

# TeleSphere opens Utah office, hopes to replace PBX systems

Product helps link a business's phones, regardless of location

BY MIKE GORRELL  
*The Salt Lake Tribune*

TeleSphere is out to do away with the PBX.

The Phoenix-based telecommunications company, which is launching its Utah operations today, contends it has developed a system that allows small and midsized businesses to avoid the cost of buying a PBX machine to handle internal communications.

"With so much economic

stress these days, it should be a welcome relief to let businesses grow with the latest product, but without the financial burden of a PBX," which can cost \$15,000 to \$250,000, said TeleSphere Chief Executive Clark Peterson.

Technically known as a "Private Branch Exchange," PBXs have allowed people in a company to communicate internally without having to access outside telephone lines. But that's about it. Applications are limited if, for instance, a company has operations in several cities.

Peterson said TeleSphere's platform has the capacity to

link these scattered operations so that a person in one office needs to dial only four numbers to talk to someone in another company office in the same city or a different region. The system costs \$25 to \$49 per month, depending on specific services provided.

In Arizona, the 3,000-member Arizona Small Business Association switched to TeleSphere last October, a move designed to improve communications as the trade group expands beyond Phoenix and Tucson. Then in March, the Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Scottsdale hooked its headquarters and nine

centers into TeleSphere's system.

"The safety and security of our kids is our number one priority, and we need to have constant communication available to the families we serve," said Boys & Girls Club President Steven Davidson, referring to redundant features that transfer calls from desk phones to cell phones (or vice versa) and prevent the system from crashing completely.

"To be down at any time is a problem for us," he added. "But the way the system is set up, if one location's phones go down, you can forward those

calls to another. We don't have to worry about those issues."

The system also can blur the distinction between phones and computers, causing phones to ring with the click of an icon on a computer screen and converting telephone voice mails to written e-mails.

"You don't have to touch your phone if you don't want to," said Matt Reed, general manager of TeleSphere's Utah operation.

It is occupying about 10,000 square feet of space in an office building off the northeast intersection of Interstate 15 and 5300 South in Murray.

The Utah team has seven salespeople and three other specialists but expects to have 20 employees when fully operational a year from now, Peterson said.

Nationally, TeleSphere has more than 100 employees and 60-70 sales agents serving customers in 44 states.

Karen Anderson, who troubleshoots issues that might confront TeleSphere customers, said she appreciates the flexibility of the call-forwarding option.

"You can be anywhere and do your job," Anderson said.

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