

# Using Collaboration Tools

*Laurel Grocery Company*

**John Hendrickson**

**Director of Information Services**



# About Laurel Grocery



- Family owned and operated since 1922
- Provides multiple services and products to over 400 independent grocery stores throughout South & Midwest
- Offerings include
  - Inventory management
  - Personnel/Benefits
  - Advertising
  - Accounting
  - Financial services

# Operational Challenges

- Geographically disparate customers
- Time-sensitive information that needs to be shared with customers
- No visibility into call center efficiency
- High support costs
  - Training
  - Merchandising
  - Accounting

# Technology Solution Phase 1

- Inter-Tel Converged Communications Platform
  - Increased communications capacity
  - Call transfers to appropriate staff regardless of location
  - Scalable to add new users & locations



# Technology Solution Phase 2

- Inter-Tel Call Center Suite
  - Monitors call center performance in real time
  - Efficiently allocates resources
  - Insures customer inquiries are answered quickly and completely



# Technology Solution

- Inter-Tel Remote Support
  - Allows collaboration between headquarters and stores to install and configure business-specific applications and software
    - Download updated pricing information
    - Training store employees on new applications and functionality
  - Correct computer problems such as virus eradication and protection

**All Done Remotely!**



# Implementation Challenges

- Setting up hunt groups to reflect previous functionality
  - Time-intensive processes needed to set up groups
  - Users were comfortable with previous functionality; had to develop similar user experience
- Network Security
  - Customers had varied degrees of security
  - Implemented a standardized approach to securing data safely through each firewall



# Implementation Challenges

- Standardizing data streams between locations
  - Had to develop automated processes to share data uniformly with customers and data center
  - Stores required immediate access to order/shipping data, pricing, etc.
  - API of application permitted the development of interfaces to facilitate data streams



# Results to Date

- Increased efficiencies

- Real-time communications between team members & customers
- Ability to quickly change pricing and other information with stores...from days to hours
- Ability to monitor and improve call center performance
- Fifty per cent reduction in travel costs to store locations
- More efficient network administration
- Faster training and support to customers

