



D&M Communicator

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SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **SPECIAL SECTION**
Why Now Is The Right Time To Conduct A Telephony Inventory & Audit (pages 2 & 3)
- **How To Telecommute Safely** (page 4)
- **A Study Reveals How To Be Happy At Work** (page 5)

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From The Desk Of The President

Happy New Year and welcome to another issue of D&M Communicator.

I read recently that the most popular New Year's resolution is to lose weight. In this issue we are going to focus on a variation of that theme and show you how to cut some fat from your telephony expenses. On pages 2 and 3 is a special section on the benefits of conducting a telephony audit and inventory.

If your company has not participated in an audit and inventory



Steven Gerhardt, President, D&M Enterprise Group

recently, I strongly suggest you do so since it could reveal some significant savings for your company.

Also of interest is the article on telecommuting on page 4 and the feature on happiness in the workplace on page 5.

Speaking of the workplace, D&M

recently added a new member to our office staff. Renee Leroux is a Project Manager who also works with our COMMAuditor system.

As the new year gets underway and you lay out your goals for improving your business, keep in mind there is no better time than now to have D&M review your voice, data, and Internet needs. To arrange for a comprehensive review, call us at 888-357-5055.

Steve

Ways To Increase Your Company's Sales

When faced with diminishing sales or a slump in profitability, sometimes a company will seek opportunities to expand sales by using different marketing methods. These time-tested marketing principles are used by businesses to seek out new opportunities to satisfy the needs of the consumer.

There are four ways to increase sales and expand revenue for your company. It is not necessary to use more than one of these methods. The best choice of the four methods is the one that will meet the needs of the company and the consumer best. This will provide a win-win situation for all concerned.

To increase sales consider one of the following methods for seeking opportunities in your target market:

1. Market Penetration

Increase the market share of your current products in your present market. By upscaling your marketing

mix you can increase your sales. To do this, advertise your current products more frequently and promote your company's image to the public through institutional advertising and publicity.

2. Market Development

You can also try to sell your present products in new markets. You have to do some research on the needs of the consumers in these markets first. Your product may appeal to other demographic groups that also need it. This is a recommended area to investigate for more profit. Often your present products are in demand in other locations, with other age groups, or professional groups. This is an opportunity for more sales many companies look for.

3. Product development

You can increase your sales by offering new and improved products to your present market. This will give you an edge over your competition. Your customers will view your com-

pany as progressive and up-to-date. This is not only a great way to increase sales, but your customers will remember your company because of the unique product you sell.

4. Diversification

If you are well established in one line of business, you may wish to diversify into a totally new one. This means moving into a new market with a new product. This can keep your profits on the rise. Here again, market research and marketing plans have to be made first.

As you can see, there are opportunities for gaining sales in all four areas. The best choice for your business depends on your goals and the resources you have. The best way to capitalize on these strategies is to start with your present strengths and look for market opportunities that complement them. Then do your market research and planning. The sky is the limit when you plan ahead using these proven marketing tactics.

Special
Section

Save Money By Conducting A Telephony Inventory And Audit

Sales Tip Of The Month

Call all your prospects and clients on their birthday to extend your best wishes. Not only does this remind your core constituents that you are thinking of them, it gives you an excuse to call and ask for more business!

If any facet of improving your company's bottom line rests on your shoulders, you know there are only so many ways to increase your company's profits. Sure, you can increase your profit margin by raising prices or even reducing costs by eliminating some customer service functions. While these steps may help your bottom line in the short run, they are not the solution to your long-term goals of higher profits and increased customer satisfaction. Instead, you may want to focus on eliminating unnecessary costs that will reduce your G&A and improve your company's profitability. This admirable goal is not only possible, but when you know what to look for it's easier to accomplish than you realize.

From a telephony perspective, reducing your monthly expenses begins with a comprehensive inventory and audit of all of your telephony services to determine if you are paying for services you do not need. For the portions of your service that D&M ordered, we have a detailed inventory of your account on file. Alternatively, if you have supplied us with all of your telecom and data information we will also have a record of this in our database.

However, if you are like the majority of our clients and have decided to maintain control of some portion of your voice and/or data services, it's likely D&M will not have the information relevant to those portions of your service in our system. And it is exactly those portions that need to be inventoried and audited. Before discussing the importance of

an inventory and audit, it may be helpful to provide a general understanding of what each of these tasks accomplish.

