



## Grene Vision Group Gains 20/20 IT Vision with Avaya Interoperability and Mobility

### Challenge:

With continuing growth and separate telephone systems across 26 locations, Grene Vision Group was unable to operate effectively as a single company.

### Solution:

Grene Vision Group deployed Avaya Media Servers, Avaya Media Gateways, and Avaya telephony applications in a networked telephony architecture to gain interoperability, mobility, scalability, and availability.

### Value Created:

- Reduced complexity and response time for IT support by migrating all locations to a centrally managed enterprise
- Lowered operational costs with monthly leasing options that offer a cost-effective way to maintain business continuity, upgrade technology, and avoid obsolete equipment burdens
- Improved customer service by increasing incoming call answer rates to 85 percent
- Increased employee productivity with flexible mobility and reporting tools

WICHITA, KANSAS, USA – As unprecedented advancements in eye care join time-tested technologies, today's vision patients are benefiting from a greater array of opportunities to improve their sight—and ultimately their lives. And in a world where visual acuity is critical to work and play, it's no wonder that eye care professionals are focused on improving both their tools and the patient experience.

At the Grene Vision Group, the company's focus is crystal clear: provide the best quality, value, and service. The team of innovative ophthalmologists, optometrists, and professional staff delivers a best-in-class total eye care system, superior patient services, and high-tech equipment. With nearly 400 employees and 26 locations—including many rural offices—the doctor-owned Grene Vision Group is constantly growing in size and reputation across the state of Kansas.

### Out-of-focus telephony environment needs new vision

While Grene Vision Group had a modern computer network architecture to support its dispersed locations and growing numbers, the company's telephony infrastructure was antiquated. There was no unified phone system in place and no effective way to field support calls at existing locations.

Eighteen of the branch offices operated separate phone systems, each with its own set of telephone configurations, message options, vendors, and mix of leased and purchased equipment. Three locations

were using Avaya equipment, with limited interoperability among those phone systems. Incoming calls to any location might be connected to an employee, an answering machine, or even a local voice mailbox, with no way to simply be transferred to another location for immediate assistance. Without the ability to operate a unified voice system, Grene Vision Group was unable to consistently respond to the influx of incoming calls from patients.

Support for the disparate telephone systems was handled by Travis Scheopner, the director of information systems—and one-man IT shop—at Grene Vision Group. His days were often spent on the road, traveling to a rural or metropolitan branch office as far as 100 miles away, to respond to downtime, replacement equipment, and vendor issues. Because he was out of the office frequently, his desk and cellular voicemail were often filled with messages from employees also in need of IT support by the time he returned.

*“Response rates were abysmal because I had no ability to remotely support our phone systems or our employees,” recalls Scheopner. “I knew our growing company could operate much smoother with a unified phone system.”*

## IT department examines requirements for change

When Grene Vision Group released plans to build two new locations within a month—and additional offices in the near future—Scheopner saw the perfect opportunity to evaluate more effective telephony options. Rather than continuing the myopic, one-location-at-a-time deployment approach, Scheopner wanted to develop a single-system approach to the company's telephony infrastructure.

His main goal was to find a way to tie together all existing and future offices to improve the end-user experience for both employees and callers, as well as simplify IT support. To better serve Grene Vision Group customers, Scheopner wanted to create a virtual call center—the ability for calls to be answered seamlessly from any location. He required a standard user interface and a global set of administrative features for the phone system, including voicemail and call transfer options, to enable employees to operate as one company rather than many separate sites. Scheopner was also interested in acquiring historical and real-time reporting capabilities that could provide data to assess call volume and staffing levels.

To provide better IT support, Scheopner required the ability to remotely manage all the phones, as well as locally sustain each office's phone system in the event of outage. He also wanted to build a template that could be replicated at every location rather than reengineering each separate location's phone services. Finally, he expected to gain better mobility, interoperability, and scalability with a networked architecture.

