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Press Release

Source: Avaya Inc.

Small Businesses Can Lose Big If They Ignore the True Cost of Lost Employee Productivity

Monday March 31, 2008 7:15 am ET

Avaya Unified Communications for Small Business Can Recoup Employee Productivity With Affordable, Easy, Secure Ways to Work From Anywhere

BASKING RIDGE, NJ--(MARKET WIRE)--Mar 31, 2008 -- According to a new survey from [Avaya](#) Inc., a leading global provider of [business communications](#) applications, systems and services, most small businesses agree that productivity suffers when an employee is out of the office unexpectedly, but few have calculated the true cost to their businesses.

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Avaya conducted a quantitative web survey of owners, presidents, CEOs, vice presidents, directors and managers of small businesses in the United States. All the businesses surveyed agreed that productivity suffers when employees can't get into the office because of bad weather or personal needs, such as caring for an ill child at home. Only a handful surveyed had calculated the business cost of lost productivity from unscheduled employee absences, and most of this small group estimated expenses could approach \$20,000 annually.

"Most people today are already working away from their primary place of employment at least part of the time, whether it's at home over the weekend, on the train on the way to the office, or in an airport waiting for a flight," said Chuck Wilsker, president and CEO, The Telework Coalition. "Small businesses are definitely beginning to recognize that their employees can be productive wherever they are -- as long as they have a laptop, high speed Internet and a phone and the right features to be truly productive while working from home. Having the right technology is key to creating a plan that enables employees to work remotely."

Technology such as [Unified Communications](#) (UC), which brings the communications

environment of the office to any location, on any device, can drive more flexible styles of working that blend with an employee's home life and ultimately help small firms retain those employees, maximize their productivity output and avoid missed business opportunities.

Avaya introduced UC for small businesses earlier this month at VoiceCon 2008, a leading conference and exhibition for enterprise voice, IP telephony and convergence solutions. The UC applications package enables employees to work from home, extends a desk phone's functions and features to mobile devices and supports full time tele-workers. Its platform is Avaya IP Office, the company's flagship converged solution for small businesses. Available worldwide, the UC for Small Business solution is priced at US\$129 per user, list (20 or more employees); US\$179 per user, list (less than 20 employees).

"Flexibility is the ultimate asset that small businesses depend on," said Ray Boggs, vice president of Small/Medium Business and Home Office Research at IDC. "But this is only made possible by technology that lets staff work how and where they prefer. Advanced solutions like Unified Communications lets small firms collaborate and communicate in ways that let them compete effectively against bigger firms. Support of remote workers makes possible the kind of sales and customer support once found only in the largest firms."

U.S. customers gain efficiencies, lower costs with Avaya

Avaya customers All Occasion Transportation and Limousine Eighteen Ltd., which are two ground transportation companies based in New England, rely on Avaya UC for Small Business applications on their Avaya IP Office solutions to manage their customers more effectively and efficiently and continue providing the personalized service that helped build their businesses over the last 20 years. Their Avaya IP Office solutions were configured by All Business Communications, a certified member of the Avaya Business Partner program.

"The benefits and payoffs are simply this: we do everything better, smarter and faster than ever before," said Marc Shpilner, president of Limousine Eighteen, which is based in Boston and has 21 employees. "Plus, I'm able to hire great people who might not be able to travel to our headquarters. I now have two excellent reservationists who work from home as if they were in the office, with full access to our headquarters-based reservations system for around-the-clock coverage. That was a huge change for us, but it proves location doesn't necessarily matter when it comes to employee productivity."

All Occasion Transportation is based in Providence, R.I., serves 600 cities worldwide and has 52 employees during its peak season of May through October. "Our business expanded steadily so we've really outgrown our downtown headquarters, but we don't want to invest in relocating until we have a better idea of where the economy is headed. With IP Office, we'll be able to delay that decision, because our managers have flexible work arrangements that make the most of the space we have," said Eric Weiner, president, All Occasion. "For instance, I share an office, but if I'm expecting a sensitive business call, I can answer my incoming calls on my mobile phone and step outside to take the call in private. Our manager of the new wedding transportation division works from home full time, with an Avaya IP phone and VPN software at her house. And almost any one of our managers can work remotely when they need to, simply by connecting to IP Office through their home or cell phone. It's all so easy, which is a good thing -- because as a small business, we don't have the time or inclination to be technology experts."

According to Trevor Gruenewald, vice president, North American channels, small and medium businesses, Avaya, even the most modest-sized firm can use Avaya UC for small businesses to combine several communications elements into a single, seamless experience. "In fact, our survey shows that when their concerns about technology are addressed, most small businesses -- some 90 percent who we surveyed -- are prepared to offer their employees much more flexible working options," he said. "Now, Avaya has even more 'big business' capabilities at a 'small business' price and we are working closely with our global network of resellers to bring that experience to small firms."

About Avaya

[Avaya](#) delivers Intelligent Communications solutions that help companies transform their businesses to achieve marketplace advantage. More than one million businesses worldwide, including more than 90 percent of the FORTUNE 500®, use Avaya solutions for [IP telephony](#), [unified communications](#), [contact centers](#) and [communications-enabled business processes](#). [Avaya Global Services](#) provide comprehensive service and support for companies, small to large. For more information, visit the Avaya Web site at <http://www.avaya.com>.

Note to editors:

-- The survey includes responses that represent the finance, insurance, business services, professional services, real estate, and import/export sectors. Most companies surveyed have from 20 to 80 employees.

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Source: Avaya Inc.



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