An audit is a financial check up of sorts on all aspects of your telephony infrastructure. This includes matching contractual rates against actual invoiced

are left with an additional sav-



If you are looking to improve your bottom line by cutting costs, consider starting with an extensive review of your voice, data, and Internet bills.

rates, identifying cramming and slamming charges, 900 numbers and other billable charges, and determining if all billed items were actually ordered. If you have canceled any services, the audit will also confirm that you are no longer being charged for these services.

The inventory is a physical check to determine what the various services are that you have at each location. The inventory will also catalog what types of services, a description of and the carrier you are paying for these services. The list of services includes all voice and data that are located at each office.

The importance of an inventory is twofold: first, if something is not working properly, you need to know what you have so the technician can determine where the problem resides. When a customer calls and tells us that they are having a problem on their fourth line, if

we know what the fourth line is we can immediately address the problem. And since you need to identify the exact line when submitting a trouble ticket, determining the line could save valuable time. Moreover, if we place trouble tickets with the local phone company and we submit tickets for lines that do not have

a problem, you will be charged for the site visit. Not only will you incur unnecessary charges, but this will also delay correcting the problem.

The second reason for having an accurate inventory is that it will eliminate ordering services that are not needed. For example, without the proper inventory you may order additional lines when you already have spare lines. Conversely, when you are downsizing, having a proper inventory will allow you to disconnect those lines or services that are no longer needed.

The inventory will document all of your services. When D&M does an Inventory we dial each and every line to ensure the service is active. We also create a usable database for us (and you) to track all of your services. The database will tell us if the line is in a hunt group or stand alone. If the lines are hunting, we tell you the hunting sequence and all of the features on those lines. If the lines are stand alone, we will let you know if they are for voice, fax, or modem. The database also tells us who your local and long distance carriers are. And, as described earlier, it will also save us time when trouble shooting. If you have PRI's, D&M will list your circuit ID's and all of the DID's. If you have data services and/or Internet, D&M will tell you the speed, circuit ID and IP addresses. If you have an MPLS, D&M will tell you your circuit ID speed and IP address and provide you with a Visio that lists service addresses, circuit ID's with BTN's.

Continued on page 3

Conduct An Inventory And Audit *(continued)*

What comes first, the audit or the inventory? Although both tasks work hand in hand, it is essential that you conduct a comprehensive inventory before you perform an audit. The reason for this is that you need to have a solid understanding of the needs of each location before you can determine if the needs are being met, or exceeded. For example, if you have a satellite office in Seattle, Washington and at one time you had 18 people working in the office, but today you only have 9 people in that office. Did anyone ever cancel the extra lines? An audit would never find this information out.

However, if during your inventory you establish the number of lines and the number of employees at that location, you would be able to determine that you have excess lines at that location. The bottom line is that without doing both an inventory and an audit you are missing out on hard and soft dollar savings.

An inventory is only as good as the information that is provided to the person doing the inventory. To ensure that D&M collects all relevant information, we have created a proprietary checklist. Some of the items included on this list are:

- A list of all the locations
- Copies of all voice and data bills
- Head count at each office
- Copies of all contracts
- Does the company plan on increasing or decreasing the number of employees in the next 6-12 months?

Once the inventory has been completed, you are ready to begin the audit. The audit is going to determine if you are paying the contract rates and ensure you are not paying for services you never signed up for. One of the big benefits of an audit is that it often results in credits. In fact, in most cases the credits we receive for our clients not only pay for the audit and the inventory, but our clients garner additional savings that can some-

times mean six-figure windfalls.

Before you begin the inventory and audit process, you should know what you will receive once the project has been completed. When D&M undertakes these tasks, we provide the following:

Post-Inventory Package

- Executive overview
- Line verification report
- Carrier escalation contact numbers
- PIC report
- Location/employee reports
- Circuit reports
- Follow-up recommendations

Post-Audit Package

- Executive overview
- Identify hidden fees (cramming/slammings charges) on your telecom bills
- Identify lines and services the client no longer needs
- Identify billing errors and potential refunds
- Verification of contractual agreements against actual bills
- Analysis of usage patterns to determine if the client has the proper number of lines
- Follow-up recommendations including a summary of the latest plans, rates, and options from those providers whose services complement the client's needs

How much does it cost to have an inventory and audit? The short answer is the cost can vary. The inventory is either charged on an hourly basis or on a project basis. An audit is charged on a percentage of savings.

Regardless of who performs these services for you (although we can't imagine why you wouldn't want D&M to do it), you should never pay up front if you are working on a percentage of savings. Some vendors require a good faith payment upfront. D&M, however, only gets paid when you receive a check for the credits.

