about 340 payphones today.

Generally, Toms handles the operational side of Southeast Payphone, and Sabia is more focused on finances. During their monthly phone reviews, there's usually a bit of give and take. "Sometimes you fall in love with a location because you've had it so long," Toms explains. "My partner brings the financial bottom line into the discussion. He makes me justify why we should keep it."

"If a phone doesn't make money in a month, we look at it very hard. Sometimes we may say we'll look at it in another few months."





The decision to pull a phone is never easy.

Toms and Sabia do consider extenuating circumstances. A site may be affected by area construction, for instance. In that case, they might remove a phone temporarily.

The company can afford to give payphones second chances, Toms said, because he and Sabia keep their expenses low and they refuse to take out loans to fund their operations. "What we've done from the beginning is that we said every month we would take our revenue (after expenses) and divide it by thirds. My partner takes a third, I take a third, and the company gets a third." When the company needs money for an acquisition or other expenses, it relies on the money Toms and Sabia set aside to cover their costs.

The company also has expanded into the ATM business, which has become a fairly reliable source of additional revenue.

Toms says he also considers the three technicians his company employs when he looks at payphones. "I pay technicians based on the number of

phones they service," he says. "If on my spreadsheet it says Southeast Payphone made a dollar on one of my phones, I can pull it and put it in my warehouse and make \$0, but that's less money that my technician makes." Unless a payphone is losing money, Toms says, he'll try to keep it running. "I love my techs. They do good work for me, so I try to look out for them."

Customer considerations

In many cases, when given the option, customers will work with a PSP so they can keep phone service on their property.

When O'Neil finds phones that are not meeting his criteria, he sends a pull letter to the corresponding customers and gives them the option of paying a \$75 monthly fee to keep the payphone in place. "I think you always need to give them an option," O'Neil says. "Ninety percent say no, but some accept."

It also is worthwhile to give customers the option of reducing or eliminating their commissions. Pinnacle has two major convenience store accounts, one with 200 phones and the other with 150. "And we have negotiated with them both to reduce our commissions down," O'Neil says.

It helps to have a good relationship with your customers when these situations arise, he adds. "What we're offering is good service.

We guarantee 24 hour service on 90 percent of our payphones. We poll them every night. I do it myself."

Toms says he recently removed a payphone that was bringing in \$0 to \$10 a month. Originally, Toms told the client the phone wasn't making enough to generate commissions, and the client agreed to a pull. "He called me a month later and begged me to put the phone back in for his customers," Toms says. "Even though they won't receive commission, we're scheduled to put the phone back in."

Toms says he was especially interested in accommodating this client because he wants to maintain a good relationship with his client's landlord, an important business connection. "It's nice to provide service," Toms says. "So my technician will be making money, and the guy is happy. And I can tell the owner, 'This is what I did for your guy.' There are a lot of variables involved."

Sometimes, even if an individual payphone is seeing low revenues, it can be worthwhile to keep it if it is one of several you have with a customer. Consider

it an investment in customer relations. That's what Rollo does. "If the overall account is profitable, we will keep lower producers," he says.

Waldhauser agrees. "We look at each phone individually. If one is part of a major chain with several phones, we're going to be more lenient. If we're right near the break even point, I'm going to keep it."

Do what it takes

PSPs have additional options to consider when they're fighting for a payphone's viability. Rollo has lowered the cost of calls, changed operator service providers and reduced the cost of 0+ calling. "We'll try other programs if possible," Rollo says. "Occasionally, we have moved a phone to another location on site, closer to the building if it's on the street or vice versa."



A tough day on the job: Randy Cromar of Public Phone sent us this photo of phones he had pulled.

Moving a phone on site can make a significant difference, Toms added. "When you do an acquisition, you clean the phone, put on labels and put phone signs up and reposition the phone. That's one of those important things."

Waldhauser says about 12 to 15 of his company's 440 payphones are semi-public. He also operates some seasonal phones near beaches and other tourist destinations. In those cases, the phones sup-

port themselves during their busy season, and the company's customers pay to keep the phones in place during the rest of the year.

Waldhauser has been able to give a number of his phones an additional boost through payphone advertising. "It's just nice revenue," he says. "If I had it on all of my phones, it would be even nicer."

Going full circle

From what Waldhauser has seen, payphone deployment has gone full circle since the Telecommunications Act of 1996. "They (Congress) wanted widespread deployment of payphones," he says. "Most of the private companies have been unable to maintain this widespread deployment."

On the other hand, Toms says, payphones can still be found in all of the logical places. "There was a time when you found payphones at convenience

stores. Then, for a lot of years, there were a lot of payphones everywhere. Now it's back to the way it was earlier. People are back in the habit of looking for payphones at convenience stores. That's not a bad thing." ■

Flori Meeks is a freelance writer who is based in Houston. She has 21 years of writing and editing experience, and has been writing for *Perspectives* for 10 years.

OSP basics

Our expert addresses basic programming issues and also offers tips for testing

Ask any golfer, professional or amateur, and he will tell you that he stays in the game by practicing his swing over and over again. Ask any soccer player, and he will tell you that he practices on the field every day. Ask any hockey player ... OK you get my point!

To get the best out of your payphones, I believe the same type of focus and dedication is required. This is particularly true when it comes to programming your phone for operator service provider (OSP) calls and also setting up a system for testing these calls.

If you'd like to test your knowledge on this subject, see if you can answer the following questions. What is the average time it takes for the operator to answer a call from your payphone? Are your credit card and collect calls being completed correctly, i.e. are they routed to the correct OSP? I'll let you give yourself a grade, and trust that you'll be honest.

So now let's turn our attention to some programming basics and also review my standard process for testing OSP calls.

