

ROME MONUMENT IMPROVES OPERATIONS AND CUSTOMER SERVICE

WITH COMCAST BUSINESS

SITUATION

- Founded in 1934
- Located in Western Pennsylvania
- 8 showrooms and 1 production facility
- Works with 300 different cemeteries across three states

CHALLENGE

- Basic phone service with no call forwarding or voicemail
- Missed calls or slow response led to inefficient customer service

SOLUTION

- Comcast Business VoiceEdge™
- Comcast Business Internet

RESULTS

- 24 x 7 availability for customers
- Customized extensions for different business groups
- Call forwarding capabilities
- Improved customer service

PITTSBURGH-BASED GRAVESTONE COMPANY PROVIDES A PERSONAL TOUCH WITH BUSINESS VOICEEDGE™

FAMILY-OWNED GRAVESTONE COMPANY SERVES WESTERN PENNSYLVANIA

Based outside Pittsburgh, Rome Monument has created personalized cemetery memorials, monuments, headstones, gravestones and grave markers for four generations. The company operates eight showrooms and one production facility where the gravestones are sculpted and carved according to very specific guidelines.

Over the years, this family-run business has built relationships with 300 different cemeteries in Western Pennsylvania, Eastern Ohio and northern West Virginia where their headstones are placed. Each stone is designed to meet specific cemetery restrictions, which vary widely. Some cemeteries require flat versus upright stones, others require one-piece monuments versus two-piece or one specific color while others do not allow granite or bronze. And if the headstones do not adhere to these specific restrictions, they are not permitted at the cemeteries.

“Each cemetery has its own unique set of monument restrictions, and it’s our job to know the specifics of each of the 300 cemeteries we work with,” said Vince Dioguardi, vice president, Rome Monument, Inc.

PREVIOUS PHONE SYSTEM PREVENTED FAST CUSTOMER RESPONSE TIMES

Although Rome Monument works with 300 different cemeteries, its customers come from all over, since the loved ones in charge of a particular gravestone inscription and design may not live where the deceased did.

In the past, calls that came into Rome Monument came in through a general telephone line at headquarters, and all the phones in the building would ring simultaneously. Whoever answered would then determine who at the company should handle the call, based on which cemetery the customer was interested in, and then give the phone number to the appropriate employee to call the customer back. There was no voicemail. No call forwarding. And they could not even transfer calls from one showroom to another. Not only was this highly inefficient – it did not enable the kind of customer service or professional image the company aspired to.

“Now when we receive calls from our customers we’re able to transfer them directly to the correct person, even if they work in a different location. It’s a lot more professional and gets our customers to the people they need to speak with right away.”

Vince Dioguardi
Vice President
Rome Monument, Inc.

“Our customers don’t realize that many cemeteries have specific restrictions on headstones, and it’s our job to guide them through the process. In the past, our phone service didn’t give us an option to transfer calls between locations, so we would have to take down a customer’s number and call them back after we determined which cemetery they wanted us to create a stone for, since different employees are experts on different cemeteries,” explained Dioguardi. “In that time, the customer may have become attached to a specific style of headstone, making our job harder.”

As the company grew, the company expanded its focus to encompass three different areas – monuments, the Rome Inspirations gift shop and a Cremation Information hotline. With just one phone line coming into headquarters, there was no way to ensure the calls went to the right place or were answered in the right way. In the memorial business, calls come in at all hours of the day and the callers are often in an emotional state, so being able to respond to their needs quickly is very important.

CLOUD-BASED VOICE SYSTEM TRANSFORMS ROME MONUMENT’S BUSINESS OPERATIONS

In an effort to increase its level of customer service and professionalism, Rome Monument decided to upgrade its voice system. The company had relied on a Comcast Business Internet connection at 75/15 Megabits per second (Mbps) in its headquarters and a 16/3 Mbps connection in each of its showrooms to communicate with its customers and send out high-resolution images of the monuments for approvals. Because Rome Monument had been pleased with its Internet service, the company turned to Comcast Business for a new voice solution and customers began reaping the benefits of the service immediately.

Comcast Business deployed Business VoiceEdge, a cloud-based virtual PBX, for Rome Monument’s employees across its nine locations. Unlike some traditional voice systems, there was no capital investment required to install the service, and there is no on-site equipment to maintain. The hosted voice solution delivers calls directly to the person who’s supposed to answer them, rather than into a general line, and a unique mobile app for iOS and Android phones lets employees make and receive calls using their Business VoiceEdge business number just as if they are in the office.

In addition, customers can call into the different business lines – monuments, the Rome Inspirations gift shop and Cremation Information – directly so they do not get bounced around and get their needs addressed faster. And Rome Monument employees can easily transfer calls from showroom to showroom, get voicemail at their fingertips, and never miss an important business call.

For instance, Rome Monument had gotten all the approvals on a very large and expensive headstone, and had finalized everything on the Thursday before Memorial Day weekend. But at 9:30 p.m. on Friday night, a frantic call came in from that customer explaining that he had provided the wrong birth date for the headstone. “Rather than have him worry all weekend and not get back to him until Tuesday morning, which is what would have happened with our old telephone service, we were able to call him right back and put him at ease, letting him know that we would take care of the change right away. You can’t put a price on that kind of peace of mind for your customers,” said Dioguardi.

Added Dioguardi: “Now when we receive calls from our customers we’re able to transfer them directly to the correct person, even if they work in a different location. It’s a lot more professional and gets our customers to the people they need to speak with right away. Business VoiceEdge has enabled us to enhance our reputation as a trusted, reliable and caring company.”