To determine if a percentage of

savings or an hourly rate is the best approach for your company, you need to consider the potential savings you believe the auditor will find. If you think the auditor is going to find significant savings, you should consider a project-based fee. Conversely, if you feel the auditor will not find a lot of savings, a percentage of savings may be more advantageous.

D&M has been able to recover hundreds of thousands of dollars in overcharges for our clients. In one case the client agreed to compensate D&M on a percentage of the savings we realized. Prior to signing the agreement we recommended that the customer pay D&M a flat fee, but they opted for the percentage. At the conclusion of the project it cost the customer more than thirty thousand dollars more by giving up the percentage over paying a flat fee. How do you know which way to go? You have to follow your instinct!

Regardless of the payment method you select, deciding whether or not to proceed with an inventory and audit should be easy. The hard part will be deciding how you will spend the savings the inventory and audit are likely to generate.

With regard to the timing of an inventory and audit, a comprehensive audit should be completed annually. Once you have a current inventory, this should be updated each time a change is made to your service. For some businesses, that means daily updates. And like the audit, you should review your inventory annually.

If you have any questions about D&M conducting an audit and inventory, contact your D&M Project Manager or call us at 888-357-5055.

Telecommuting Safely For Better Business

Imagine lounging in your most comfortable outfit, sipping on homemade chicken soup and enjoying the sounds of your favorite CD... all while managing national accounts, answering inquiries from curious clients and writing a detailed report for your company's upcoming meeting. When email in your employees' home offices is secured, telecommuting can be a valuable resource for your business without the risk of compromising crucial information.

Millions of Americans are already taking advantage of the benefits that come with telecommuting and the trend is only expected to grow in the coming years. High-speed Internet connections, laptop computers, and email make working outside of the conventional office setting convenient; productivity can be improved while reducing travel time and the ever-increasing cost of transportation. The telecommuting population is predicted to reach 9.9 million by 2009!

Many benefits can come from allowing your employees to telecommute, but let's not forget about making it safe for all parties involved. You can take every precaution to ensure that sensitive data regarding your company and clients is secured when it is kept at company headquarters, but these defenses become much harder to implement at a worker's home office. Loss of intellectual property can do much to damage the potential

for revenue, as well as brand reputation, for any size company.

Employees who work from home may use their company machines to do non-work tasks such as:

- Downloading and storing non job-related files on their work machines
- Allowing their children to use their workstation to do homework or web research
- Letting their significant other check personal email

Company email and work assets are susceptible to being accessed and inadvertently misused or misdirected by others in the household. Every time a telecommuter's workstation is used for non-work tasks it puts your company's files at risk, including client account sheets, prospect lists, or an important business partner's marketing plan.

What can your business do to offset the risk of unintended email redistribution, while allowing employees to telecommute? Solutions must be easy to install, intuitive, and effective in protecting sensitive data from being copied, edited, or forwarded. For those employees working in a non-technical field, it is conceivable they lack adequate knowledge on how data theft is possible or legitimate ways to prevent redistribution, so

user-friendly software is best.

Since you can't invade your employee's home and rummage through his/her PC, your best bet is to research software that will secure their incoming and outgoing email. A user-friendly solution should be utilized to its full extent by the employee which will provide the highest level of protection for sensitive communication.

Email anti-theft software that integrates with Microsoft Outlook or another existing application that your employee is familiar with is a simple and cost-effective option. A security solution that works with a program your staff is comfortable with eliminates anxiety that comes with using unfamiliar high-tech programs. When email anti-theft controls are available at the click of a button, workers are more likely to take the time to protect their messages.

Today, telecommuters include employees of such organizations as The Defense Information Systems Agency, Kettering Medical Center Network, as well as many small businesses in your region. Email anti-theft software allows telecommuting to be a safe and effective alternative to working in a conventional office setting. The option to work from home makes for content employees, satisfied customers, and a more profitable business. So secure your data and take advantage of all that telecommuting can do for your company!

Quote Of The Month

"Example is not the main thing in influencing others. It is the only thing."

Albert Schweitzer
(1875 - 1965)
German medical missionary,
Nobel Peace Prize winner

"Did You Hear About..."

A professor at a university is giving a pre-exam lecture on time management.

On his desk is a bag of sand, a bag of pebbles, some big rocks, and a bucket. He asks for a volunteer to put all three grades of stone into the bucket, and an eager student duly steps up to carry out the task, starting with the sand, then the pebbles, then the rocks, which do not fit in the bucket.