*"Because our company is constantly building new offices or redesigning existing structures, we need to have a system that can be ready to go—and grow—at any time," says Scheopner. "We want to be able to design one schematic that scales and interoperates with every new office we bring online."*

To gauge the financial and implementation feasibility of potential solutions, he began evaluating possible vendors. With two sizeable locations currently under construction, he would soon need to have an approved plan in place. Several business partners recommended Cisco Systems solutions but were not able to offer the single-system design Scheopner was looking for. With Avaya systems in place at three locations, Scheopner decided to further explore the possibility of deploying Avaya servers, gateways, and telephones across the company.

Scheopner turned to an Avaya Platinum BusinessPartner (BP) to discuss the telephony challenges at Grene Vision Group. The BP recommended building a networked telephony architecture based on Avaya Media Servers and Avaya Media Gateways. The Avaya network would help Grene Vision Group achieve its goal of unifying and managing telephony services for all remote branch offices from one central location, without the need to rebuild or rewire each building.

*"Unlike other potential partners that tried selling solutions that did not serve our current and future needs, this BP truly partnered with Grene Vision Group to design a single system that would scale and grow with our company," says Scheopner.*

He compared the projected costs and benefits of installing telephony into the two new locations with the costs and benefits of overhauling phone systems across the entire company using an Avaya solution. By partnering with Avaya Financial Services he was able to examine flexible monthly leasing options that would enable Grene Vision Group to deploy the Avaya system without capital expense.

*"Avaya provided us with a cost-effective way to implement and scale a telephony network, with one monthly lease payment, easy upgrades, and no wasted assets," says Scheopner. "It was an easy choice to select Avaya as our vendor."*

## Networked architecture offers business foresight

Prior to the completion of building construction on the two new Grene Vision Group centers, Scheopner began implementing the Avaya telephony network across the company. He installed two Avaya S8710 Media Server units at the corporate office to serve as the nerve center of the network. Designed with high-capacity processors to help improve management efficiencies, the servers provide a scalable, highly available architecture for virtually unlimited growth and redundancy options.

Avaya G700 or G350 Media Gateways with Local Survivable Processors (LSPs) were placed at each office to provide remote IP connection gateways between all of the locations. Designed for complete sustainability at remote offices, Avaya gateways with LSP support have the ability to provide 100 percent uptime and business continuity, even if the connection to headquarters is lost.

To power the new infrastructure with enterprise-level communications, Scheopner installed Avaya Communication Manager 2.2 and Avaya Basic Call Management System (BCMS) Reporting Desktop software. Designed to support analog and digital circuit switching, as well as IP-based telephony, Avaya Communication Manager fosters easy implementation of intelligent business rules within a distributed network. User-friendly interfaces and data mining capabilities enable Avaya BCMS Reporting Desktop to generate historical and real-time reports that help employees quickly visualize and customize contact center data from their desktops.

To address mobility issues and response rates, Scheopner was also interested in the Extension to Cellular feature of Avaya Communication Manager. Activated by pressing a feature button on an Avaya desktop telephone, Extension to Cellular transparently bridges calls to any digital cellular device—regardless of location or wireless service provider. As a result, Grene Vision Group employees, such as Scheopner, would gain the flexibility to conduct business from any location. The new architecture was completed with Avaya 4600 Series IP Telephones and 2400 Series Digital Voice Telephones, which provide employees with easy-to-use display and administrative features.

### **Enterprise capabilities improve customer service**

Prior to installing a unified Avaya infrastructure across the company, Grene Vision Group had difficulty providing a consistent customer call experience. Without clarity as to appropriate staffing levels and call volumes or the ability to answer and transfer calls between locations, employees were less effective at responding to incoming calls.

Today, when the phone rings at any of Grene Vision Group's locations—regardless of origination or destination—calls are handled with flexibility and efficiency by informed employees and routed seamlessly to the appropriate company specialists. Because all locations are connected to the same Avaya phone system, there is only one administrative feature set for employees to learn and only one method for forwarding or transferring calls.

