



Computer Telephony Industry Application Profile: Real Estate

Doug Burger & Associates at RE/MAX Four Seasons Open New Doors to 24-Hour Business Opportunities and Better Service with Artisoft's Award-Winning TeleVantage

In the world of real estate, calls are critical, and Artisoft's TeleVantage software-based phone system opens new doors for real estate agents and teams, allowing them to treat each client uniquely while remaining in control of their own time. Whether real estate agents work as a team or as individuals, on the road or in an office, timing is essential. TeleVantage allows real estate professionals to stay in touch with important clients through call control and personalized options. Agents who use TeleVantage never miss a call, stay connected and ultimately expedite the selling process, maximizing revenues and ensuring excellence for clients as they complete their business transactions. Since implementing TeleVantage, Doug Burger & Associates has experienced a phenomenal sales growth, and its commitment to answer every call promptly garnered the Olympia, Wash.-based RE/MAX Four Seasons Associate Broker recognition as one of the top RE/MAX Teams in the nation.

Problem

- The old proprietary phone system was stifling growth, losing off-hours calls and limiting voice mail capability.
- The phone system did not have any advanced routing options or an extensive voice-mail menu; many important calls were lost.
- Doug Burger & Associates could not provide any information or messages to inbound callers as they waited on hold.

Solution

- Doug Burger & Associates at RE/MAX Four Seasons implemented Artisoft's TeleVantage, a software-based phone system.
- TeleVantage allowed the company to set up multiple ACD queues and an off-hours auto attendant to ensure that all incoming calls were answered appropriately.
- TeleVantage allowed testimonials from satisfied clients to play for new customers waiting on hold.

Result

- Doug Burger & Associates at RE/MAX Four Seasons achieved phenomenal sales growth due to calls received and responded to during non-business hours.
- TeleVantage consolidated the need for multiple numbers; now customers use one convenient number to keep in touch with the RE/MAX team.
- Doug Burger & Associates is now ranked among the top RE/MAX teams in the country.

Artisoft's TeleVantage Offers Real Estate Offices a Complete Solution

Doug Burger, the team leader, was familiar with the cost of missing important calls. Previously, his phone system within RE/MAX Four Seasons was costing him thousands of dollars in lost commissions because it did not allow him to answer incoming calls promptly. Calls to the business were unanswered or abandoned after lengthy hold times, and messages were inaccurate, lost or never taken.

Heavy direct advertising, as well as the business's excellent reputation, caused calls from prospects inquiring about properties to pour into the RE/MAX team's office, but Burger soon realized that the old phone system was jeopardizing his company's image as a business that always provided prompt service. "As the business grew, I realized that I had to gain control of the phone system in order to have the flexibility I needed to give our customers the 24-hour service they deserve."

Armed with a list of his key requirements, Burger started the search for an affordable phone system that would continue to meet the company's needs as it grew and expanded. The new phone system would have to provide advanced routing features, so that any call, at any hour of the day, could get through to the appropriate person. A controllable system that would allow the company to make changes in its own way and on its own time was another necessity.

Ultimately, Artisoft's TeleVantage was chosen because of its ability to route calls efficiently at any time of day and help ensure quality service through customized menu options and specialized voice greetings. TeleVantage also enhances the office's professional image with recorded client testimonials that play for potential buyers and sellers while they wait on hold.

RE/MAX



Capturing Off-Hours Calls Ensures 24-hour Service

With the old phone system, clients were frequently deferred to an answering machine during non-business hours, which significantly reduced the possibility of sales. In the real estate market, timing is everything, and letting eight or 10 hours pass without returning a call from potential buyers or sellers can result in missed opportunities.

For Doug Burger, the key to success is the ability to answer calls quickly and route them effectively using TeleVantage. The automatic call routing options are easy to establish and TeleVantage automatically switches between day and night routing patterns. Burger has found the after-hours routing most helpful for capturing new opportunities. He has set up an auto attendant with a number of menu choices, the first of which reflects the most important category: a potential buyer.

Taking and Making Calls on the Go Easier

For Burger's RE/MAX team, being out of the office doesn't mean being out of touch. All of the agents require flexibility in communications to win and close business. When team members are out of the office, each person routes calls to a forwarding number such as a cell phone. In addition to smart call forwarding, TeleVantage has a pager feature that can be activated to automatically signal a pager in cases where the cell phone is not reachable or when someone leaves a voice message. Team members profit from being able to change call-forwarding options from the road or in the office. As their schedules and locations change, they modify the way their calls are routed, giving themselves complete flexibility to conduct business effectively independent of their locations.

While on the go, the team also finds that the ability to make an automatic return call while listening to a voice message is a tremendous advantage in efficiency and convenience. This time-saving feature allows a user to respond to voice mail immediately with the touch of one button, without initiating a new call or scrambling for a pen, address book, or pocket organizer. Making an automatic call back saves money and improves driver safety for road warriors who check their messages while driving. Since the team interacts closely and is always on the go, the agents "can't imagine working without TeleVantage" and say that it is probably the best tool they have in the office.

Clients Get Specialized Attention

Because Burger's team uses the forwarding options of TeleVantage, clients have one number that always

reaches their agents, at home, in the office or on the road — and the customer never knows the difference. If a team member cannot answer his phone, he can leave personalized recorded messages for any contact number he has designated. Doug Burger & Associates may also include group greetings for clients who are thinking of purchasing soon or specific groups of clients eager to hear a particular piece of information.

This RE/MAX team has also customized the message on hold that customers hear while waiting to be transferred. Clients get to hear real customer testimonials recorded in the customers' own voices. The testimonials attest to the team's professionalism and courtesy. The feedback from new clients has been excellent — they are impressed that such personalized references are so readily available.

Easy-to-Use Features Maximize Investment

Burger found that teaching his employees about the new phone system was quick and painless. In addition to managing calls and messages via the phone keypad, TeleVantage shows calls on a PC monitor, allowing agents to see their messages onscreen, using the TeleVantage graphical user interface (GUI). The office is very dependent on its e-mail system and since TeleVantage follows a Windows-based format, users were pleasantly surprised by its familiar look and feel. The agents on Burger's team agree: "It's very intuitive, and it makes a lot of sense."

TeleVantage Provides The Best Value

Not only does TeleVantage deliver a wealth of intelligent features, but it is also surprisingly affordable, compared to a traditional proprietary phone system. Because it works with any telephone handset or headset, existing equipment can be used, and new handsets need not be expensive. Advanced features are included with the system at no extra cost, and its easy administration reduces the need for service fees. System upgrades are especially cost-effective because new features and functionality are as simple and easy as a software upgrade.

TeleVantage met Doug Burger & Associates' requirement for longevity because of its flexibility in hardware options and adaptability to emerging technology. In the future, Burger plans to integrate TeleVantage with his contact management system for unified e-mail, voice mail, and outbound direct-mail marketing campaigns. TeleVantage opens the door to a wealth of new opportunities. According to Burger, "Once you start using it, your mind just takes off, thinking of numerous things you can do with TeleVantage. It has all the flexibility we need."

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*Doug Burger
Team Leader*



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