



## Case Study

# Associated Cardiologists, P.C. Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

### PROVIDING CONVENIENT FULL SERVICE HEALTH CARE

Associated Cardiologists, P.C. is a group of dedicated cardiac specialists that has been treating patients in the Susquehanna Valley for over 20 years, offering prompt, convenient full-service care both to patients and referring physicians. The group has grown dramatically over the years in response to the needs of the community, expanding to two office locations.

As Associated Cardiologists was in the process of expanding their practice, they realized they needed a communications solution that would provide patients with greater accessibility to their health care providers. They also realized that the communications system they selected had to provide a foundation that would allow for improved customer service and enhanced employee productivity.

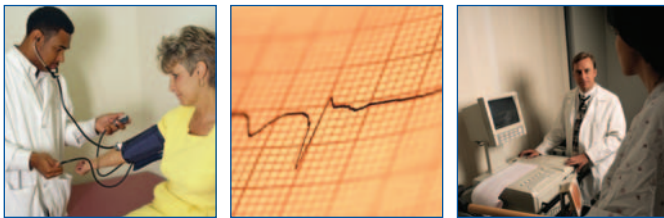
### THE BUSINESS CHALLENGE— IMPROVING PATIENT SERVICE

"About two years ago Associated Cardiologists decided to go to a live operator system and do away with an auto attendant. We really needed to be more user-friendly. We knew we didn't want our old system," stated Rita Boslet, manager of patient services. With in excess of 16,000 active patients and concerned about past performance with service, Associated Cardiologists felt they needed to change vendors entirely.

Associated Cardiologists needed to make sure that the person handling calls had the information they needed to respond quickly and efficiently. "Specifically we wanted to be able to follow up if someone were to tell us, 'I couldn't get through' or 'Your phone was busy.' Those are the kind of things that, to us, represent poor service and we wanted to be able to track those things," stated Boslet.

Additionally, Associated Cardiologist has two primary locations, about two miles apart. "We wanted to tie those two together seamlessly from a data, voice, networking and technology perspective," said Wayne Eberts, director of MIS for Associated Cardiologists.

As they looked at what their needs were going to be presently and moving into the future, Associated Cardiologists wanted to make sure that they had enough bandwidth to include both the voice and data communications between the facilities.



#### **FAST FACT...**

*Associated Cardiologists enhanced patient service with an Inter-Tel platform and call center reporting solutions.*



## THE INTER-TEL SOLUTION

Ecomm, an Inter-Tel solutions provider in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, provided Associated Cardiologists with an Inter-Tel advanced communications platform in both locations connected via Internet Protocol. Additionally, Ecomm proposed Call Center Suite, a collaboration and customer relationship application. Harry Warren, vice president and general manager of Ecomm explained, "With any telephone system, you either look to that system to generate revenue or protect revenue. Associated Cardiologists was really looking for Call Center Suite to protect the revenue of the incoming calls." With Call Center Suite, Associated Cardiologists are able to route calls to the appropriate personnel and monitor calls to ensure they are providing outstanding customer service to their patients and referring physicians.

"We knew from our physicians that we were missing a tremendous amount of calls every day just simply because people would call in and say I can never get through. We had no idea of the volume of calls because the system we had previously had no capability of telling us that information," stated Eberts. In fact, with the help of Call Center Suite, Associated Cardiologists found they were receiving approximately 3,200 calls per day. In addition to tracking call volumes, the application also enables Associated Cardiologists to track abandoned calls, how calls are being handled and by whom.

Boslet affirmed that the practice can now make changes, reroute calls and reassign personnel to provide the best service possible. She added, "The system has really enabled us to use our personnel much more efficiently."

## WHY INTER-TEL

Support during and after installation was extremely important to the personnel at Associated Cardiologists. According to Boslet, "We wanted to be able to have somebody there holding our hand through the installation and the first few months that we were operating it."

Wayne Eberts elaborated, "We shut down at 4:30 p.m. on a Friday afternoon and transferred all the calls to an answering service for the weekend. And, as a result of the hard teamwork between Associated Cardiologists, Ecomm and the supporting team out at Inter-Tel, Monday morning at 8:00 a.m. we were taking patient calls without a glitch. We can make calls between the extensions as if they're local calls without a problem. And the bandwidth between the two buildings is dynamically allocated so when there is not a lot of voice traffic, then the data traffic gets full bandwidth. When there is voice traffic, it's allocated dynamically and both voice and data go across the same lines at the same time."

Warren of Ecomm added, "As we move forward and as they continue to increase their need for that bandwidth between those facilities, we are well positioned to make sure that they're able to get as much throughput as possible without increasing their monthly expense. We were very excited about what we were going to be able to bring back to Associated Cardiologists from a managed services standpoint, and I believe that had a major impact on their final decision to choose Ecomm and Inter-Tel."

As Eberts explained, "It made the doctors happier. It made the patient services [department] happier. What we really look for in this practice is quality of care—and delivering our services out to the patient. And, when they can get through it's much more valuable to us. The most important thing to our doctors here is that each and every patient call is answered. And, by being able to monitor the calls, we got more of a return on investment in patient satisfaction and non-dropped calls than any possible dollar amount you could put a finger on."

A video of this case study on CD is available upon request (Part # 835.2679).



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