Using the data capture functions of the Avaya BCMS software, managers have ready access to data, removing the guesswork from attributes such as staffing levels, call volumes, and answer rates. Grene Vision Group is now able to report a weekly average for incoming calls—nearly 9,000 across its multiple sites—and has already improved the average speed of answer by more than 35 percent.

*“Before we had the Avaya reporting capabilities, there was no accurate way to capture comparable data across the board. Now we easily generate reports on the fly and can make informed decisions about staffing needs,”* says Scheopner.

### **Mobility and flexibility remove productivity blind spots**

The company is also realizing business benefits from simplified IT management, greater employee productivity, and lower operational costs. The Avaya network has helped to reduce the overhead and complexity of managing disparate systems and, with a network template in place, adding or modifying locations is simplified. Scheopner went from supporting different wiring, equipment, and vendors at each location to simply ordering the number of Avaya phones he needs to install. Because the

Avaya Media Server and Avaya Media Gateway units can be configured and managed centrally, Scheopner can operationalize new branch offices quickly and cost-effectively, as well as handle maintenance or modifications without traveling to remote locations.

*“After the Avaya installation, telephony support time requirements dropped from several hours—and many miles—per day to 15 minutes per day,”* says Scheopner.

Employees throughout the company are enjoying the benefits of Avaya technology. On-the-go employees like Scheopner and company president Susan Wade now maximize their time using Extension to Cellular. Wade spends her hourly morning commute on the phone, dialing one number, following prompts to connect with any employee, and migrating from call to call without having to hang up and redial. Rather than spending time each day listening to voicemails and then responding to support requests, Scheopner is now able to provide immediate support because employees can reach him at the time of need.

*“I can take a 30-second call and provide a solution immediately rather than trying to track down the employee when I get back to my desk. Avaya mobility options have helped us improve IT response tenfold,”* says Scheopner.

Teams of physicians located throughout the company once needed to plan meetings in advance and make time to travel to a single location for the meeting. Now Avaya Meet Me Conferencing enables those same doctors to quickly assemble from the convenience of their individual offices for a conference call.

With the high scalability and availability of Avaya equipment and the intelligent communications and

open interoperability built into Avaya software, companies like Grene Vision Group are able to help make employees more productive, processes more intelligent, and customers more satisfied. And cost-effective Avaya leasing programs offer an affordable way to maintain business continuity,

upgrade technology, and avoid obsolete equipment burdens.

*“At Grene Vision Group, we focus on increasing quality, providing higher value, and delivering better service. Avaya fits perfectly into our frame of operation,”* says Scheopner.

**Learn More**

For more information on how Avaya can take your enterprise from where it is to where it needs to be, contact your Avaya Client Executive or Authorized Avaya Business Partner, or visit us at [www.avaya.com](http://www.avaya.com)

**ABOUT GRENE VISION GROUP**

At Grene Vision Group, the future of eye care is now. Blending the talents of all eye care specialties into one great team, the doctors at Grene Vision Group are dedicated to providing total eye care for the entire family across the state of Kansas. The doctor-owned group is one of the largest in the United States, with 13 MD ophthalmologists, 30 optometrists and more than 325 professional opticians, technicians and support staff. Contact Grene Vision Group at 800.362.3296 or visit the website: [www.GreneVisionGroup.com](http://www.GreneVisionGroup.com)

Applications	Systems	Services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avaya MultiVantage™ Communications Applications</li> <li>• Avaya Communication Manager</li> <li>• Avaya Call Center</li> <li>• Avaya Basic Call Management System Reporting Desktop</li> <li>• Avaya Extension to Cellular</li> <li>• Avaya Meet Me Conferencing</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avaya S8710 Media Servers</li> <li>• Avaya G350 and G700 Media Gateways</li> <li>• Avaya 4600 Series IP Telephones</li> <li>• Avaya 2400 Series Digital Voice Telephones</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avaya Global Services</li> <li>• Avaya Financial Services</li> <li>• Implementation and Installation provided by Avaya Platinum BusinessPartner</li> </ul>

All statements in this Case Study were made by Travis Scheopner, director of information systems for Grene Vision Group.