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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST

- Using The Phone To Get To A Decision Maker (page 1)
- Learn How Audio, Video And Web Conferencing Can Save You Time And Money (page 2)
- VoIP Terms Explained (page 3)

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- From The Desk Of The President 1
- Phone Tips To Get To A Decision Maker 1
- Conference Calling Is More Than Audio - It's Also Video & Web 2
- News You Can Use: VoIP Terms 3
- Did You Hear About... 3
- D&M Has A Variety Of Conferencing Suppliers 4
- About D&M 4

From The Desk Of The President

I recently returned from the Channel Partners Conference in Las Vegas. This is the pre-eminent show for agents to learn about new telephony technology and products.

The buzz at the show centered on advances in conferencing, including audio, video and web conferences. To learn more about this technology, see the story on page 2 and the related feature on conferencing suppliers on page 4.

The other hot topic at the Show was VoIP. Although I

am not a big advocate of VoIP, I want to educate our clients



Steven Gerhardt, President, D&M Enterprise Group

on this technology - see page 3.

As a follow-up to last month's issue in which we promised 2 sets of Nets tickets to the first 2 companies who sent us a referral, I want to congratulate Tony Murphy of Vinning-Hartness and Tom Coffey from CALLfx for their referrals. Your tickets to an upcoming Nets game should arrive shortly!

As always, if I can be of any assistance, do not hesitate to call me at 1-888-357-5055.

Steve

Phone Tips To Get To A Decision Maker

Using the phone successfully to market your products/services to potential new clients often requires you to navigate through a labyrinth of people to find the correct individual(s) who can provide the information you seek. Whether for pre-sales research or to determine who has the ability to acquire your products/services, here is a quick summary of proven techniques for achieving these objectives.

- 1. Know the purpose of your call in advance.** Before placing a call, have a clear and specific objective or purpose of what you are trying to achieve.
- 2. Prepare a list of questions which need answers.** To stay on track and meet your objective, prepare a list of questions prior to your call.
- 3. When you don't have an obvious contact point,** Purchasing, Investor Relations or the Presi-

dent's office are all good places to begin. Calling into multiple departments in a company or organization not only provides the information or person sought, but also gives a unique overview of how a company's internal processes work.

- 4. Take advantage of the corporate hierarchy.** When being referred from a higher-level person (such as the President or his office) to a lower level person, use the higher person's name or office to lend credibility and importance to your request.
- 5. Ask for permission to speak.** After briefly introducing yourself and your company, ask for permission to speak, before explaining the reason for the call.
- 6. Set up a telephone appointment.** If the person sounds busy, make an appointment by asking when would be a good time to schedule a call.

7. Use the optional choice methodology. Ask which is better, Monday or Tuesday? Morning or afternoon? Ten or eleven AM.?

8. Listen to what is going on in the background. If a phone rings or a distraction occurs in the background, politely inquire whether or not that situation needs to be dealt with and offer to be placed on hold. This shows respect for the other person and is greatly appreciated.

9. Practice the Q/A/F/Q technique. Ask a Question. Wait for an Answer. Feedback what was said to be sure you have a clear understanding of what was said. Finally ask another Question to direct the conversation into the area where you want it to go. The person asking the questions controls the direction of the call.

10. Be persistent in your quest. If you remain persistent, you will likely find the person who has the information you seek or who is in a position to buy your products and services.



Whether you use audio, web, or video conferencing, taking advantage of new and existing conferencing technology is likely to save you time and money.

How To Blog Your Way To The Top

Provided below are About.com's Scott Allen's list of the ten most practical blogs for entrepreneurs:

- Small Business Trends
- Just for Small Business
- WorkHappy.net
- Duct Tape Marketing
- The Entrepreneurial Mind
- BizzBangBuzz
- Business Opportunities Weblog
- Go BIG Blog
- Young Entrepreneur Journey
- Startup Spark

Conference Calling Is More Than Audio - It's Also Video And Web

Conferencing has made a dramatic impact on the way people work. In a recent national survey, Wainhouse Research found that more than 60 percent of all meetings today are done virtually.

Today, conferencing is used for more than just meetings. Businesses understand the importance of creating better connections with colleagues, partners and customers. In addition, conferencing can be a significant cost cutter by eliminating costly and time-consuming out-of-town meetings.

According to Copper Conferencing's Sarah Deatherage, "Following the tragic events of 9/11, businesses turned to conferencing as a replacement for travel. As business travel settled back to pre-2001 levels, the conferencing industry did something that surprised even the experts – it continued to grow."

For those who think an **audio conference** call is expensive, you may be right if you are not using a conference calling company to facilitate your calls. To demonstrate the benefits of using a company that specializes in conference calling, D&M recently completed an audit for a client who was paying \$.78 per minute for conference calls using AT&T. After switching this client to a conferencing call carrier they were able to reduce their per minute charge to \$.08 per minute, and that includes toll-free access!