Initial setup

Let's address the initial programming first. Obviously, all of the preliminary work/programming is completed in the office before you send your phones out into the field. Being from Canada, I have no problem with that, especially in January or February. I would rather program my phones in the comforts of my warm office than outside in the snow and -10 degree temperatures.

Whether you are using Elcotel, Intellicall, or Protel, the basics are all the same; all types of payphones have some kind of register for programming. The Elcotel program (PNM Plus) uses macros, whereas the Protel program (ExpressNet) uses tables called routes. Both macros and routes are a set of low level commands that are placed together in a file that programs the payphone to do a particular command (i.e. dialing 0+ a number using a credit card or '00' for a live operator). These dialing macros establish how and when to send digits to the central office for each call type.

It is important to have a quality relationship with your OSP, as they will provide the program (script) required for your type of payphone. One of the common mistakes I find is that many payphone service providers (PSPs) have the incorrect telephone number (also called the access number) programmed for their OSP. (I fell victim to this myself once or twice, but don't tell anyone.)

Each OSP protocol requires that the payphone dial a telephone number to access their switch. PSPs should ensure that the number is 10 digits if required, but in most cases, an 11 digit toll-free number is used. Both PNM Plus and ExpressNet have predetermined default macros/routes that can be used or slightly altered to

by Dennis Williams



5.18 Macro 22 800 OSP Access #1

```
30 Initialize dialing sequence
73 Dial OSP 800 access number #1 (Register 319)
50 Remove expiration date from credit card #
26 Add NPA
46 Set up 35 second reroute timer
25 Say "One moment please"
31 Wait for progress tone
47 Fast dialing speed 75ms/75ms
74 Dial OSP Authorization code #1 (Register 320)
70 Dial destination number
41 Wait for bong, delay for ear piece on, send CC#
01 1 second
68 Set up return code table
02 If DTMF "B" is detected, splash back
36 Special voice detect for OSPs
```

Figure 1. Macro 22 from PNM Plus users' manual

correctly work with your OSP. For example, if using the PNM Plus program, registers 319, 322, 331 and 332 contain the OSP access numbers and one of these registers must be present in the macro used to dial an OSP call.

In addition to having the correct access number programmed for your OSP, make sure the correct authorization code is entered as well. Many OSPs give each payphone provider his own access number to distinguish one company from another. However, some OSPs have a code that must be entered into the program that separates one company's payphones from another company's payphones, and this is in addition to the access number.

PNM Plus uses register 320 to do this (see Figure 1). The default macro 22 dials the toll-free access number of the OSP and is used when a credit card is used to make the call. Command 79 directs the payphone to register 331 to retrieve the access number and command 74 directs the payphone to register 320 for the authorization code. Also note that command 50 is only used when a credit card is swiped.

Another common fault is not having the correct DTMF tone programmed. As you all know, DTMF stands for dual tone multifrequency, and it is the signaling system that is used to dial digits through touch tone rather than pulse dialing. Your OSP will also help you with the configuration of the correct tones to use.

If a DTMF tone is missing or is incorrectly placed, the call will probably not reach the operator of your choice. In these cases, the call will probably be rerouted to the local exchange carrier (LEC) and the revenue will be lost.

Macro 22 uses command 68 (see Figure 2) to set the correct DTMF. As you can see in Figure 1, if DTMF "B" is detected, then the OSP wants a splashback. If the phone detects any other DTMF, then it will continue with the call. A splashback is an action that occurs when a call that was originally placed with an OSP cannot be handled for whatever reason and is returned to the LEC or local operator. With the correct DTMF, the call will be routed to your operator of choice and the call can be completed to your satisfaction and revenue can be collected.

The importance of testing

Now that we've discussed basic programming, let's turn to testing. When is the last time you made a 0+ or 00 call from one of your payphones? I suggest doing it at least once a day on a small portion of your route.

Within our company of 1,500 payphones, we test approximately 15 payphones a day (roughly 1 percent). The key is to know that the payphones on an individual basis are programmed correctly. We do this testing when we are collecting or servicing a payphone; we do not want to make special trips to a site only to test the OSP, unless we suspect the payphone is not programmed correctly.

Although it is important, completing only this test will seem like a waste of time and money. I have a spreadsheet I use to gather more information (see Figure 3). I note the date and time I was on site, the site name and payphone number. I also note the amount of time it takes for the payphone to dial out to the operator (i.e. the time, in seconds, from pressing 0 to when the operator's switch answers, whether automated or a live operator).

The amount of time is a key element, because if it takes too long, the payphone user will hang up and you will lose that potential revenue. And, as we all know too well, the customer may take his frustra-

68 – DTMF Return Code "XX." This is a two-part command (68 XX), where XX specifies the following:

- "01" = If DTMF "#" is detected, send credit card buffer.
- "02" = If DTMF "B" is detected, splash back.
- "04" = If DTMF "*" is detected, say previous call number and charges.
If DTMF "A, B or D" is detected, payphone collects coins.
If DTMF "C" is detected, payphone starts Service Desk.
- "17" = User defined return macro (reg 306)
- "18" = User defined return macro (reg 307)
- "19" = User defined return macro (reg 308)

Figure 2. Command 68 for DTMF tones (from PNM Plus users' manual)

OSP Daily Checkup

Date	Time of Day	Payphone Number	Site Name	Time to reach the OSP switch (sec.)	Notes
14-Dec-08	1:30 PM	(905) 555-1234	Tom's Place	7	
14-Dec-08	2:25 PM	(905) 555-7890	Coffee shop	30	not good, check phone's programming
14-Dec-08	4:15 PM	(905) 555-6954	Gas station	6	
23-Dec-08	12:05 PM	(604) 555-5847	Another gas station	10	should be better
23-Dec-08	7:26 PM	(604) 555-1425	Still another gas station	6	
Average time				11.8	

Figure 3

tion out on the payphone and then you will be replacing a handset or the payphone itself.

