



**LIGHTBOUND**  
INTEGRATED VOICE

# CASE STUDY: Huntington University

*When ongoing development is your mission*



“BY FAR, THE PEOPLE HAVE BEEN THE BEST. WE KNOW OUR ACCOUNT REPS BY NAME, AND THEY CARE ABOUT US. WE ALWAYS GET MORE THAN WE EXPECT FROM THEM. LIGHTBOUND FEELS LIKE A PART OF THE HUNTINGTON FAMILY.”

Adam Skiles, DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICES



## A LEARNING ORGANIZATION

Huntington University is a Christian liberal arts college that provides over 70 programs of study, including undergraduate and graduate degree programs. It has a small student/faculty ratio and, according to national student satisfaction surveys, delivers one of the best college experiences in the country. Like any complex organization, fluid communications are the foundation for its success. Everything flows through the university's phone system, and it directly influences the experience of students, donors, faculty, and staff. The school's demanding end-users expect a best-in-class system, with features designed to support their productivity as well as quality they can depend on.

“OUR MISSION IS REALLY TO IMPART A LOVE OF LEARNING SO THAT OUR STUDENTS CAN ADAPT WELL TO A QUICKLY CHANGING WORLD. THIS DRIVES WHAT WE EXPECT FROM OUR BUSINESS PARTNERS AS WELL. WE NEED AGILE PARTNERS THAT WILL CHALLENGE US TO BE BETTER AND GROW WITH US.”

Adam Skiles, DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICES



## TIME FOR A CHANGE

Huntington University's prior voice system was aging and increasingly not able to meet the needs of a growing institution of higher education. The world of telecommunications is constantly evolving - as are the expectations of users. Outdated systems not only cost a university time and money while frustrating users, but they can more broadly impact the university's competitiveness and overall brand.

When the team at Huntington reached out to their vendor to see what could be done, they were disappointed by the lack of commitment to make any change. They were also disappointed with the service and support received from this national vendor. Realizing that they needed to make a change, they explored the market to identify a partner that would challenge them to do things differently – both in terms of how they operate and the services they provide to faculty, staff, and students.

“WORKING IN IT FOR YEARS, I’VE WORKED ON MANY RFPS AND CONTRACTS. I WANTED ALL OF MY VOICE UNDER ONE VENDOR, AND I DIDN’T WANT TO HAVE TO SWITCH VENDORS AGAIN IN FIVE YEARS. WE NEEDED A PARTNER THAT WOULD NOT ONLY MEET OUR NEEDS TODAY BUT WOULD ALSO BE THERE WITH US IN A DECADE.”

Adam Skiles, DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICES



## THE SEARCH FOR FUNCTION AND SERVICE

When it came to the ideal new voice system, first and foremost, the team wanted to have more control. The IT team wanted to be empowered to manage aspects of the system themselves, allowing our support team to quickly resolve any issues and provide better customer service for our users. Likewise, they wanted end users to be able to manage their personal use of the system with ease.

A new system also needed to provide all of the modern features users have come to expect. This includes the ability to access voicemail and phone systems remotely as well as better handsets and overall quality. Additionally, an outsourced cloud-based system would allow Huntington to move from a large capital expense to a more manageable business expense while also freeing up internal bandwidth to support other in-house services.

The team at Huntington started out by looking at several national vendors, of which LightBound was not yet included. Initially, they kept their search to national vendors, thinking that would best support their expansion to a second location across the country in Arizona. They signed a contract with a new vendor but were disappointed when service expectations started to fall apart just six months in.

This unfortunate experience led them to re-evaluate their needs and place more importance on a potential vendor's service model. They decided to consider other vendors with similar backend systems but more customer-focused service models. This search led them to LightBound.



LightBound was able to present a solution that met all of their core requirements while also uniquely delivering on superior reliability, easier adoption, and faster resolutions times. While located in the Midwest, their solution was easily scalable and accessible from anywhere. However, perhaps most importantly, LightBound was willing to adapt their standard offering to better meet Huntington's needs in Arizona – all within desired budget.

“MUCH OF THE TECHNOLOGY ACROSS VENDORS IS SIMILAR. OF COURSE, YOU NEED THE RIGHT FEATURES AND FUNCTIONS, BUT WE LOOKED FOR WHO WAS GOING TO HELP US STRATEGICALLY MOVE TOWARDS OUR LONG-TERM GOALS. WE WANTED A TRUE PARTNER, AND IT WAS CLEAR RIGHT AWAY THAT LIGHTBOUND'S COMMITMENT TO PARTNERSHIP DOESN'T STOP ONCE THE AGREEMENT IS SIGNED. THEY WERE AND CONTINUE TO BE INVESTED IN PROVIDING A TRUE SOLUTION FOR US.”

Adam Skiles, DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICES



## POISED FOR THE FUTURE

During the transition process, LightBound worked with Huntington to troubleshoot data quality issues from their previous vendor. Equipment upgrades and onsite training went smoothly and were well-received by end-users. The IT team reports that if they have a question or minor issue, it is addressed in a timely manner.

Overall, support of the system is less of a burden on IT staff and end users receive reliable, high-quality service. When a faculty survey in the spring of 2018 asked which university services they were most satisfied with, IT services was named #1!

LightBound's Hosted PBX Solution is the last phone system Huntington will ever have to purchase. While keeping up-front costs to a minimum, it's cloud-based and continually updated to ensure it will continue to grow with the organization.

The web portals make voice management easy for end-users and administration. Productivity features such as instant messaging, visual voicemail, call forwarding, video calling, and click-to-dial within Outlook have been hits with Huntington's users.

However, ultimately, Huntington chose LightBound because of the people. Being able to call on someone they know by name who can address any issues related to their voice solutions at any of their locations, has been the key to their success. With LightBound, the Arizona location feels like it is part of the same environment, receiving the same high level of service. In fact, a sub-leaser in their Arizona building compared LightBound's price and services to other options in the local area and also selected LightBound!

"LIGHTBOUND'S SERVICES ALLOW US TO BE MORE FLEXIBLE AND NIMBLE AS AN ORGANIZATION. WITHOUT IT, OUR VENTURE TO ARIZONA WOULD HAVE BEEN MORE COSTLY AND DIFFICULT. WE'RE NOW ADDING A NEW BUILDING, AND THE PROCESS OF SCALING OUR VOICE SYSTEM AS WE GROW IS SEAMLESS."

Adam Skiles, DIRECTOR OF IT SERVICES

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P 800.844.8649 - 731 W. Henry Street, Suite 200 Indianapolis, IN 46225 - [LIGHTBOUND.COM](http://LIGHTBOUND.COM)