An additional benefit of using a conferencing facilitator is they have the ability to accommodate a call with up to 125 people at a time. How does it work? Typically the moderator and the call participants are given an access code and a toll-free number to call to join the conference. Alternatively, conference companies can also contact each participant and bridge them onto the call for an additional charge. If interested,

you can even have the call recorded for an added fee.

Conferencing is now a \$3.7 billion industry, up more than 32 percent from 2000 industry revenue of \$2.8 billion. Today, many executives spend the majority of their time on conference calls. The move to conferencing as an everyday business tool is so significant

Were you using a free conference calling service? Have you recently had trouble with your "free" conference calls going through?

Free conferencing numbers are now being blocked by AT&T, Qwest and Sprint carriers. As a result, businesses who were using these services now need an alternative service. Contact your D&M representative to get immediate access to a more reliable conferencing solution today!

that executives surveyed by Wainhouse said that it was the second most vital tool on the job next to the computer and ahead of the cellular phone. Experts see continued growth in the industry over the next 10 years. As the speed of innovation continues to accelerate, one can only begin to imagine the way that conferencing will continue to change the way businesses work and interact in the future.

Conferencing is not limited to just audio calls; it also includes video and web conferencing.

With **video conferencing**, you can use a hosted solution to give that added level of professionalism and convenience. Through your data connection multiple parties are bridged, providing both image and audio. It is the next best thing to actually having the other party in the room. Video conferencing does require

you and the other party to have specialized systems and support. These can be very challenging to set up and use. However, when you compare the costs and lost productivity of video conferencing with that of actual travel, and travel-related expenses, you will find that this is a very cost-effective solution.

Web conferencing works best when using computer desktop applications that are the same on both ends. It is a fantastic option for showing products such as software to customers, or to share spreadsheets, images, and other applications among the different parties involved in the conference call. Web conferencing grew 33% year-over-year from Q1 2005 to Q1 2006. Perhaps one of the reasons web conferencing is becoming so popular is it enables hundreds of people from all over the world to contribute to a presentation.

Selecting from among these various conference call solutions will help you to provide the best communication solution for the party with whom you are communicating.

As the US economy expands globally, companies will be able to meet the challenge of staying connected by leveraging conferencing tools. The future of the conferencing business will keep people connected and productive from wherever they work around the world.

D&M has extensive experience matching the best conferencing solutions — be it audio, video or web — with the needs of our clients. If you are interested in receiving information on a conferencing system, please contact your D&M representative, or call us at 1-888-357-5055. For more information on conferencing companies, see the related story on page 4.

News You Can Use: VoIP Terms

With Vonage spending nearly 100 millions dollars on advertising in the fourth quarter alone last year, it's no surprise people are talking about VoIP. The problem is you need to have a technical degree to make sense of the VoIP jargon.

To remove the mystery surrounding the latest VoIP buzzwords, we have provided a handy reference:

VoIP Phone or Broadband

Phone: A handset used to make VoIP calls. A VoIP phone has an Ethernet port (RJ-45) instead of a regular phone jack (RJ-21), and it connects directly to a broadband Internet modem. A VoIP phone does not require a computer or softphone application to make or receive calls. A high speed Internet connection is all that is required. A SIP phone is a type of VoIP phone.

SIP Phone: A VoIP handset that complies with the SIP standard for voice over IP. SIP is the latest open standard, succeeding H323 standards. Bottom line, SIP compatibility is good. Phones that compete with SIP use proprietary signaling protocols for voice over IP.

IP Phone: An umbrella term but used with an IP network (like the Internet). An IP phone may comply with either

proprietary or open standards for voice signaling. An IP phone doesn't have a RJ-12 connector like regular phones.

Internet Phone: This term is used pretty loosely and depending on the context can mean the same as IP phone.

Softphone: A software application that lets you make calls over the Internet using the mouse or keyboard to dial phone numbers. To use a softphone, your computer must have a sound card, plus speakers or a headset and a microphone. A USB phone can take the place of a headset and microphone. Soft-phones are often free to download. USB phone and Free VoIP software such as Skype and Free World Dialup are two popular choices.

USB phone: A handset that connects to the USB port on your computer. It is used for convenience when dialing from your computer, but it requires that a softphone application be installed first. Instead of using the softphone with a headset or microphone, the USB phone looks and acts like a regular phone and keypad. USB phones require driver software to be installed on the computer.