As mentioned above, I take note of the date, time and payphone number, and I do this to check my OSP records. I confirm that the call is recorded as a call detail record (CDR). I do have a great rapport with my OSPs, but it never harms anyone to validate his CDRs and commission check.

Speaking of OSPs, I cannot stress enough the importance of dealing one on one with your OSP to program your payphones correctly. If you are making changes to the program of a payphone, test it in the office first to ensure the call is routed correctly before programming any payphone in the field. It is always harder to get a return customer if the pay-

phone is not working than it is to have a satisfied customer return time and time again.

If you think of your payphone route as The Masters at Augusta and your bench payphone as the practice tee, I believe you will have no problem shooting better than par. In fact, every payphone installed with the correct OSP program will be that much closer to the "hole in one" we all strive for. ■

Dennis Williams has been involved in the payphone industry for 11 years and is currently operations manager for FCT Communications Inc., which is based in Toronto, Ontario, Canada. He can be reached at dennis.williams@rogers.com, and he would particularly love to hear from you if you have an idea or a question for the Tech Talk column.

APCC 2009: The National Conference

Save the dates

May 20-22, 2009

The Renaissance Hotel
Washington, D.C.

Complete details and updates at www.apcc.net



ATTENDEE INFORMATION (One form per registrant. Please duplicate form for additional registrations.)

Name: _____ Title: _____
Company Name: _____ E-mail: _____
Address _____ City, State, Zip (+4) _____
Phone _____ Fax: _____

REGISTRATION INFORMATION

IMPORTANT NOTE: APCC 2009 will include scheduled visits to Capitol Hill. These meetings will provide PSPs with the unique opportunity to meet with key legislators and their aides to discuss some of the issues facing their specific companies and, more generally, the public communications industry. Due to the special nature of the 2009 program, APCC is able to offer one registration package only.

	EARLY BIRD	AFTER APRIL 30	AMOUNT DUE
APCC/APCCS Rate *	\$195	\$250	
Non -Member Rate	\$395	\$500	
* APCC/APCCS rate is available to APCC members and APCC Services customers only.			TOTAL DUE

☐ Yes! I will be traveling to Capitol Hill on Thurs. May 21 to meet with key legislators regarding the payphone industry.

☐ Yes! I am signing up for the Washington, DC tour on the afternoon of Friday May 22.

In which states/congressional districts do you own/operate payphones?

Do you operate, do business in, or is your business headquartered in any of the following districts/states represented by current members of House and Senate Commerce Committees? Note: Names based on committee assignments as of 12-10-08 and is subject to change.

☐ AR, Mark Pryor (D)	☐ CA, H. Waxman (D)	☐ IL, J. Shimkus (R)	☐ MI, F. Upton (R)	☐ NY, A. Weiner (D)	☐ TX, M. Burgess (R)
☐ AR, Mike Ross (D)	☐ CO, D. DeGette (D)	☐ IN, S. Buyer (R)	☐ MN, A. Klobuchar (D)	☐ OH, Z. Space (D)	☐ TX, G. Green (D)
☐ AZ, J. McCain (R)	☐ CT, C. Murphy (D)	☐ IN, B. Hill (D)	☐ MO, C. McCaskill (D)	☐ OH, B. Sutton (D)	☐ TX, C. Gonzalez (D)
☐ AZ, J. Shadegg (R)	☐ DE, T. Carper (D)	☐ KY, E. Whitfield (R)	☐ MS, R. Wicker (R)	☐ OR, G. Walden (R)	☐ TX, R. Hall (R)
☐ CA, Barb. Boxer (D)	☐ FL, K. Castor (D)	☐ LA, C. Melancon (D)	☐ NC, GK. Butterfield (D)	☐ OK, J. Sullivan (R)	☐ TX, KB. Hutchison (R)
☐ CA, Lois Capps (D)	☐ FL, B. Nelson (D)	☐ LA, D. Vitter (R)	☐ NC, S. Myrick (D)	☐ PA, M. Doyle (D)	☐ UT, J. Matheson (D)
☐ CA, Anna Eshoo (D)	☐ FL, C. Stearns (R)	☐ MA, J. Kerry (D)	☐ ND, B. Dorgan (D)	☐ PA, T. Murphy (R)	☐ VA, R. Boucher (D)
☐ CA, J. Harman (D)	☐ GA, J. Barrow (D)	☐ MA, E. Markey (D)	☐ NE, L. Terry (R)	☐ PA, J. Pitts (R)	☐ VI, D. Christensen (D)
☐ CA, M. Bono Mack (R)	☐ GA, N. Deal (R)	☐ MD, J. Sarbanes (D)	☐ NJ, F. Lautenberg (D)	☐ SC, J. DeMint (R)	☐ WA, J. Inslee (D)
☐ CA, D. Matsui (D)	☐ HI, D. Inouye (D)	☐ ME, O. Snowe (R)	☐ NJ, F. Pallone (D)	☐ SD, J. Thune (R)	☐ WA, M. Cantwell (D)
☐ CA, J. McNerney (D)	☐ IA, B. Braley (D)	☐ MI, J. Dingell (D)	☐ NV, J. Ensign (R)	☐ TN, M. Blackburn (R)	☐ WI, T. Baldwin (D)
☐ CA, G. Radanovich (R)	☐ IL, B. Rush (D)	☐ MI, M. Rogers (R)	☐ NY, E. Engel (D)	☐ TN, B. Gordon (D)	☐ WV, J. Rockefeller (D)
☐ CA, H.L. Solis (D)	☐ IL, J. Schakowsky (D)	☐ MI, B. Stupak (D)	☐ NY, E. Towns (D)	☐ TX, J. Barton (R)	

Do you have relationships with any specific members of Congress (not listed above) with whom you would like the APCC to request a meeting?

