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Cost-Saving Applications for Call Accounting in Today's Businesses

Call Accounting software was originally developed to control expensive long distance calls over 28 years ago. Long distance rates have dropped substantially since then and the main uses of Call Accounting have changed. Telecom is now considered one of the top five expenses in most companies. Business people and managers are now finding that they can do more than just track calls. Call Accounting systems can provide significant benefits to companies, including improved call traffic management, cost allocation, fraud & misuse detection and employee productivity management.

Use Call Accounting to detect fraud & misuse. Telephone fraud is a major concern to all telephony managers. With more PBX systems now connected to corporate networks (IP Phones, Trunks and gateways), telephone security is of real concern. According to the *Telecom Risk & Prevention Summit*, telecommunication fraud costs organizations over \$70 billion in fraudulent charges annually. If your phone system is compromised charges can amount rapidly. Most organizations protect their networks from outside attacks however there are always potential security vulnerabilities. A Call Accounting system with built-in fraud detection alerts you to fraud before the charges can get out of hand. Telecom experts suggest companies should review their Call Accounting reports on a daily basis to spot abnormal activity. Advanced systems feature built-in fraud detectors to email or SMS text you when preset fraud criteria are met or in the event of traffic pattern changes. Alerts could be based on:

- Calls exceeding a predetermined cost
- Long distance calls after business hours
- Any call made from unspecified or a reserved extensions
- And nearly any other set of criteria

Use Call Accounting to improve cost allocation. Traditionally, companies without Call Accounting treat all the telephony charges as a cost of doing business. Some organizations divide total costs evenly between departments. There is no accountability in either of these methods, and a department making hundreds of calls per day shouldn't be allocated the same costs as a department making a few calls a day. With a Call Accounting system you are able to analyze your phone usage and allocate costs to each department, division, or extension based on their actual usage.

Use Call Accounting to manage employee productivity. An organization's efficiency depends on employee. Payroll is one of the largest business expenses, and Call Accounting can ensure that you have adequate staffing, and that they are using the phones appropriately. With a Call Accounting system you can determine if sales persons are making their daily call quota, and if not, provide them with assistance. Call Accounting gives you hard numbers to base your decisions on, whether they be staffing, disciplinary, or otherwise.

Use Call Accounting to manage telephone traffic. A Call Accounting system can help managers optimize their trunking based on call volumes. If you are under-trunked you will be missing calls, reducing customer satisfaction, and losing business. A Call Accounting system will analyze your traffic to determine the required number of Trunks or PRI's for your site. You can run reports to determine if you are still adequately trunked as call volumes at your site increase.

Choose a Solution that is accurate, reliable and proven. Software updates are critical in maintaining Call Accounting accuracy. Area codes and exchanges in your area will be expanded yearly and Call Accounting software should be upgraded at least twice a year to get the most accurate charges. V&H coordinate billing based on your location is the most accurate for calculating actual call costs (and is what your telephone company uses), and your Call Accounting solution should provide this. There are many different Call Accounting choices, but few have been around long enough to be tried and proven in the business world.