WiFi phone or WLAN phone: A handset used for making wireless VOIP calls. It has a built-in WiFi transceiver unit instead of an Ethernet port. When

you talk over WiFi, the phone connects wirelessly to a WiFi base station and from there to the Internet and a remote VoIP server. A computer or softphone is not required to make and receive VoIP phone calls. All that is required is access to a WiFi base station. Many cell phone companies are developing handsets with WiFi capability. This means you can make calls on the regular cell phone network and make VoIP calls on a local WiFi network (called a WiFi hotspot).

Skype phone: A handset that is much like a USB phone, except that the softphone application used to make the calls is Skype. A Skype phone can only make calls using the proprietary Skype phone software running on your computer. Linksys recently announced the release of its CIT200 wireless Skype handset which makes using Skype convenient from anywhere in the home.

Web phone: A marketing term that means many things, both softphone and IP phone-related.

Net phone: Same as IP phone

Computer phone: See softphone, PC phone or USB phone.

PC phone: See computer phone, softphone or USB phone.

Sales Tip Of The Month

Follow-up and follow-through are keys to prospecting success. Just like gardening, if you don't water the seeds, the garden will languish. And so it is with prospecting... if you don't remain in contact, you will never break through.

“Did You Hear About...”

Two men were traveling together when a bear suddenly met them on their path. One of the men climbed up quickly into a tree and concealed himself in the branches.

The other, seeing that he might be attacked, fell flat on the ground. The bear came over and felt him with his snout, smelled him all over and appeared to whisper in the traveler's ear.



The man held his breath and feigned the appear-

ance of death as much as he could. The bear soon

left him, for it is said a bear will not touch a dead body.

When he was sure the bear was gone, the other traveler descended from the tree, and jocularly inquired of his friend what it was the Bear had whispered in his ear.

The man told his companion "He gave me this advice, "Never travel with a friend who deserts you at the approach of danger."

D&M Has A Variety Of Conferencing Suppliers

If you express interest in a conferencing system, our first point of contact will be to one of the conferencing companies listed below.

Copper Conferencing provides enhanced group communication services to small and medium-sized businesses.



From on-demand reservationless audio conference calls, to highly-interactive web conferences and special event calls, Copper helps businesses improve the speed and effectiveness of decision making. These services are backed by fully-managed, carrier-class platforms to power communication for thousands of customers.

One of the largest providers of conference

communications in the world, **Inter-Call** serves over 400,000 individual conference leaders in more than 70,000 organizations



around the globe with a range of services that includes audio, event, web, and video conferencing solutions. As a licensed reseller of InterCall, D&M provides its clients access to the company's strong U.S. presence that includes five call centers and 26 sales offices. In addition, they have more than 140,000 conferencing ports available globally. As a result, InterCall is well positioned to handle the largest conference calls in the industry.

The Conference Group is a full

service audio and web conferencing company providing services to a variety of industries, including pharmaceutical, legal, health, financial, energy, and manufacturing, to name just a few of the sectors they serve.

The Conference Group offers a comprehensive range of conferencing services with no set-up fees. In addition,



they wow their clients with an unprecedented level of customer service they define as their "personal touch."

To see if your company can benefit from a conferencing solution, contact D&M today by calling 1-888-357-5055.

About D&M

Founded in 2001, D&M Enterprise Group has more than 10,000 satisfied clients. D&M utilizes a consultative approach to thoroughly examine every aspect of each client's telecommunications needs and then recommend specific cost-saving and performance-enhancing solutions. We specialize in medium to large-scale applications that include DS3, T1, as well as phone equipment installations.

As independent telecommunications experts, we have the luxury of offering our clients objective advice that truly serves their best interests. Once our clients' telecommunications needs are identified, we match these needs with the services offered by more than 20 of the nation's leading carriers and equipment manufacturers we represent. Because we have the ability to select from a wide variety of carriers and equipment, we can guarantee our clients that they are getting the **best solution** available at the **lowest possible cost**.

HOW WE DO IT: D&M does all the comparison shopping for you! Using proprietary software, D&M analyzes your existing communication, Internet, and data transfer usage. Once this analysis is complete, a comprehensive, customized proposal is prepared that shows the savings you can expect from competing carriers who can provide the same, or in some cases, superior service, at a lower price. Based on your needs, D&M will also recommend service and equipment changes that will save you money too.

In addition, D&M uses proprietary software, which we call our COMMauditor system, to analyze every invoice to ensure you are being charged at the contracted rate and that you are not charged for equipment or services that were canceled or never ordered. We also track all your telephony assets and vendor agreements.

The combination of increasing the efficiency of your business by ensuring you are using the proper services and equipment, along with monitoring your bills for accuracy, guarantees your company will be performing at maximum efficiency without overspending.

As your single point of contact, D&M makes it easy for you to spend your valuable time running your business while we make sure your telecommunications, Internet and data transfer needs are being supplied by the highest quality providers at the lowest possible cost.



Where world class communications meet superior customer service

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