PAYMENT INFORMATION - Payment must accompany registration form.

AMEX ☐ MC ☐ VISA ☐ Check # _____ TOTAL PAID \$ _____
Card Number _____ Exp. _____
Cardholder's Name _____ Cardholder's Signature _____

Mail or fax to: APCC 2009 * 625 Slaters Lane * Suite 104 * Alexandria, VA 22314 Fax: 703-739-1041

psp spotlight

by Flori Weeks

A positive focus

Scott Brack enjoys being a PSP and remains upbeat about the industry as well

One of the first things Scott Brack learned when he entered the payphone industry 12 years ago was not to look to others to make his business a success. Today, the owner of Wichita, Kansas-based Touch Tone Communications values the opportunity payphones have given him to shape his company and guide its future himself.

"I get to call all of the shots in the business," says Brack, who also is a full time sales representative for an avionics company. "It's like being a salesman. If you want to earn more money, you work harder. You research good locations and pull out of unproductive locations. It's not overly complicated."

Taking the plunge

Brack's decision to venture into the payphone business was influenced by family dynamics. After his second son was born, Brack started looking for ways to replace his wife's income so she could focus more on their children, and they could maintain a similar standard of living.



Scott Brack likes owning his own business because he can call all the shots.

His wife, Rhonda, worked for an accounting firm at the time. While researching business opportunities, Brack noticed some ads about the opportunities in the independent payphone market.

He decided to follow up and after much research, bought a couple of phones. "Like everybody who bought in the 1990s that way, I paid too much," Brack says. Brack hired a company to help him with the installations as well. "Again, I paid too much. That's when I learned it was best to do it all on my own."

Building a payphone route



Brack says that even with the best science, it's still hard to know how a location will fare.

was slow going. "By day, I was doing my sales duties, and on evenings and weekends, payphones," he says. "Now, I'm still doing some payphone work on evenings and weekends, but it is not nearly as hectic as in the past. It fits my personality."

The ins and outs

Brack devoted a lot of time during his early days in the business to learning the ins and outs of payphones. He says he'll always be grateful to fellow payphone service provider (PSP) John Long of the Kansas Payphone Association (KPA). Long, who has served as association president and now is the treasurer, shared the benefits of his knowledge and experience with Brack.

"I don't know how many nights I spent on the phone with him asking him questions," Brack says. "He was the one who enforced the idea that a lot of this I have to do myself, and he gave me the confidence to do it."

Brack also has strived to learn from his mistakes,

especially when it comes to placing phones. "I've learned from much experience that payphone placement is not an exact science," he says. "You have to do your research, but no matter how much analysis you do, it's still hard to predict how each location will fare."

At its peak, Touch Tone Communications had 85 payphones in operation. Today, the company has about 70 scattered throughout the metropolitan Wichita area.

"When my business was growing in the early days, I went after the bar phones," Brack says. "Now I look more at convenience stores and higher volume outdoor sites." He makes a point of keeping his locations reasonably close to home, since he's the one who handles maintenance and collection.

More often than not, Brack has made good calls on his sites. When he does find phones unprofitable, he makes case by case decisions on how to approach them. "If a phone is turning any profit at all, it will remain in place. If it starts operating in the red, I usually analyze it for 90 more days and then consider removal and relocation," he says.

Keeping current

Brack has remained a member of the KPA, and also belongs to the American Public Communications Council Inc. (APCC). He finds it difficult to attend KPA meetings because of his schedule, but he values the information it provides. "Luckily, they usually do send out a recap (from the meetings). I do keep informed. We don't have a big association, but everyone has been helpful. All of the members together have been a pretty big base of information."

Brack said he wishes more people in the industry would avail themselves of the information payphone associations have to offer. Over the years, he has bought out a number of newcomers to the field who probably could have benefited from more knowledge.

"The people I bought out had no idea there was an APCC or a state payphone association, and by the time they called me, they were disheartened with the whole process and ready to sell everything," he says.

Maintaining focus

Brack has seen a lot of his colleagues in the industry seek out additional sources of revenue to help supplement their payphone businesses. For him, that approach simply isn't an option right now. "It's (the payphone business) still part time for me, so

payphones are the only thing I concentrate on," Brack says.

He has been able to draw callers to his phones, he says, by keeping his pricing as low as possible. After U.S. laws changed and PSPs were allowed to increase the cost of a local call to 50 cents, Brack made the decision to continue charging 35 cents. He even decreased the cost to 25 cents on some of his phones. "My business has actually increased at some locations," he says. "That's been a big help."

Brack also makes it a priority to make callers glad they chose his phones. "My equipment is always clean; it's always maintained."

He strives to take care of his customers, too. "I never miss paying commissions to my customers on time; I keep them happy."

Brack says he appreciates the other PSPs in his region. He hasn't experienced the cutthroat competition for sites he's heard about in other urban areas. "There's not a lot of back-stabbing and location stealing," he says. "I think there's an unwritten rule, at least in our association, where providers respect other's locations and try not to step on each other's toes."

"I feel there's no reason to get in a battle with another provider — I think that would be a stressful, no-win situation for all involved." He has also been approached to be a subcontractor for other providers. "I simply don't have the range to do maintenance and collection very far outside of the Wichita area. I'd definitely be interested if the work was centered around the metro area."

Staying put

Brack says he's not sure where the payphone industry is going from here, but he believes there's reason to be hopeful. "I talk to people who say payphones will always have an audience; they'll be around in some form. I agree."

"The technology may change, but I'm banking there will be a market for my locations and what I do."

In addition to his time with Touch Tone Communications and his sales work for the avionics company, Brack runs a second business that buys and sells coins. And beyond work, he spends as much time as he can with his wife Rhonda and their sons, 16-year-old Zachary and 12-year-old Taylor.



