Network Computing Request for Information: **VoIP System**
Publication Date: **June 24, 2004**

I. Introduction

Network Computing's June 24, 2004 cover package will be devoted to the state of VoIP for smaller companies. Why should a 200-employee company buy your VoIP system rather than outsourcing its telecom needs? We're basing our analysis on a fictional 180-employee insurer that is moving into new offices (details below). If you would like to participate, please RSVP to the author, Peter Morrissey, by March 26, 2004, and return completed RFI to Peter by April 14.

A. Purpose

This Request for Information is proprietary to Network Computing and CMP Media, LLC. It is drafted and disseminated for the sole purpose of generating information on VoIP products for publication in Network Computing on June 24, 2004. Participating vendors must meet the minimum requirements for participation and agree that any information returned to Network Computing in response to this RFI will be published in print and electronic form on our Web site, www.networkcomputing.com.

B. Instructions

The following minimum requirements are essential to participate in this review. Please check all that apply.

Please note: Products proposed in this RFI **MUST** be shipping at time of your response. No beta products, please. We reserve the right to examine a test unit (either in our lab or at a customer site) of any product submitted.

___   System must support a minimum of 220 Ethernet-attached IP phones (180 employees plus room to grow. Please list maximum number of phones supported.)
___   All phones must support 802.3af
___   All phones must have two, 100 megabit ports
___   All phones must support 802.3q/p and either DiffServ- or TOS-based QOS
___   All responses must include Unified Messaging support
___   All responses must include ACD support
___   All responses must include Presence support
___   All responses must include support for Telecommuters

If you do not meet all of these criteria, your product does not meet the minimum qualifications for this review. Please RSVP to Peter Morrissey (pmorrissey@nwc.com, 315-443-2575). Thank you for your consideration.

If you respond to the RFI, please note the dates in Section C to complete the RFI on time for inclusion in our June 24, 2004 issue. We suggest you read through the entire RFI before answering questions. You can reference answers to other questions in the RFI using the section and question number. Please do not reference materials outside the RFI; incorporate them into your answers. This RFI will be the **only** source used to compare the participating products.

Questions provide for Yes/No checkbox answers. In addition, some questions require more detail using an essay format. **Essay-type questions include word-count limits. Any responses submitted beyond the limit may be disqualified**.

Please answer all questions as this information is the foundation on which we determine the winning bid and our Editor's Choice Award. If you have questions, please contact Peter Morrissey.

C. Effective Dates

RFI Issue Date: March 12, 2004
RSVP Deadline: Postmarked by March 26, 2004
RFI Deadline: Postmarked by April 14, 2004
Publication Date: June 24, 2004

II. Business Overview

HaveNoFear Insurance LLC insures the makers of reality television programs, including everything from Fear Factor to Candid Camera. The growing reality TV media phenomenon requires insurance due to the dangerous, high-risk activities that make these shows so popular. The likelihood of a lawsuit from a stunt gone wrong, or mental abuse and humiliation from another contestant or panelist is high. As a result, insuring the sponsors, producers and staff of these shows has become a high-growth area. HaveNoFear is growing quickly, but also faces stiff competition. As a result, actuaries, risk managers, loss control engineers, underwriters and legal counsel must work together to efficiently set premiums for new shows, sometimes on a stunt-by-stunt basis, while keeping the company's costs down. Case managers, customer service reps and claims adjusters have to work together to resolve claims in a timely manner.

The company plans to move its staff of 180 employees to larger headquarters and will require a new phone system. Upon occupying the building, HNF IT will install a high-bandwidth, high-quality LAN that will not be part of this RFI. While there are no satellite offices, about 20 employees telecommute from home, and 30 additional employees have offices at headquarters but also travel extensively and telecommute from home occasionally.

The company is seeking basic, reliable, cost-effective communications, but it is also interested in improving efficiency of staff interactions and optimizing business processes. Aside from traditional phone service, provided cost-effectively via VoIP, HNF is also interested in applications such as presence and unified messaging. The company hopes this new system will give it a competitive edge against larger, more well-established insurers who are increasingly attracted to the lucrative business of insuring those associated with reality TV.

III. HNF Business Essentials

A. Total employees: 180
B. Number working remotely: 50
C. Existing network infrastructure:

The network infrastructure will be LAN-based with Layer 2 and Layer 3 QoS enabled. There will be 100 megabit connections to desktops with 802.3af PoE support. A gigabit backbone will connect to the rest of the network. Assume that the network is more than adequate to support VoIP applications.

