

## *IP Communications for Law Offices: An Appia Case Study*



Krieg DeVault LLP ([www.kriegdevault.com](http://www.kriegdevault.com)) is a 140-professional, diversified law firm representing a wide variety of local, regional and national clients. It is a business-focused law firm with offices in Indiana, Illinois, Georgia and Florida, and is routinely named one of the “Best Places to Work in Indiana.”

### **The Challenge**

Krieg DeVault had an aging PBX system connected to the firm’s three remote offices. “The phone system was coming to end of life,” said George Smith, the firm’s IT director.

The communications system was tested by disaster in 2006. “In April, the high rise we were in was hit by straight-line winds and we had to vacate our building for 12 weeks,” said Smith. “We have a remote office in our area and we went to that office, but the PBX system could not handle the 120 additional extensions we needed. The biggest challenge we faced during that situation was to give all of our staff access to a telephone.”

Understandably, disaster recovery was an important consideration when Krieg DeVault explored options for its new office in Noblesville, Indiana. The firm was also looking for features its PBX system did not offer, such as unified messaging, call history, and extension mobility.

“Scalability was also a driving force,” said Smith. Krieg DeVault needed a solution that would integrate with its existing PBX system, but still enable the firm to expand the system in the future to include its remote offices. They did not want to spend money at existing sites, but wanted a platform to build on.

“We opted to install the Appia solution in the new [Noblesville] office to test it out and to see how it worked,” said Smith. “A hosted solution made sense because it saved us on upfront costs.”



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## The Solution

Appia-hosted IP phones were installed at the Noblesville office, and an integrated access device was installed on the headquarters' PBX system. This solution allowed the old PBX to interface with the new IP voice equipment in Noblesville.

Krieg DeVault also added a second T-1 for redundancy. "If we were to lose one of the connections to the office, we can simply switch the voice and data to the other connection," said Smith. "This is part of the flexibility we did not have with our previous system."

## The Results

"As we gradually added more users to the IP voice system, we realized the benefits of that system," said Smith, including advantages such as extension mobility, caller ID and reduced long-distance costs. The attorneys are also using voicemail-to-email, which has enabled them to respond to client calls faster.

"Since management has lived through a disaster situation, they recognized the importance of disaster recovery," Smith said. "My firm has lived through this and they know that it can happen to them, because it *has* happened to them. Disaster recovery is very significant; we see that as value for the future."

## The Future

Krieg DeVault is in the process of migrating its entire voice system to Appia's hosted solution.

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