Brack's wife Rhonda is a partner in Touch Tone, and their sons are also familiar with the business by now. Zach (left) is 16 and Taylor is 12.

Rhonda also is his partner with Touch Tone, which helps the couple spend even more time together. "She's the common sense side of the business," Brack says. "When I'm ready to make a rash decision, she brings me down to earth and makes me rethink things."

Whenever possible, Brack, Rhonda and the boys enjoy traveling together. "Now that the business has kind of matured, I have more time for family." He also enjoys an occasional golf game. "I don't get out to play as much as I would like, so I love my time on the course."

People sometimes ask Brack how he can keep his route afloat while limited to a part-time schedule. He doesn't see any other way to go. "In a smaller city like Wichita, payphone revenue is generally lower per phone than other metropolitan areas," he says. "There's less traffic. This business is best suited for part-time."

"It's nice that I'm down to a manageable level where I can pretty much test, collect and clean the phones on most of my route all in one day," Brack says. "I'm my own subcontractor. I've got it down to a science."

He says he hopes his positive experiences in the payphone industry, and his ability to keep going, will give others hope. "I want people not to get discouraged and to think the payphone industry as a whole is dead. It will always be around in some form." ■

Flori Meeks is a freelance writer who is based in Houston. She has 21 years of writing and editing experience, and has been writing for *Perspectives* for 10 years.

Looking for **B-N** parts ?

**Rubber gasket • Glass molding •
Tempered glass • Logo header • Pedestal**

Call **1.877.477.5151**

JARO
INDUSTRIESJARO.COM

Serving the payphone industry

**COLLECT
CALLS TO**



at&t
Dial
***91**

G-FIVE
LLC

**G-Five introduces first AT&T
Direct Dial Tone Package
for CA and TX,
other states coming soon!**

**Also introducing
COLLECT CALLS TO AT&T DIAL *91
The only nationwide, legitimate
operator service call program
with the AT&T brand and
payphone faceplate signage.
For information: 800-644-3483**

**G-Five also offers competitive zero plus programs
using CTI and ILD, and Discount 1+ programs using AT&T.**

industry briefs

product news

YourATM.com

YourATM.com now offers the MA-2000 Alarm made by AlarmIt Security Solutions. The MA-2000 is designed to prevent ATM theft and to monitor all ATM access.

Most alarms will not trigger an alert until someone attempts to break into the machine's vault, but not the exterior door nor the top door, a-YourATM.com representative said. This kind of break-in leaves the ATM vulnerable and provides the intruder with easy access to the vault.

The MA-2000 protects the exterior of the ATM as well as the interior vault. Once someone attempts to enter the ATM through the top or through the bottom door, it sounds an alarm and automatically calls a designated phone number. Once alerted, the ATM operator can direct police to the ATM site.

Further, the MA-2000 will call the designated contact whenever someone accesses the machine, even authorized personnel. A second call is made when the machine is closed. This approach gives the ATM operator a record of when each machine is accessed and a means of monitoring ATM maintenance and cash removal from the vault. Eventually, the service will be upgraded so that the system will be able to send the user text messages and computer software can be used to create a detailed log of ATM access.

In addition to these features, the MA-2000 comes with an on-off fob intended to make enabling and disabling the alarm safer and easier for authorized users. The fob operates much like the devices car owners use to lock and unlock doors.

For more information, visit www.youratm.com.

people & places

Embarq

Embarq Corp. gave payphone callers in seven U.S. states free calls during the holiday season.

The communications company donated five days of free long distance and local calling, and calls were limited to 10 minutes. The company targeted payphones at shelters and community centers in Tennessee, Virginia, North Carolina, Florida, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Nevada.

Thomas Mathews, a Mid-Atlantic Region media relations manager for Embarq, said the company has been making the free calls available to shelters and community centers in different cities every holiday season for years.

Embarq, which is headquartered in Overland Park, Kan., has operations in 18 states. Its services include local and long distance phone service, payphone service, high speed Internet, wireless, satellite television, enhanced data network services, voice and data communication equipment and managed network services.

For more information, visit www.embarq.com.

Long distance coin calls now exempt in NJ

Effective Jan. 1, 2009, long distance coin calls from payphones are exempt from New Jersey sales tax. Previously, only local coin calls were exempt. The expansion of the exemption to long distance coin calls was the result of revisions of the New Jersey Sales and Use Tax Act to conform with various provisions of the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Agreement (SSUTA).

The SSUTA, which New Jersey first passed in 2005, was developed over the course of several years through the joint effort of over 40 states participating in the Streamlined Sales and Use Tax Project.

According to Arthur Cooper, president of the New Jersey Payphone Association, the new exemption will have little financial impact on PSPs due to the low volume of long distance coin calls, but there will be a "great 'savings' in not having to worry about filing sales tax forms any more."

A copy of the notice on the exemption can be found at: www.state.nj.us/treasury/taxation/pdf/amend_sales_use.pdf.

— Dan Collins, corporate counsel

TIO Networks Corp.

TIO Networks Corp., which operates a network of financial services kiosks in North America, has announced an extended partnership with NEXXO Financial Corp., a company that provides self-service

remittance services to the Hispanic demographic.

The partnership will enable NEXXO to offer its self-service remittance technology on TIO's network of bill payment kiosks at Circle K and other participating retail stores.

Currently, NEXXO's service is available in several U.S. cities across California and Texas. The partnership will bring its remittance services to an additional 427 locations in Texas and in Arizona.

"There remains a strong need in the Hispanic community for sending funds to loved ones back home in a safe, easy and cost-

effective manner," said David Alvarez, NEXXO's chief executive. "Our continued relationship with TIO will allow more individuals in these communities who want to transfer money the control and access 24 hours a day, seven days a week."

