

CASE STUDY:

net2phone

Skoglund Hotel Group

BECOMING A BRANSON STAPLE

Skoglund Hotel Group is a Missouri-based hotel group and family business that owns and operates 5 hotels including Lodge of Ozarks, Savannah House, Branson's Best, Brookwood, and Camden Inn & Suites. Since purchasing its first location in 1990, the Skoglund family has continued to grow their business with 70 employees and expand their portfolio of properties to become a Branson visitor staple. The Skoglund Hotel Group strives at all times to excel in caring for its guests and offering the best in accommodation, amenities, service and hospitality through each of their centralized locations.

Tired of high phone bills and service headaches, Skoglund Hotel Group turned to net2phone to deliver a phone solution that would increase functionality using its existing infrastructure.

Challenge

A single phone solution will not always translate from one organization to another. Every business has different needs, use cases, and communications specifications, and its phone system needs to be able to adapt to these organizational requirements. This is especially true for the hospitality industry, in which businesses are prone to seasonal fluctuations and ever changing demands.

Like many hotel groups across America, Skoglund Hotel Group was paying an exorbitant amount to offer in-room phone service for all guests, with enough capacity for 25% of guests to be able to use the phone at the same time. While business paused for a 2 month period during the off season, their expensive telephone bills remained the same. Knowing that there was a better, more unified solution available, Skoglund Hotel Group began their search for a business phone service that would enable them to keep their existing on-premise PBX infrastructure while simultaneously reducing costs.

Impacting the Bottom Line

With unprecedented levels of competition within the hospitality industry coupled with instant avenues for the provision of

feedback, it has never been more vital for hotels to prove their value through customer service. As hundreds of online hotel listings advertise to prospective visitors, consumers have a plethora of options to choose from. If one hotel does not answer the phone to process a booking, that consumer can simply move on to call the next listing. This was becoming a significant challenge for Skoglund Hotel Group, whose individual hotel properties were each operating off separate phone systems from different providers. Like most hotels servicing the Branson-area, operations halted in January and February when tourism slowed down, however the corporate office remained available to take reservations. Because each property had its own phone system, there was no way of routing calls to the corporate office to ensure business continuity. Rather, prospective guests would be met with a voicemail. Without call forwarding functionality, the Skoglund Hotel Group was losing out on potential guests, who would simply call the next available hotel to book a room through a live representative. This disjointed solution was becoming a growing liability.

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“The move to net2phone provides our guests with a better calling experience and ensures we never miss a reservation request.”

Not only did this limited flexibility impact potential bookings, and in turn, overall revenues, but Skoglund Hotel Group was also paying for expensive phone services that were going unused for two months out of the year. High fees, regular maintenance cost and the headache of managing 6 telecom providers were negatively impacting the bottom line.

Having already invested in multiple on-premise PBX systems as well as phones in every guest room, it would be prohibitive and incredibly expensive to replace all existing hardware. Rather, they needed a new solution that could operate within their existing infrastructure.

In preparation for their busy season, Skoglund Hotel Group began searching for a phone service provider that would unify each location, increase functionality and reduce monthly service fees without having to complete a major communications overhaul. Enlisting the help of a technology consultant whose expertise lies in finding communications solutions for the hospitality industry, Skoglund Hotel Group was referred to net2phone for its SIP trunking services fully equipped with great features and unlimited international calling.

Increase in Functionality, Reduction in Costs

While innovative technologies have paved the way for new communication channels, SIP Trunks continue to serve as the most popular solution for organizations within the hospitality industry due its unique ability to scale capacity up or down as needed. net2phone's SIP Trunks integrated easily into Skoglund Hotel Group's existing PBX systems, enabling the team at Skoglund Hotel

Group to access all of the innovative call control features associated with cloud-based solutions without the need to replace any existing equipment. Skoglund Hotel Group can now accommodate variations of bandwidth requirements to adjust to their seasonal changes, which significantly reduces overhead costs during their off season.

As with any essential business technology, upgrading to a new phone solution can be daunting, especially for organizations that rely heavily on client communications. However, in choosing to proceed with a net2phone solution, Skoglund Hotel Group was backed by a network of telecom experts who worked one-on-one with their Management Team to review their former systems and leverage net2phone's capabilities to make improvements. net2phone reviewed Skoglund Hotel Group's previous phone bills to assess its number of phone lines, usage, and costs. In providing every room with a phone, Skoglund Hotel Group was paying a significant amount per line to ensure there was enough capacity to allow multiple guests to use their phones at the same time. In evaluating the usage, it was determined that Skoglund Hotel Group would be able to continue to offer guests a powerful phone connection while reducing the number of lines.

In welcoming visitors from across the globe, it was important for Skoglund Hotel Group to offer their guests toll-free and international calling. Through net2phone's feature-filled bundle, the Skoglund Hotel Group gained access to unlimited international calling to over 40 countries at no additional cost. Guests appreciated that they were able to call into making a reservation without incurring heavy long-distance charges. Having paid top dollar for these services with their previous providers, the switch to net2phone saved them over \$22,800 per year in toll-free costs alone.

Through unifying all 6 locations under a single solution, net2phone was able to set up a schedule to automatically forward calls to the Skoglund Hotel Group corporate office throughout January and February, when the hotels close for the off season. Once tourism increases, calls are then re-routed back to the hotel to ensure business continuity. This functionality ensures that callers always connect with a live representative, rather than a voicemail or busy signal. This improvement in customer services provides guests with a better calling experience and ensures that Skoglund Hotel Group never misses a reservation request. ROI for its investors.

Find Out How net2phone Can Put a Solution Like This to Work for You

Visit www.net2phone.com or call us any time at [866-978-8260](tel:866-978-8260).