IV. Goals

The company hopes to keep costs low and improve productivity and its ability to compete.

V. Business Objectives

A. Improve internal communications
B. React quickly to new business prospects
C. Provide excellent customer support
D. Control costs

VI. Review Criteria:

The proposed solutions will be graded on the following criteria:

A. General Architecture

1. Provide a diagram of the major hardware and software components and how they are connected.

Provide the business case for your selection based on HaveNoFear's goals, objectives and business environment. You are free to include a competitive analysis. Please limit your answer to 500 words or fewer.

B. Phones

Basic phones for most employees. (These phones should be as low cost as possible while still containing required features)

1. Model of phone proposed: _____

2. Pricing per 100 phones including software licenses:_____

3. Insert picture of phone here:

4. Please verify support for the following required features:
__ 802.3af
__Two 100-megabit ports
__ 802.3q/p and either DiffServ- or TOS-based QOS

5. Please check features tied to hard key:

__Call transfer
__Call forwarding
__Call hold
__Volume control buttons

6. Please check additional features supported:

__Calling number & name on display
__Message-waiting indicator
__Backlit display
__Tiltable screen

7. Please fill in quantity:

Number of call appearances: ___
Number of bridged appearances: ___
Number of programmable keys: ___
Size of display: ___

8. List codecs available:

9. List codecs available with Voice Activity Detection/Silence Suppression:

2. Executive phones:

1. List model of phone proposed: _____

2. Pricing per 100 phones including software licenses:_____

3. Insert picture of phone here:

4. Please verify support for the following required features:
__ 802.3af
__Two 100 megabit ports
__ 802.3q/p and either DiffServ- or TOS-based QOS

5. Please check features tied to hard key:

__Call transfer
__Call forwarding
__Call hold
__Volume control buttons

6. Please check additional features supported:

__Calling number & name on display
__Message-waiting indicator
__Backlit display

__Tiltable screen

7. Please fill in quantity:

Number of call appearances: ___
Number of bridged appearances: ___
Number of programmable keys: ___
Size of display: ___

8. List codecs available:

9. List codecs available with Voice Activity Detection/Silence Suppression:

3. Attendant Consoles:

1. List model of phone proposed: _____

2. Pricing for two phones including software licenses:_____

3. Insert picture of phone here:

4 Please verify support for the following required features:
__ 802.3af
__Two 100-megabit ports
__ 802.3q/p and either DiffServ- or TOS-based QOS

5. Please check features tied to hard key:

__Call transfer
__Call forwarding
__Call hold
__Volume control buttons

6. Please check additional features supported:

__Calling number & name on display
__Message waiting indicator
__Backlit display
__Tiltable screen
__Direct trunk selection
__Incoming trunk display

7. Please fill in quantity:

Number of call appearances: ___
Number of bridged appearances: ___
Number of programmable keys: ___
Size of display: ___

8. List codecs available:

9. List codecs available with Voice Activity Detection/Silence Suppression:

4. Conference phones:

List model of phone proposed: _____

Pricing for five phones including software licenses:_____

Insert picture of phone here:

Describe major features of conference phone: Limit answer to 100 words.

5. Describe how software images are updated on phones in order to minimize management costs and disruption to end users. Maximum of 100 words.

Provide the business case for your phone selection based on HaveNoFear's goals, objectives, and business environment. Please limit your answer to 100 words.

C. PBX

Pricing for PBX with the following capacities and features checked below:
        300 IP phones
        50 telecommuters
        10 analog fax lines
        48 Inbound digital trunks with DID support
        35 Outbound digital trunks

1. PBX Model:_____
2. PBX Price:_____

3. Describe high- availability and redundancy features. Limit answer to 200 words:

4. Check the following features that are supported in the proposed system:

__Authorization codes
__Automatic callback
__Add-on conference
__Call waiting
__Paging
__Hoteling
__Automatic camp-on
__Automatic alternate routing
__Trunk callback queuing
__Uniform dial plan
__Night service
__E911 Support

__Class of service
__Class of restriction
__Intercom groups
__Group paging
__Directed call pickup
__Group call pickup
__Distinctive ring

5. Provide the business case for your selection based on HaveNoFear's goals, objectives, and business environment. You are free to include a competitive analysis. Limit response to 300 words.

D. Telecommuting:

Currently there are 20 employees who live in the area and want to telecommute from home via their broadband connections. The company wants to provide the flexibility for those in the call center to be able to work from home in a seamless manner. There will also be 30 additional telecommuters who also have office phones but spend a majority of their time on the road.