In addition, TIO Networks Corp. and Pacific Gas and Electric Co. (PG&E) have partnered to launch a self-service bill payment kiosk program.

PG&E has purchased 11 self-service payment kiosks that are powered by TIO's self-service software and processing services. The deal authorizes TIO to deploy the PG&E bill pay application on at least 200 self-service kiosks within the PG&E service area.

For more information, visit www.tionetworks.com.

Boingo Wireless

Boingo Wireless has acquired the Wi-Fi networks for the Washington State Department of Transportation ferries division from Parsons Transportation Group, and will be providing Wi-Fi access to the daily commuters, professionals and tourists that use the ferry system.

With the acquisition, Boingo will be adding 11 Washington state ferries terminals and 15 ferries to complement its airport network.

The Ferries Wi-Fi network will be moving to a Boingo branded start page, where the public will be able to purchase Boingo AsYouGo day passes for \$7.95, as well as Boingo Unlimited for \$21.95 per month.

The 11 terminals from where the Wi-Fi ferries launch are Seattle, Bainbridge, Bremerton, Edmonds, Kingston, Mukilteo, Clinton, Fauntleroy, Vashon, Southworth and Anacortes.

Boingo also has acquired Opti-Fi Networks, a limited liability company from Parsons Transportation Group and ARINC that provides Wi-Fi infrastructure implementation and management for airports around North America.

The acquisition increases the number of airport networks operated by Boingo from 30 to 55. The Opti-Fi acquisition includes such airports as Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport, Buffalo Niagara International Airport, Edmonton International Airport, El Paso International Airport and Piedmont Triad International Airport.

In other news, Boingo Wireless has been broadening its support for Apple platforms, first with Boingo software for the Macintosh and now with its recent introduction of Boingo Mobile for iPhone and iPod Touch.

According to usage reports from airport Wi-Fi networks operated by Boingo, there has been a steady increase in Wi-Fi connections from MacBooks and PowerBooks. As of January 2008, nearly 20 percent of airport usage comes from Mac laptops, an increase of 30 percent since January 2007.

For more information, visit www.boingo.com. ■

Correction

In the March 2009 article "A friendly reminder about FLEX ANI," we inadvertently listed an incorrect address for APCC Services Web site. The correct address is www.apccsideas.com. We apologize for the error.

Put your phones back to work

Do you have Protel payphones in excess or already in a warehouse? Are you looking for new ways of putting them back to work?

We are a Latin American payphone company operating in high volume markets where public payphones cover basic communication needs. Let us show you how to get benefits from your current assets. Please send an e-mail to: usa@altamex.biz, or call us at: 011-52-55-10555-777, ext. 102, USA department.

www.altamex.biz. ALTA Telephony — a division of ALTA Group — is a member of the local industry association and operates more than 19,000 payphones all over México.



In Memoriam

by Sara G. Stephens

The payphone industry bids farewell to longtime member Albert Gerlach. A 14-year board member of the American Public Communications Council Inc. (APCC), Gerlach died on Jan. 14 in Fargo, N.D., where he had lived most of his life.

Gerlach owned and operated Gerlach Communications. At age 65, he had enjoyed a lifetime of success as a payphone service provider who also sold operator services, prepaid calling cards and ATMs.

Greg Ludvigsen is an attorney who serves as legal counsel for the Minnesota Independent Payphone Association (MIPA), for which Gerlach had served as State Leader. Ludvigsen also worked as attorney for Gerlach's business. He knew Gerlach for 20 years and developed a strong relationship with him over that time.

"He was a great friend," Ludvigsen said. "I liked working with him. He had a good sense of humor, and was one of the best sales guys I've ever seen. I learned a lot from him."

Gerlach's successes extended beyond work and into his favorite pastime, baseball. He coached baseball for many years, was active in North Dakota Babe Ruth baseball, and was inducted into the North Dakota Babe Ruth Baseball Hall of Fame in 2002. One of his favorite and most prized claims to fame was having coached Major League Baseball player Chris Coste while Coste was still in high school. His other hobbies included duck and goose hunting, as well as gardening.

Survived by Sharon Gerlach, his wife of almost 50 years, Gerlach had three sons, Blaine, Bill, and Bryan. He also enjoyed nine grandchildren.

Gerlach served the payphone industry for many years, and, according to Ludvigsen, "had a great knowledge of [it], and accomplished a lot with his involvement."

APCC President Randy Nichols expressed similar sentiments. "Al was an active member of the independent payphone industry from the very beginning, supporting both the APCC and the MIPA," he said. "He was one of our first board members and served for 14 years. He'll be sorely missed."



Al Gerlach
1940-2009

FOR SALE

I.D.TEL One Stop Handset Source

March Madness

Top Quality

\$9.00 handsets (black handles and caps)
(other colors available call for details)

It's a slam dunk!



CTI **INTELLICALL** **APCC MEMBER**

55 CANAL STREET STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK 10304
718.876.6000/OUTSIDE NYC 800.628.8097 FAX 718.876.6003
Email: sales@handsetsource.com Web site: www.handsetsource.com

TPIT TELECOM PRODUCTS Inc.

MANUFACTURER OF COIN OPERATED
AIR & WATER MACHINES

- Air/Water Machines
- Payphone Enclosures
- Air Vacs
- Pedestals
- Security Vaults
- Inmate Products

CALL TODAY FOR MORE DETAILS
1-866-874-8210

WWW.TPITEXAS.COM

Stop UNAUTHORIZED access to your ATM!!

The Most Advanced Security solution for your ATM!
Not only stops theft but also monitors all access.

The MA-2000 alerts you when

- Employees ■ Third Party Service Providers ■
- Competitors with keys to your ATM ■ Skimmers ■

Access your ATM.

