# Case Study

# Cornerstone Merchant Services Adds Innovative IP-based Virtual Receptionist



**Grandstream**
Innovative IP Voice & Video

**WinTech**

## Challenge
Find a way to eliminate continuous front desk turnover from poor customer service while reducing operational costs and projecting a professional high-tech company image

## Solution
Implementation of ALICE Receptionist virtual visitor management solution integrated onto Grandstream's UCM6100 series IP PBX Appliance

## Value Created

- $25K cost savings from eliminating full-time receptionist

- Improved visitor experience – connect visitors with on-site and remote workers

- 1 person can manage multiple locations

- Improved company image from customizing system with branding messages and images

- Maintain a consistent image to customers 24/7 x 365 days of the year

- Increased business communications, efficiency and productivity

## Las Vegas, NV

For over a decade, Cornerstone Merchant Services has grown into a powerhouse in providing merchant customers with transaction processing solutions that accept credit cards or bank debit cards using online ordering or point of sales systems. Successful at forging alliances and building strong relationships with partners and customers, Cornerstone helps businesses of all sizes to implement check service and payment processing solutions that support numerous payment methods including Visa, MasterCard, Discover, American Express, JCB, Diners Club, as well as an array of other regional and national debit cards.

## Challenge

*Reduce the operational cost of employing a full-time, front office receptionist while improving company image and offering superior customer service with timely, face-to-face visitor communication at corporate headquarters.*

A client's first impression of a business is often made when a phone call is answered or when he or she arrives on-site and is greeted by a company representative at the front desk. A company with an active lobby at its headquarters in Las Vegas, NV, Cornerstone went the traditional route of employing a full-time receptionist to manage call routing and welcoming visitors. Over the years, turnover increased and Cornerstone found it difficult hiring staff that could portray the professional high-tech image and deliver a consistent level of customer service to clients and partners as they entered the building.

## Solution

Always seeking technology innovation to improve business efficiency and reduce costs, Cornerstone Merchant Services became aware of another local Las Vegas company that was receiving awards and rave reviews regarding its new ALICE® Receptionist visitor management solution. Shortly after reviewing the features, benefits and cost to implement, Cornerstone selected ALICE Receptionist as a replacement to hiring another full-time staff for lobby client relations.

ALICE Receptionist is a multi-language, virtual receptionist that greets visitors when they enter the building and notifies employees of their arrival. When a visitor arrives, motion detection is used to start a pre-recorded welcome video message with instruction for contacting their party. A touchscreen directory allows the visitor to easily find and connect with the intended party via live one-way or two-way audio/video by simply touching the screen. If employees are unavailable, visitors can contact the employee via a phone, direct-to-mobile or leave a video or voice message. For businesses with multiple locations, ALICE enables one employee to monitor and manage many locations. Cornerstone chose a 27" touchscreen desktop solution to fit perfectly on the receptionist desk located in the front lobby area. The ALICE system uses motion detection to recognize and greet guests as soon as they enter the lobby area.

> *"The Grandstream UCM6100 IP PBX is the perfect fit for our ALICE Receptionist solutions. It's a compact, reliable, feature-rich, affordable device that includes all the features of a PBX necessary for the ALICE system to provide voice and video over IP communications."*
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> Mike Yoder
> Chief Technology Officer
> Win-Tech LLC

ALICE is an IP-based system that requires a VoIP phone system platform to operate. It is either implemented onto a customer's existing VoIP hardware or it can be purchased as a stand-alone integrated solution with an IP PBX. At the suggestion of WinTech, a technology solutions company that helps businesses to improve the customer interaction experience, Cornerstone opted to have the ALICE system separate from their existing corporate phone system. The decision to go with a separate standalone solution was because of its affordability and arrival on-site ready-to-go. WinTech selected Grandstream's UCM6100 series IP PBX Appliance as the platform for the ALICE desktop solution because this IP PBX runs the Asterisk platform, delivering everything that's needed in a VoIP solution for ALICE in a way that's reliable, affordable, compact and yet powerful. The UCM6100 series supports robust voice and video features in addition to advanced data and mobility applications.

Grandstream's UCM6100 series is an open source, licensing-free IP PBX appliance for delivering enterprise-grade secure and reliable voice, video, data and mobility apps to SMBs worldwide. Powered by an advanced hardware platform based on Asterisk®, the UCM6100 series helps organizations to affordably use VoIP to increase productivity, provide better customer service, unify communications on a single platform and save money on communications costs all while increasing communications features and abilities.

The integrated ALICE and UCM6100 series IP PBX solution was installed as a local solution at the corporate headquarters. This allows for reliable 2-way audio and video as well as can be integrated with a SIP client or softphone for the desktop solution.

The integrated ALICE Receptionist with Grandstream IP PBX Appliance is an IP-based solution with a 3-month ROI that allows employees to greet building visitors with audio and video communication from their own desks and without the assistance from a lobby receptionist.

All calls to the main office and extension are routed through the UCM6100 series IP PBX. Cornerstone remote workers are routed through the cloud. Calls to remote workers are to a cell or office phone using the UCM6100 series' built-in PSTN support for audio communication. Remote workers are also equipped with a SIP client softphone solution to receive video as well as audio notification from the ALICE receptionist through the UCM6100 series IP PBX.

Installation was completed within one day and system training took less than 30 minutes. All voice and video features were easily configured using the web user interface of the IP PBX. Cornerstone then selected options during the set-up process to customize the ALICE system for their business including options like custom video greetings and messages, graphics and logos, information pages, communications modes and more.

Now when a visitor arrives at Cornerstone, ALICE greets the visitor and provides an on-screen list of employees the visitor can contact, even if that employee is out of the office or is a remote worker at a satellite office location.

## Business Results

With employees located at the corporate headquarters and remotely, Cornerstone needed a solution for its front desk receptionist challenge. After several attempts to hire full-time staff to effectively management visitor communication, Cornerstone turned to WinTech to install a new and highly innovative virtual receptionist that could be programmed to deliver the customer service and consistency the company needed. To complete this solution, Grandstream's UCM600 series IP PC was used to run this virtual receptionist and to handle voice and video calls.

Implementing ALICE with Grandstream's UCM6100 series IP BX has allowed Cornerstone to achieve return on investment (ROI) in approx. 3 months. Taking into account the annual salary of $30K for the lobby receptionist and the purchase of ALICE desktop system with Grandstream's UCM6100 series IP PBX integrated with no future upgrade or recurring annual fees into the solution, Cornerstone was able to achieve a 1-year savings of $23,500 for replacing one full-time receptionist (wages, benefits and healthcare). With no anticipated costs associated with maintaining ALICE or the UCM6100 series IP PBX, a 5-year outlook on costs savings will reach upwards to $141K.

Requiring only a minimum amount of training, Cornerstone employees took to using ALICE very easily. The option to answer a call with audio only or with audio and video provides a truly collaborative solution.

The integrated ALICE solution based on technology from WinTech and Grandstream also gives visitors a reliable, consistent experience along with the ability for Cornerstone to control how their image is being portrayed in the lobby area.

## Project Highlights

- 3-month ROI
- First year Cost Savings of $25K
- No on-site IT staff required to operate or maintain the system
- Able to connect visitors with on-site, out of office and remote workers
- Ability to lock down lobby area for security purposes
- Customizable video messages for branding and customer service