1. Provide name of telecommuting product:_____

2. Provide per employee price for telecommuting product:_____

3. Provide a diagram of your proposed telecommuting solution:

4. Describe how you provide this in a secure, functional environment. Limit response to 150 words.

E. Presence:

The second set of telecommuters mentioned above will need to be accessed as quickly as possible. There are also numerous other groups of individuals within the company who need to access each other at a moment's notice. The company would like the option of knowing the availability information of individuals, or groups of individuals, who can quickly be consulted or patched into a call to address problems via office phone, telecommuting phone, cell phone, IM or e-mail.

1. Indicate the product name or feature that provides this option:_____

2. Provide the price for this feature per 100 users:_____

3. Describe the hardware/software platform and requirements.

4. List the features available:

5. Describe how a user updates his or her own presence, for example, the application and rules available.

6. List enterprise IM products supported that will display presence information

7. List phones that will reveal presence information, and describe the presence information that they will reveal to presence application. Limit description to 100 words.

8. List desktop applications that reveal desktop presence, and how presence is monitored and revealed. For example, keystroke monitoring, application usage monitoring.

9. List groupware/calendaring systems that support user-driven status updates and describe their level of integration.

10. Provide screenshot of presence client interface.

11. Provide the business case for your selection based on HaveNoFear's goals, objectives, and business environment. You are free to include a competitive analysis. Limit response to 300 words

F. Conference Calls

Currently the company rents a conference bridge for conference calls. It would like three simultaneous conference bridges with 6 participants each.
Please describe the features and limitations of your system, including additional cost if necessary, that will allow the company to set up calls with one call-in number that will include external participants.

1. Indicate the product name or feature that provides this option:_____

2. Provide the per user price for this feature: _____

3. Describe how conference calls are set up and reserved. Limit response to 100 words.

G. Voice Mail

Approximately 50 hours of voicemail for 220 employees is requested. Please indicate the per user price of the voicemail and the maximum hours allowed.

1. Indicate the product name or feature that provides this option:_____

2. Provide the per user price for this feature plus maximum per user hours:_____

H. Unified Messaging

Employees rely on voicemail and e-mail for communications. HNF would like to simplify the process of retrieving voicemail and possibly provide more flexibility in retrieving e-mail. For this reason the company is investigating the possibility of integrating its voicemail system with a future new e-mail system. Please indicate which of the following features are supported:

1. Indicate the product name or feature that provides this option:_____

2. Provide the price for this feature or product per 100 employees:_____

3. Check all the features provided in the quoted product:

__Read voicemail messages from e-mail
__Caller ID information provided in header of e-mail
__Delete voicemail messages on voicemail system from e-mail
__Listen to e-mail messages from phone
__Delete e-mail from phone
__Forward e-mail messages from phone
__Forward e-mail messages from phone with comments

4. Describe any IVR or speech recognition capabilities that add value to the product. Limit response to 100 words.

5. List the e-mail packages that support the unified messaging feature

6. Provide additional comments as necessary. Limit comments to 100 words.

I. Application Integration

HNF is open to the possibility of realizing gains by integrating its phone system with business applications. The company will be investing upgrades to its business apps in the near future. It is currently interested in exploring the possibilities for integrating these apps with their VoIP system.

1. Please list the business applications that will integrate with your system, along with a brief summary.

2. List the software vendors not mentioned above with which you have established partnerships:

 3. Provide additional comments about the current or planned business value of support for third party integration. Limit response to 100 words.

J. Business Summary (Optional)

 You may use this section to summarize the business value that you are providing that you were not able to cover in any of the above sections. You may also use it to make additional recommendations or comments on the RFI. Limit your answer to 200 words.

J. Pricing Summary and Totals
Please include all costs incurred by HNF in incorporating your system.

1. Provide pricing summary for sections B – I, by section.

2. Provide all installation costs and maintenance costs

K. Distribution Channel

1. Is the system purchased through direct sale, resellers, and/or channel partners?
__ Direct sale
__ Resellers
__ Certified Resellers
__ Channel Partners
__ Other. Please explain:

VII. Vendor Information

1. How long have you been in business?

2. What is the size of your organization by number of employees?

3. How long has the product been shipping?

4. Do you provide onsite support for installation and configuration?

5. In how many cities do you provide onsite support?

6. List three enterprises that are currently using the proposed solution.