ALARMIT
SECURITY SOLUTIONS

Authorized Reseller for Alarm It Security Solutions

YourATM.com
877 428 6720



N FORM PRODUCTS

1-800-677-6750

25¢ LOCAL CALLS

Local Calls 25¢

Aluminum Signs • Plastic Signs
Decals for Handsets & Face Plates
Security Screw Drivers
Band Clamps • Directory Binders
Custom Signs

Join us for a custom tour of DC
(advance sign-up required)

The riding/walking tour includes:

- The White House
- The Smithsonian
- National Gallery of Art
- Washington Monument
- World War II Memorial
- Vietnam Veterans Memorial
- Arlington National Cemetery

APCC 2009
The National Conference

2-6 p.m.
Friday, May 22
www.apcc.net

FOR SALE

AMERICAN PRODUCTS

Manufacturer of AIRKING Air and Vacuum Machines

Looking for an EASY way to earn more income?




Powder Coated Air K14-750

Economy Stainless Steel Vac K52

Mention this ad and receive a FREE air or vacuum hose when ordering a machine!!
Call us TODAY at 1-800-542-3336

TU L.L.C.

T.R.I.A.D. - UNIVERSAL COMMUNICATIONS
"Serving the payphone industry since 1985"

"The Industry's Complete Payphone Supplier"

- Complete Payphones
- Payphone Parts
- Smart Boards - new & refurbished
- Enclosures/Pedestals
- Repairs
- Refurbishing
- Technical Support
- Air/Water/Vac Machines

Quadrum - GTE - Western - Protel - Elcotel - Intellicall

Manufacturer and Supplier of Coinless/Inmate Phones and Accessories

For information and pricing call

- Randy Pakos/Pat Soltis 800-735-6597
- Cheryl Barker 866-528-5352
- Jerry Sherman 877-528-5352

APCC MEMBER

CUSTOM TELEPHONE PRINTING

APCC MEMBER

Call us for a FREE sample pack!
Phone: 800-753-5300
or 815-338-0000
Fax: 800-933-5303
or 815-338-0009

Visit our Website at: www.customtel.com
Email us at: sales@customtel.com



FOR SALE

Telecom Printing Solutions, Inc.
877-855-8557
 Fax: 888-491-8400

Payphone Signage Aluminum labels

Llame a México!
 3 Minutos Por \$1.00
 A Todo México!
 Directo Con Monedas
 Marque 01152
 El Numero En M

LOCAL CALLS Deposit 50¢
 for first 15 minutes

No coin needed for Charge and SOS Calls

Use Your Credit Card or Call Collect
 Dial 0 + Area Code + Number

Mastercard DISCOVER

This pay phone provided by:
 TSPS
 21 W. La Verne Street
 Calabasas, CA 91301
 818-881-8811

Operator Service complaints may be directed to:
 Federal Communications Commission, Consumer Complaints
 475 Lafayette Avenue, Washington, DC 20554

You may choose your own service. Cards may be marked by adding the area code provided by the operator.

VOLUME PRESS & KEY
 1-LOUD
 2-LOUDER
 3-LOUDEST

payphone.com Global Supplier of Public Telecommunications Equipment
 Quality. Selection. Value.

Provider of coinless / inmate phones and all types of payphone boards, parts, and accessories including Protel & Elcotel

We BUY - SELL - TRADE

Visit us at
WWW.PAYPHONE.COM 1-800-884-4835

PAYPHONE SERVICE & REPAIR

TeleSource

BELLCORE QUALITY REPAIR

- Handsets
- Relays
- Hoppers
- Dials
- Coin Tracks

The Largest Coin Inventory in the U.S. Since 1984

Ric @ 800/544-0059

Buy. Sell.

We've got you covered either way.

Call Jannette at 864.278.3013

WANTED

PAYPHONE ROUTES WANTED NATIONWIDE

25 PHONE MINIMUM

PLEASE E-MAIL CONFIDENTIAL INQUIRIES TO:
TROSE@CPMC.BIZ

PAYPHONE SERVICE & REPAIR

Are you managing payphones, ATMs, air or water machines?

M.I.S.T. is your solution
 (Management Information System for Pay Telephones)

- commission checks
- invoicing
- profit reports
- trouble tickets
- collection schedules
- and more

The company with the unlimited support plans

America's Business Software
 (916) 483-7266
 john@abs-mist.com

OUR REPAIR PRICES ARE IN RECESSION

Protel, Elcotel, Ernest & Intellicall

Circuit Board Repairs \$25

Coin Relays Key pads CoinCo Coin Mechs \$8

Protel & MARS Scanners \$15

6 MONTH WARRANTY / 3-5 DAY TURNAROUND
 VISA, MasterCard, Discover accepted

888-926-8057

PT Solutions
 ELECTRONICS REPAIR
 Quality Service Since 1997
 59 Lauderdale Ln
 Crawfordville, FL 32327
 www.electronrepair.com

state payphone association meetings calendar

Alliance of Specialized Communications Providers
 (866) 305-0836
 March 31-April 1
 Hilton
 Jackson, Miss.

Central Atlantic Payphone Association
 (717) 697-5948
 11 a.m.
 Harrisburg Hershey Sheraton
 April 8
 November 11

Independent Payphone Association of New York
 (718) 776-8179
 4 p.m.
 March 18
 Crowne Plaza La Guardia

Midwest Independent Coin Payphone Association
 (636) 922-5213
 7 p.m.
 Holiday Inn - Oakland Park (airport)
 March 11
 June 10
 September 9
 December 2

San Diego Payphone Owners Association
 (888) 289-0011
 9:30 a.m.
 Cocos Restaurant
 La Jolla
 March 19
 May 14
 July 16
 September 17
 November 19

All dates are subject to change; please verify with state associations prior to making travel arrangements.

