



## Case Study: Award Vacation

### President

Bill Reed

### Industry

Travel and Leisure

### Headquarters

United States

### Websites

[www.awardvacations.com](http://www.awardvacations.com)

[www.travelagentrez.com](http://www.travelagentrez.com)

[www.internetvacationmall.com](http://www.internetvacationmall.com)

### Business Environment

Bill Reed is the President of Award Vacation ([www.awardvacations.com](http://www.awardvacations.com)), a destination vacation management company specializing in the creation of private brand vacation programs. Award employees deal extensively with Convention and Visitor Bureaus, Tourism Offices, travel agents, and the general public. The company operates two interactive web sites, a commissionable website only for travel agents ([travelagentrez.com](http://travelagentrez.com)), and a vacation mall ([internetvacationmall.com](http://internetvacationmall.com)) for the general public.

### Business Challenge

Due to the broad nature of incoming calls and the geographic distribution of Award's workforce, Reed wanted to make certain that all telephone inquiries were tracked, managed, and routed promptly and accurately.

Setting-up a distributed call center that would quickly and intelligently route inbound calls to remote agents working from home was a critical element of the travel wholesaler's business strategy. Furthermore, the extreme seasonality of the travel and leisure industry mandates that Reed not buy more system than would be financially viable in the lulls any more than he could afford to be limited by underpowered systems during peak periods.

## Solution

Reed discovered the VirtualPBX hosted business phone system that enabled his company to establish a sophisticated call center operation to support Award's remote employees that fit his needs and his budget. It wasn't necessary to purchase expensive equipment or technology in order to accomplish this either. By offering a monthly service option that wasn't beholden to the same restrictions that a physical system is, VirtualPBX had the ideal solution for Award Vacations's complex and ever-changing communications needs.

With VirtualPBX service, Award Travel is assigned as many 800 toll-free numbers as required to handle and route all categories of calls. At the moment, Award Travel utilizes 25 toll-free numbers allocated to various customers for whom it operates vacation programs, though that number can fluctuate as required. When a call comes in, the system announces the caller's name and which toll-free number is being used and any active agent on the corresponding queue can answer each number.

VirtualPBX numbers carry a customized auto attendant greeting along with features like automatic call distribution (ACD) queues, voice and fax mail, music or message on hold, new message paging, follow me calling and online management of call queues. When customers call in, they are prompted to either enter an extension or a particular department. After the initial transfer is made, the call is still live and may then be routed to other employees regardless of where they are situated or how long the call is active.

"Having VirtualPBX completely handle our telephone communication needs is like having a dedicated telecom person on staff," said Reed. "We have no capital investment in a phone switch and no software to continually maintain and upgrade. It's been very flexible, allowing us to add numbers and agent extensions in hours, unlike dealing with telecom companies that take days."

## Results

Award Vacation has been able to maintain a consistently strong customer service profile within the travel and tourism community due to their knowledgeable network of travel experts. Growing that profile to where they are today hadn't been possible without the reliability, speed and flexibility of the VirtualPBX solution. As a company whose primary business is providing tourism organizations with a turnkey total management solution to vacation packaging, it is important that Award Vacation's internal operations run as smoothly as the experiences it curates for its customers.

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