



# Seattle Pacific University Finds CallXpress® Scalable, Affordable, Easy to Use

*Seattle Pacific University needed a change from its communication system that was limited, difficult to manage and expensive. In its place, CallXpress unified messaging returns affordable scalability and effective integration for increased productivity and ease-of-use.*

Seattle Pacific University ([www.spu.edu](http://www.spu.edu)), founded in 1891, is a fully accredited Christian University of the liberal arts, sciences and professional studies. It employs approximately 550 faculty and staff members and instructs close to 3,800 students from across the U.S. and more than 20 international countries. Almost half of the students live on campus.

## CHALLENGE

Every day the Seattle Pacific University (SPU) network manages more than 150,000 inbound e-mails and thousands of calls or voicemail messages. Effective communication is essential for faculty and staff members who are, for instance, setting university policies or discussing curriculum. The same is true for students who “thrive on technology for instructional and entertainment purposes,” according to Dave Tindall, assistant vice president for technology services at SPU.

For 1,800 students living on campus, residence hall rooms are equipped with network and cable connections as well as phones supported by a voicemail system that features separate mailboxes for each individual student. Among other benefits, “Parents like the ability to leave personal messages that remain private,” Tindall said.

For years, SPU relied on an Octel system for its call processing and message management. Over time, according to Tindall, the system proved limited, and expensive to upgrade and expand. “We had a fairly limited number of ports and storage,” Tindall said. “Ports with Octel were overpriced and disk space that is relatively cheap (in general) was expensive.”

With Octel, shared mailboxes for students living on campus was possible, but it required tedious manual set-up. The IT staff needed a faster, easier way to connect a single inbound telephone to private mailboxes for up to six students.

Also, communication among SPU faculty, staff and students came to rely heavily on Microsoft® Exchange and Microsoft Office. “We are very Outlook-centric. Most faculty and staff members on campus virtually *live* in Outlook®,” Tindall explained. “The majority of day-to-day work and communication is shared via e-mail or voicemail.” As a result, the IT team wanted to migrate to a computer-based platform that operates within Microsoft Windows® and integrates with Exchange. Such a system supports unified messaging, the combination of voice, e-mail and fax messages in one location for convenient management. “Integrating to unified messaging was a natural for us,” Tindall said.

SPU set specific criteria for a replacement to its previous system. Among other requirements, the new system would easily accommodate student phone mailboxes, work well with Outlook and provide an easy transition for users.

## THE SOLUTION

In April 2001 SPU installed CallXpress from Applied Voice & Speech Technologies, Inc. (AVST). Since then, Tindall reported, “We’ve certainly seen return on investment and received great value from the investment.” Does CallXpress meet the aforementioned criteria? “CallXpress unified messaging works well,” Tindall said. “It aligns with features and functions of shared mailboxes, handles call processing, integrates

seamlessly with Exchange and provides easy transition and management.” SPU worked with TechLine Communications Inc., a Seattle-based systems integrator and professional services firm, to install CallXpress. Since CallXpress is PBX independent and capable of integrating with more than 250 traditional and IP phone systems, the team easily tied CallXpress to SPU’s Teltronix (formerly Harris) PBX.

**Integrated** – “We saw CallXpress in a class that was more forward-thinking as it related to unified messaging,” Tindall said. As the IT team searched for an effective integrated solution it found some vendors had products, but they were not as developed as CallXpress which provides integration with Microsoft Exchange, IBM Lotus® Notes® and other e-mail systems.

For SPU employees managing messages via Outlook, voicemails arrive as .WAV attachments and are listed directly alongside e-mails. “The ability for faculty and staff members to maintain, store, listen to, respond to and forward voicemails in the same manner as e-mails quickly caught on,” Tindall said. “It smooths out the process for those that live and breath in Outlook—when they see a voicemail, they can deal with it quickly.”

CallXpress also provides Octel specific integration components, including OctelNet networks for phased replacement of Octel systems, and an optional Octel Aria® telephone user interface for accessing messages.

**Scalable and Affordable** – Moving to a server-based platform allowed SPU to increase disk space and ports in dramatic numbers without the hefty price tag, according to Tindall. SPU expanded from its previous solution to 60 ports with its CallXpress system—and there is still plenty of room to grow. A single CallXpress server may support 144 ports per system, as many as 10,000 users in a single Windows 2000/2003 server platform.

Scalability is combined with other features for an affordable, but effective system. “We conducted a Request for Proposal and reviewed other systems,” Tindall said. “We found the runner-up—Octel Avaya—to be substantially more money for what I felt was an inferior platform. At that time, it wasn’t as developed for unified messaging as we had hoped.”

**Easy** – Setting-up and managing shared student voice mailboxes is simple in comparison to previous methods, Tindall related. “In a review we found CallXpress met

our needs perfectly. A main extension number can programmatically be set so individual boxes associated with specific residence hall rooms are automatically configured.” Setting-up mailboxes with CallXpress is a straightforward process of extracting data from an administration system and importing the information directly into CallXpress.

Tindall reported a comfortable transition from Octel to CallXpress for users and administrators “The fact that we hear virtually no complaints is indicative that it is (a technology enhancement) now taken for granted that causes no disruptions.” In fact, a recent system update was accomplished within a couple hours, early in the morning. “No one even knew about it,” Tindall said. “Running on the Windows server has proven to be robust and reliable.” The IT team stays current with updates and patches by subscribing to XpressCare, the CallXpress software maintenance program.

Overall, Tindall said, SPU doesn’t measure the ROI of CallXpress in dollars but in ease-of-use, service enhancement and its support of SPU’s mission for student growth. “It is an important communication piece we see as part of our tool belt (for meeting the university mission).”

## FOR MORE INFORMATION

**Applied Voice & Speech Technologies, Inc.** (“AVST”) is a leader in the unified communications (“UC”) marketplace uniquely combining the strengths of its world-class messaging platform, CallXpress®, with its speech-enabled call management module, Seneca™, to create a powerful, next-generation unified communications solution. The Company’s products are designed to scale and support organizations of all sizes. For more information contact: [www.avstgroup.com](http://www.avstgroup.com) or +1.949.699.2300.

**TechLine Communications** is a Seattle-based systems integrator and professional services firm specializing in the development and implementation of information management and enhanced messaging systems. For more information visit [www.techlineinc.com](http://www.techlineinc.com) and contact +1.206.527.3450.

