

“We deal with insurance companies all over the country. If they don’t get through to us by fax or phone, we lose assignments. If we can’t answer the phone, that’s potential lost business. Aptela streamlines our communication process.”

—Mark Clark, Franchise Owner/PDA, East Baltimore and Delaware

Property Damage Appraisers (PDA) provides independent insurance appraisals for a wide range of property damage incidents—from home and automobile to heavy equipment. PDA has 270 independently owned and operated franchises in the United States and Puerto Rico.

Challenge: Responding to customer calls with a workforce that is on the road and on the go all day.

When Mark Clark started working for the original PDA franchise in Baltimore, MD, the office was tied down by a PBX system and a \$700 monthly phone bill. The phone system didn’t provide individual extensions for employees—or any way to transfer calls to the appraisers who spend their days driving from one site to another. During the process of purchasing the franchise and opening a new office, Clark immediately recognized the opportunity that better communication technology could offer his new business.

After researching several VoIP providers, Clark selected Aptela for its combination of robust features and the high level of service and responsiveness he received from Aptela representatives during his research process. “They made me feel comfortable with my choice,” he says.

“We now have confidence that someone who cares is standing behind us. We can’t afford to be ‘left in the lurch’ if a problem does arise.”

Solution: Implementing a system that gives mobile employees the support of a central office without the overhead expense.

Clark has five appraisers working for him. The nature of their jobs keeps them out on the road, inspecting property damage and preparing appraisals. But the appraisers also need to stay connected and receive new assignments as they are received. “Efficiency is the name of the game in our industry,” says Clark. His appraisers’ goal is to turn around appraisals within 72 hours after a call comes in.

With Aptela’s Hosted VoIP phone service, PDA’s franchises in East Baltimore and Delaware have the tools they need to give customers quick, responsive service.

- **Call Blast** rings on the appraisers’ home and mobile phones simultaneously so they



Mark Clark owns two property damage appraisal franchises in East Baltimore and Delaware.

www.pdacorporation.com

Counts on Aptela to help them:

- Save time and money
- Respond to customers quickly
- Increase efficiency
- Share resources to seamlessly service two franchises
- Connect and enable mobile employees

never have to worry about missing calls.

- **Auto Attendant** routes calls to employees' virtual extensions automatically—saving PDA's office manager hours of time that she used to spend manually transferring calls.
- **Voicemail to Email Integration** allows appraisers to receive their voice mail messages on the road as mp3 or .wav files on their mobile devices or laptops. No more dialing into a central voicemail message center.
- **Seamless Remote Connectivity** means PDA appraisers and telecommuting office staff can place and receive calls using Aptela's system, regardless of where they happen to be on a given day. All the while, they appear as though they are in the office.
- **Outbound Faxing** lets appraisers fax documents from the road, eliminating the need to return to the office to use the physical fax machine and speeding up the processing of appraisals.
- **Announce Callee** lets appraisers know immediately whether a call is coming from Baltimore or Delaware.
- **Extension Dialing and Call Transfer** means employees can quickly transfer a call between their home offices and mobile phones (and vice versa) by just dialing an extension.

"Even though I'm on the road over half of my work week, I have to keep my business going. As long as I have an Internet connection and my Aptela phone service, I can manage my operations from anywhere."

Results: Running a successful business in two geographic locations—with an entirely remote workforce. With Aptela, Clark can operate multiple PDA franchises in different states just as easily as one. His office manager and data entry staff work from home and are able to serve both locations as needed. "Aptela has doubled my productivity," says Clark. "And we're totally paperless because of Aptela." In addition to saving time for both his staff and his insurance company customers, Aptela saves him money. Clark estimates he saves at least \$4,000 to \$6,000 a year over the old PBX system. "We are just very pleased with Aptela."



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