"This is an analogy of poor time management," shouts the lecturer, "If you had put the rocks in first, then the pebbles, then the sand, all three would have fit.

This is much like time management, in that by completing your biggest tasks first, you leave room to complete your medium tasks, then your smaller ones.

By completing your smallest tasks first you spend so much time on them you leave yourself unable to complete either medium or large tasks satisfactorily.

Let me show you. So the lecturer refills the bucket, big rocks first, then pebbles, then sand, shaking the bucket between each so that everything fits.

The moral of the story is to plan your tasks accordingly and not only will you have more time, but you will be able to cram more into the time you do have!

What Does Happiness Have To Do With Business And How To Obtain It

Have you ever been really happy? Have you ever tasted the fruit of pure happiness? Have you ever completed a task with that feeling of "YES! I gave it my all. I'm really happy and proud with what I've done." Have you ever had that inner glow? But was it happiness?

You see, most of us have replaced happiness with pleasure. Pleasure is those times when you feel terrific like after eating a fantastic meal with excellent company. Pleasure is when you loll for hours in that hot bath. Pleasure is when you indulge yourself in that spa weekend. Pleasure is when you watch your favorite team play...But it ain't happiness!

The bad news is that happiness is not an emotional state. Happiness is not the feeling you get when you are enjoying yourself. It's much, much more than that.

What makes people truly happy, satisfied and fulfilled? Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (pronounced "chick-sent-me-high-ee"), Director of the Quality of Life Research Centre at the Druker School of Management, Claremont, USA has spent years researching what makes us happy.

And he and his colleagues have found that happiness can only be achieved when you are totally involved in something. When you are totally immersed. When, you are participating to the full. You know, when you are enjoying yourself so much you have no idea what the time is, what day it is, what is happening around you. You are really

happy.

His research involving 250,000 people from every continent including chess players, rock climbers, musicians, people who meditate, artists, sports people, and people from all walks of life shows that the times when you find yourself fully absorbed in something, totally focused, totally immersed, and totally con-

enjoy what you were doing. the times when you were reading a stimulating book and when you put your head up everyone has gone off to bed, the times when you are so involved playing your favorite sport, you forget everything else that's when you feel really happy.

Happiness is: the flow state. The state when you feel that you are on a roll.

Where everything you do is effortless and just flows. The feeling you get when you completely lose yourself in what you are doing. The time when time stops. You are in the "groove" and everything is working for you. You are in total harmony with yourself.

The irony is that this great feeling of happiness happens not when you are relaxing or watching TV or enjoying the company of your friends. Happiness is achieved when you challenge yourself.

When you stretch yourself. When you are doing what you enjoy doing most.

When you are totally absorbed in what you are doing. When you put yourself out there. When you exceed your expectations.

So what are you waiting for? You have nothing to lose. All you have to do is put those oughts, shoulds and musts behind you and follow your heart. Lose yourself in what you really want to do. Enter the flow world where being completely involved in an activity for its own sake.

The ego falls away. Time flies. "Every action, movement, and thought follows inevitably from the previous one, like playing jazz. Your whole being is involved, and you're using your skills to the utmost." (Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi)



centrated is when people are at their happiest.

Whether it be at work, playing with the children or meditating, the times when you don't notice time passing. the times when you keep going without being aware of what's around you....The state where.. I give John a cup of coffee and he doesn't even know I've placed it on his desk next to the screen...the state where you really enjoy what you are doing and when you come up for air you are totally satisfied with what you have been doing — this is happiness!

In other words you were really connected: heart and soul. You really

D&M Partners With The Conference Group

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, manufacturing, and more.

At The Conference Group they take your teleconferencing personally. In fact, since the company opened its doors in 1999 customer satisfaction has been their driving force. If you're tired of being treated like one of the masses, discover how they can improve your teleconferencing experience with their personal touch and

technological know-how.

Their "boutique" approach has remained their focus since the beginning and has resulted in a very high degree



of customer satisfaction. When it comes to using the service, The Con-

ference Group offers several options that makes using their conferencing programs very user friendly. You can utilize their easy-to-use client controlled features to be as self-reliant as you wish or request their staff of conference support professionals to take care of every detail.

If you would like to learn more about The Conference Group and how your company can benefit from their money-saving suite of conferencing services, call your D&M Project Manager at 888-357-5055 or you can reach us by email at customevice@dmenterprise.net.

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.



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