ADVERTISER INDEX

ALTA Telephony	22
APCC 2009	14-16
APCC Services	IFC
Communication Connection	4
CTI Operator Services	IBC
G-Five	20
Industries JARO	20
NCIC	1
Talk Too Me	BC

Classified ads are accepted on a pre-paid basis only. Classified ad rates are \$1 per word with a 40-word minimum, or \$50 per column inch for display ads. Classified ads are accepted in written form only. To place an ad, please call Jannette Corcher at (864) 278-3013, or send your ad to:

Perspectives magazine
 625 Slaters Lane, Ste. 104
 Alexandria, VA 22314

©2009 by the American Public Communications Council Inc. This publication may not be reproduced in whole or in part without the express written permission of the American Public Communications Council Inc.

Perspectives is published six times per year by the American Public Communications Council Inc.

Perspectives is offered for information purposes only. Statements of fact or opinion by authors or advertisers are believed to be true, but should not be considered as legal advice. If legal advice is required, contact your attorney.

Perspectives reserves the right to reject any advertisement submitted for publication.

last word

by Flori Meeks

Step away from the window

When computers malfunction, tossing them out the window is very tempting. However, you might want to consider letting someone else manage them instead.

It's happened to the best of us: you're busy, you're stressed out, on deadline and your computer freezes up or has some other type of annoying malfunction. It's enough to send the most peaceful among us over the edge, and payphone service providers (PSPs) are no exception.

Obviously, computers are of vital importance to payphone providers, as they are used for critical programming, polling and other functions. But the honest truth is that few PSPs have the time to properly care for their computers. Conversely, the more pressing truth is that payphone providers don't have time for their computers to be down, either.

This is why it might be useful to consider using a managed services provider, and it's less expensive than you might think. For a flat monthly fee, managed services providers assign a team of information technology (IT) professionals to maintain clients' computer systems before problems occur.

"A lot of people call managed services outsourcing, but it's not," says Dave Manders, president and CIO of Certified Network Group, a managed services provider based in Aurora, Colo. "Managed services manage your computer proactively."

Preventive care

While services vary from company to company, managed services can include data protection, database management, e-mail protection, security solutions, system administration, network design and installation, network monitoring, end user training, equipment updates and replacement, software updates and installation and Windows patch management along with troubleshooting and repairs.

Managed services have been around a long time, but the idea of providing it to small and mid-sized companies first surfaced about eight years ago, says Greg Bischer, senior engineer for Bischer Technologies in Clinton Township, Mich. "It's fairly common in California, but not as much in the Midwest," Bischer says.



But the concept makes lots of sense for small companies, which can least afford computer downtime, he says. "This is a most cost-effective approach. It's more proactive than reactive."

Remotely possible

Certified Network Group's clients range from large scale companies to small businesses and sole proprietorships. In most cases, Manders says, he can access his clients' computer systems by high speed Internet and monitor them for problems remotely. "If they have problems we can jump on their system and take care of it," Manders says. "It doesn't matter where they are as long as they have a high speed Internet connection."

The costs of these services vary. Bischer says depending on a client's needs, his company charges \$75 to \$105 per workstation each month.

Thoughts to consider

If you are in the market for managed services, or you want to learn more about it, you can enter "managed services" or "managed services, (city name)" on any Internet search engine. Your Yellow Pages may not have a "managed services" heading, but you might find what you're looking for under "Computers-Software & Services."

When seeking a managed services provider, Bischer suggests selecting a company that makes managed services its core focus. The provider should offer unlimited help desk support and life cycle network management. In other words, he says, the service should be helping you assess your needs now, and help you plan for growth and changes.

"In my opinion managed services are definitely the way to go," Bischer says. "It's a team of people supporting your network." ■

Flori Meeks is a freelance writer who is based in Houston. She has 21 years of writing and editing experience, and has been writing for *Perspectives* for 10 years.

SOLID GROWTH

CTI's growth is a direct result of its customers' growth

By providing our customers with the highest level of service, revenue-generating products such as Collect Calls Dial *11®, and the highest operator service commissions in the industry, it's no wonder more and more PSPs turn to CTI Operator Services to grow their payphone business.

Contact us to see why some of the largest PSPs have chosen to use CTI.



800.672.9080

www.customteleconnect.com

“PSPs receive a hand to increase their revenue by up to 300% in 2009.”



“In 2008 some PSPs reacted unsuccessfully as their revenue continued to wash away...while other PSPs increased their revenue by up to 300%!”

You can rescue your business and stop the trend of declining revenues!

It is absolutely possible during 2009 that you can recapture your revenue declines from 2008, 2007 and 2006 with EncircleALL™ - the only proven solution for increasing your Coin deposits, Dial-Around Compensation and OSP commission checks.

Talk Too Me is not simply offering Operator Services. We are offering a comprehensive, business changing solution. A rock-solid, proven system that maximizes the revenue from all three major revenue sources of your business.

EncircleALL™ is business changing! Some PSPs have seen their revenue jump by as much as 300% while all have seen an improvement of 30% or more.

To accurately illustrate the financial impact that EncircleALL™ will have on **your** business, we have created a powerful, interactive tool to show you how much more revenue is available to you and your business.

We promise that in just 10 minutes, we'll show you how much more Coin, Dial-Around Compensation and OSP commissions you could be getting right now! We'll also show you what your future business will look like both with and without EncircleALL™. Would you like to see where you will be in the future?

There's no obligation and the consultation is free, so call us today at 1.866.900.8255 or email us at success@talktoome.com to schedule your 10 minute “proof positive” demonstration.

Call Talk Too Me toll-free at

1.866.900.8255



™ & © Copyright 2009 Talk Too Me, LLC All Rights Reserved