



“Making the switch to Aptela was easy. They held my hand through the entire porting process and I was able to get very familiar with my new system before the switchover was complete.”

—George Cochrane, Allstate Agency Principal, Frederick, Maryland

Insurance is one of those services customers don't put much thought into...until they need it. Then they want immediate response and attention. As the award-winning owner of an Allstate agency delivering both insurance and financial planning services, George Cochrane understands. Missing a call from a customer—or prospective customer—doesn't mesh with either his or Allstate's standards of attentive, professional service. So it's vital that his phone system is up to the challenge.

**Challenge: Finding a budget-friendly phone system to support Allstate's high**

**service standards.** Before George established his own Allstate agency, he enjoyed the flexibility of the Voice over IP (VoIP) system he used with his previous employer. When it came time to start an office of his own, he inquired about the expense associated with that system and found it was cost-prohibitive. So George made the decision to go with FiberNet, a regional telecom provider that serviced his area.

As a tech savvy user, however, George quickly became frustrated with the drawbacks of that system. When he worked from home, he couldn't do so transparently—customers would see his cell phone number on their caller IDs. In addition, there was no voice mail capability. And each evening he'd have to remember to manually switch the system to Allstate's after-hours call center, otherwise callers couldn't get a live person to talk to in an emergency.

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*“When I switched to Aptela Hosted VoIP and told my previous employer what I paid, his jaw dropped. I have the same functionality he does, but it costs me just a fraction of what he pays.”*

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**Solution: Gaining more flexibility and functionality while reducing costs.** During the move to Agent Choice Technology in 2008, George had to make a number of buying decisions related to his business communications infrastructure – including new PCs, broadband and even phone service. George replaced his Allstate computers with fresh technology and then began a search for a new phone system. He asked his trusted IT Consultant for a VoIP provider recommendation and he told him about Aptela.



George Cochrane owns an exclusive Allstate agency offering insurance and financial planning solutions in MD, VA, DC, WV, and PA.

<http://agent.allstate.com/gc/welcome>

**Counts on Aptela to help them:**

- Save money
- Work more flexibly
- Monitor employee productivity
- Serve customers better

After just a 20-minute chat with Aptela, George was sold. For less than what he was paying to use his company-standard phone system, Aptela could deliver:

- **Individual Voice Mail.** Now employees can hear customers' requests in their own words, instead relying on handwritten messages on slips of paper that can be lost or inaccurate.
- **Seamless Remote Capabilities.** Whether working from home, vacation or some other location, George can place and return calls and have it appear as though he's in the office. His Allstate information shows up on Caller ID regardless of where he is or which phone he uses.
- **Automatic Call Forwarding.** George no longer has to remember to switch calls to the after-hours call center and then switch them back again in the morning. The Aptela Auto Attendant is pre-programmed to do it automatically each day based upon George's needs.
- **Monitoring Capabilities.** With Aptela, George can monitor the phone activity of the other agents in his office to ensure his employees are using their time wisely.
- **Scalability.** No matter how many employees George may add or how many offices he wants to connect, Aptela can accommodate him with all the functionality mentioned above.

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*"One of my goals is to expand by either opening a satellite office or purchasing another agency. Being able to tie the two offices together through one integrated phone system will be invaluable to me."*

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**Result: Leveraging a phone system that will serve his business and his customers well, now and in the future.** One of the biggest results George has noticed has been in his communications cost-to-value ratio. With Aptela, the capabilities of his phone system have increased significantly, while costs have dropped 15%-20%. And he still hasn't leveraged the full value of all the features he has available.

George looks forward to using Aptela to receive faxes, which will drop his communications costs further. Plus, he's still exploring some of Aptela's built-in productivity tools, like Click to Call, which reduces dialing down to a single mouse click.

As he looks ahead to the future of his business, George foresees establishing satellite offices and additional Allstate agency franchises. With Aptela's remote access capabilities, he will be able to take calls from other offices, redistribute call flows during the day, and monitor the productivity across his offices whenever he chooses, from wherever he chooses. Most important of all, however, he can rest easy knowing he's doing everything he can to deliver on Allstate's promise of putting his customers in good hands.



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