

Town Fair Tire Deploys 8x8 Unified Cloud Communications to Increase Efficiency and Maintain Market Leadership

Town Fair Tire, a leading retailer of tires in New England



Town Fair Tire is a well-established tire retailer located in the New England region of the United States. In an effort to make its employees more available to prospective customers the company opened a traditional contact center but quickly became dissatisfied with the substandard experience and the inaccessibility of call-related information. The search for a replacement—made in parallel with the decision to upgrade a conventional phone system—resulted in deployment of the 8x8 Virtual Office and 8x8 Virtual Contact Center solutions. The results have been dramatic.

Town Fair Tire launched into the New England tire business in 1967 with just one store. Today, by combining fair prices with exemplary service, it has expanded to 95 stores spread across six states throughout the northeast United States. The company's 1,800 employees focus strictly on tires; encompassing the sale of tires and providing tire-related services such as balancing, installation and alignment. In addition to its retail business, Town Fair Tire sells wholesale to auto dealerships, repair shops and other outlets.

The Town Fair Tire stores and showrooms offer attractive, comfortable facilities, staffed with knowledgeable personnel. The company's way of doing business is to encourage staff to spend time with each customer—both in person and on the phone—to provide in-depth explanations of the features and benefits of the available tire choices. To ensure that appropriate time could be allocated to clients and guarantee that questions were always satisfactorily answered irrespective of the capacity of each store, a decision was taken to open a contact center.

Not All Contact Center Solutions Are Created Equal

Town Fair Tire initially entered into a contract with a contact center provider that was almost immediately acquired by a competitor. The resulting performance of the deployment did not meet expectations.



Customer: Town Fair Tire

Industry: Retail

Locations: New England, 95 stores

8x8 Products:

- 8x8 Virtual Office: 700 lines
- 8x8 Virtual Contact Center: 60 seats

Favorite 8x8 Features: Routing store calls to contact center, comprehensive reporting

Primary reason chose 8x8:

- Integrated contact center and business phone system solutions
- Cost-savings

Previous phone system: ShoreTel

Website: www.townfairtire.com



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—Mike Barbaro,
Senior Vice President,
Town Fair Tire

Mike Barbaro, Senior Vice President at Town Fair Tire, elaborated, "Although we invested quite heavily in the solution we couldn't get decent quality recordings. Despite having call logging in every store, we had no details on how many incoming or outgoing phone calls were occurring. We were looking to get valuable insights from analyzing the data but we just couldn't get to the information we needed."

The flawed contact center solution sent Town Fair Tire looking for a higher-quality replacement. While the focus of the new search was initially for contact center software, the company also seized the opportunity to identify and implement a high-quality cloud-based phone system.

8x8 Delivers Combined Solution

In his research Barbaro discovered that while there were a variety of contact center vendors, only one—8x8—offered both a cloud-based contact center solution and an enterprise-grade business phone system. He recalled, "We found some respectable solutions for contact centers, but would have had to go to a second vendor for business phone service. Given the overlap and interdependencies between the two platforms, there was great appeal to source both from a single provider; making 8x8 very compelling."

Utilizing Internet-based solutions for such critical business functions raised some initial concerns: "We had apprehension about the effect of poor Internet service at some of our locations and we were particularly worried about the impact this would have on voice quality," recounted Barbaro. "But by surveying each location to verify that it would receive high-quality voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) communications, 8x8 convinced me that this wouldn't be an issue."

Let It Snow

Given the urgency of getting usable caller traffic information, the implementation was phased to allow the new 8x8 Virtual Contact Center to come online first, followed by the company-wide deployment of the 8x8 Virtual Office cloud-based business phone system.

The infamous New England winters create a seasonal spike for Town Fair correlating to the purchase and installation of snow tires, and a second peak associated with the swapping back to regular tires at the return of better weather. "We needed to ensure that the 8x8 Virtual Contact Center system was in place prior to the spring surge and targeted late August for the completion of 8x8 Virtual Office, just before we start ramping up again. The deployments were very well managed and despite the tight timeframes, we hit our installation goals."

Getting Traction with 8x8

8x8 Virtual Office provides Town Fair Tire with a full-featured, complete cloud-based telephone system. It delivers seamless communication for all company locations and supports both mobile and desk phones. Features include collaboration capabilities such as web conferencing and video meetings. In addition, corporate features such as extension dialing, auto attendant, ring groups, call recording and Internet faxing are all part of the package. 8x8 Virtual Office includes a suite of web-based tools that provide detailed analytics to support informed decision-making.



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—Mike Barbaro, Senior Vice President, Town Fair Tire

Town Fair Tire also makes extensive use of 8x8 Virtual Contact Center's features; leveraging queues to facilitate efficient service and call-backs to save customers from being placed on hold. Customized messages provide key details such as hours of operation and new product information; and the company updates these seasonally to stay fresh. The system supports a variety of customer interaction methods, including phone, email, chat and the web.

"Having been in business for 50 years, our customers are long-standing and very loyal," Barbaro stated. "If they suffer a flat tire they want to know that they can get into a shop promptly for service. With 8x8 Virtual Contact Center, when they call a local store they are routed to the contact center where an agent immediately schedules an appointment, which instantly shows up on the store's reservation list. From our customer's perspective, it's all about getting their flat fixed tomorrow morning and 8x8 Virtual Contact Center enables us to do just that."

Efficient Handling of Over a Million Calls

Within Town Fair Tire's contact center, a dedicated team of customer service agents handle appointment calls, and a similar number of tire experts answer inquiries when advice and tire pricing are needed. Relying on 8x8 Virtual Contact Center, the center efficiently handles over 1.3 million calls a year from all 95 stores.

8x8 Virtual Contact Center is integrated with Town Fair Tire's CRM database and Barbaro's team leverages the 8x8 APIs to enable data mining. He shared, "We have built business intelligence dashboards, spanning multiple applications, that we utilize constantly. With 8x8 Virtual Contact Center we now can see how many calls come in by agent, how many are for repairing flats versus new tires, or for tire rotations, et cetera. This lets us know exactly what's happening in the field so we can stay close to the needs of our clients, tailor programs to drive sales, and maintain our market leadership in the Northeast."

8x8's Impressive ROI

Each Town Fair Tire store typically has four retail lines, three lines dedicated to wholesale clients and additional circuits for credit card transactions and security/alarm connections. Barbaro summarized "We're still phasing out some of our legacy contracts but we calculate that the total monthly savings on our phone bill are over 35 percent. On its own this is very impressive, but when I add in the efficiency gains and customer experience improvements we've been able to achieve, it really confirms we made a great choice in 8x8!"

To find out how 8x8 can help your business, contact your 8x8 Account Executive or visit www.8x8.com

