



Unified Communications during a Crisis – Glenbriar and ShoreTel Can Help

CALGARY, AB – October 4, 2013 - The world is changing. Hurricane Sandy in October 2012 in New York, massive tornados in May 2013 across the mid-west US and in June and July 2013, flash floods in Calgary and Toronto. Disasters of all kinds are becoming more and more common. The effects of any disaster can be devastating. Businesses and organizations need to evaluate their needs and the needs of their employees and customers and work toward ensuring that regardless of the type of disaster, their services will be up and running in no time. Businesses using VoIP telecommunication services are much more capable of disaster recovery strategies and solutions than companies using traditional PBX phone technology.

While no system is ever fully “disaster-proof,” ShoreTel’s IP phone system does offer a number of options for ensuring business continuity.

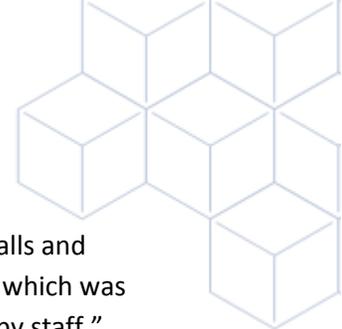
The first of these is ShoreTel’s distributed architecture. Distributed architecture means that while one site may be unavailable (even corporate headquarters), dial tone and connectivity at other sites is still available, with the same features and functionality. ShoreTel also has “N+1” redundancy, which allows a single spare voice switch at an off-site location to stand in for any voice switches that may be affected by an outage. This provides organizations with a very cost-effective way to maximize the availability of dial-tone.

Most VoIP phone systems allow extensions and internal numbers to be mapped to an external phone number. Thanks to unified messaging and inboxes, employees can access their VoIP network from an external phone as well. The VOIP phone system’s network automatically routes calls through the public phone network (PSTN) during a disaster or outage.

The flooding in Calgary on June 21, 2013 caused serious damage to lives, homes and businesses. Roads were closed, people were evacuated and large cats from the Calgary Zoo were housed in the City’s courthouse. Southern Alberta businesses that had a ShoreTel unified communication solution were able to redirect calls to other offices and continue to operate, so their employees could either look after themselves or help others during this time of crisis. With major flooding and roads being washed away, keeping everyone safe and informed became a top priority.

Some organizations, such as Calgary West Primary Care and the Town of Canmore were able to utilize aspects of their ShoreTel UC solution to help the people around them.

Calgary West Central Primary Care Network (CWC PCN) is made up of 313 physicians in over 100 clinics. CWC PCN’s vision of providing excellence in community based health care was put to the test during the flooding. Glenbriar worked with CWC PCN to redirect their phone lines from their head office in downtown Calgary to their Westbrook location, outside of the flooded area. CWC PCN was able to continue to operate and provide assistance to the thousands of people caught in the flooding.



“When our head office closed due to flooding we were able to re-route the phone calls and faxes. The changes took place in a timely manner, allowing the calls to get through, which was critical to operations. Everything worked well and there were no issues mentioned by staff.”

- Brad Lohman, Calgary West Primary Care Network

About 105 km west of Calgary, Canmore was at the heart of the spring flooding. Residents were evacuated from their homes at 3:00 a.m. on Thursday morning and The Town of Canmore, which installed its ShoreTel system across the town’s primary civic offices in September 2012, quickly established a flood help line. Allan Wingenbach, IT Manager for the Town, was able to immediately set up a phone number that went to a queue so calls could be answered in order by volunteer staff. The process took just minutes to implement. It took more time to gather up sufficient phones to set up in the command centre. Staffed by local volunteers, with no time for training or how to use the phone system, the volunteers were able to work the phones, transfer calls to other departments or numbers using the desktop tools. They could see who was calling and were able to immediately help their neighbours.

“Using the ShoreTel system, we were able to keep communications open with the public. We were able to quickly set up a call centre in 25 minutes and staff it with 4 people around the clock. In total, there were 4500 calls for information: 1700 on the first day. Flexibility was there with the ShoreTel system. There was no need to have anyone add licenses or give permissions; using the Director we had access to everything. Our old system would never have worked.”

- Allan Wingenbach, Town of Canmore

The Public Information Office for the Town of Canmore, Sally Caudill, Ph.D, was also extremely pleased with the ShoreTel system.

“I would not want to be a Public Information Officer again without it! In June of 2013, we experienced a flash flood that led to the evacuation of approximately 1200 residents. In the early hours of the evacuation, a call in phone line was set up and manned by Town staff. The ShoreTel system allowed us to set up multiple lines coming in to the same number. During the first day, our small town of 12,000 received over 1700 calls on that emergency line. We were in a state of emergency for a week and kept the phone lines active throughout this time, taking more than 4,000 calls during this time.”

-Sally Caudill, Ph.D, Communication Coordinator, Town of Canmore

“Glenbriar has worked with ShoreTel since 2002 and we have always been impressed with its ease of use and ‘brilliantly simple’ design,” noted Glenn Matheson, VP of Unified Communications for Glenbriar. “Having our clients prove what we have always known is extremely satisfying. We are so glad our clients are safe and were able to take advantage of the ShoreTel UC solution under such trying circumstances.”



About Glenbriar

Glenbriar Technologies Inc. (CNSX: GTI) is a leading provider of business technology solutions for successful enterprises in manufacturing, distribution, retail, energy, health, education, dealership, professional services and real estate. From its offices in Calgary, Vancouver and Waterloo, Glenbriar's staff of IT professionals and software developers manage and support the IT needs of over 300 companies. Glenbriar's solutions include IT Services, Cloud Services, Portals & Collaboration, Unified Communications and Software Services. See www.glenbriar.com for more details.

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