



# AltiGen Communications Case Study

## Client

## New Era Cap

### Customer Profile:

It's not a cap - it's a flag. To all of you who are fanatical about sports, New Era Cap is right there with you. And while they love sports, what they are really fanatical about is caps. Even the people living in the small town of Derby in Western New York, the site where New Era Cap's corporate headquarters is located, are fanatical about sports. It's been that way since 1920 when the company was founded. Back in the days before the designated hitter rule, New Era Cap's founder, Ehrhardt Koch, had ideas on how to improve the original baseball cap, but his employer at the time wouldn't hear it. So Ehrhardt started his own company and little did he know at the time that it would begin a 'new era' of sporting style.

New Era Cap began operations in 1920 at one main office location. And oh how they have grown. 83 years later, New Era Cap has grown operations from manufacturing one skullcap style at one production plant, to shipping a full range of low, mid, and professional cap profiles from 5 manufacturing plants and 2 distribution centers. In 1954, they introduced the "Brooklyn-style" cap, also known as the 59Fifty. This cap quickly became, and remains, the standard for baseball and is the official equipment for all 186 teams in both the Major and Minor Leagues. Now shipping over 20 million caps per year, New Era Cap is not just fanatical about caps; they are honored to be a part of sporting history.

### Telephony Challenge:

When New Era Cap was founded in 1920, they began operations with just a handful of people working out of one manufacturing location. Since that time the company has expanded to now include over 1700 employees with 2 manufacturing plants in New York and 3 plants in Alabama. New Era Cap's telephony challenges first began when they expanded operations into their second location. At that time, the corporate headquarters was using an outdated PBX telephone system that had very limited voice mail capabilities. This newly acquired location did not have a business telephone system and was only equipped with a few phone lines coming in directly from the central office. New Era Cap needed the telephone functionality necessary at the new location to support effective business communications. In addition, about 3 ½ years ago, their telephony challenge intensified when New Era Cap expanded operations into Alabama. At that time, New Era Cap realized that in order to improve business efficiency, they would need to strengthen their telephony infrastructure and unify the communications of the entire organization.

New Era Cap began looking at telephony solutions that could assist them in accomplishing the goals they had established to improve communications. Over the next 6 months, New Era Cap began working with Advance2000, a local AltiGen Authorized Reseller in the New York area. The process began by researching multiple types of solutions, from traditional PBX systems to the latest in Voice over IP telephone system technology. Advance2000 was able to demonstrate the powerful functionality and the cost savings of implementing an IP-PBX solution.

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Therefore, after reviewing all the telecommunication challenges set before them, New Era Cap recognized the benefits of an IP-PBX solution in a multi-office environment and decided that the AltiGen solution would be the best phone system to meet the needs of their expanding business.

### Installed AltiGen Solution:

AltiGen's IP-PBX was ideal in meeting New Era Cap's expansion, self-maintenance and customer service requirements. New Era Cap has the AltiGen solution implemented at five of their seven locations across the United States, Canada, and now Europe. Each location utilizes AltiGen's T1/PRI capabilities and is seamlessly integrated with the other office locations and manufacturing plants via AltiGen's VoIP technology. Connectivity between locations is accomplished on a VPN via WEB DS1 circuits with Cisco routers.

Implementing AltiGen's Voice over IP capabilities has resulted in a tremendous reduction in the total voice communication and maintenance costs for the entire organization. Interoffice call routing, unified dialing and voice mail messaging are now transparent on the AltiGen systems. In addition, New Era Cap can now centrally manage and synchronize their multiple systems using AltiGen's DINA multi-system administrative manager. To improve customer service, each New Era receptionist uses AltiConsole, AltiGen's operator attendant console, and can effectively manage the 800+ physical extensions being used by the employees. New Era Cap has also implemented AltiGen's Contact Center solution. Every contact center agent is using AltiGen's AltiAgent desktop interface to provide them with information about contact center activity and to cut down on the time it takes them to assist customers calling into the center.

### Benefits, Feedback, & Results:

The purchase of a new phone system was a strategic, corporate decision for New Era Cap. Like any organization, New Era Cap was looking for the highest possible initial value and a strong Return on Investment (ROI). Shortly after New Era Cap implemented the AltiGen solution at each of their business locations, they began realizing the benefits and costs savings. Utilizing the AltiGen solution, New Era Cap can now make their own Moves, Adds, and Changes (MACs) such as the common tasks of adding a new extension, relocating employees to different desks, changing the routing and adjusting the number of agents participating in a contact center.

According to Dan Marmion, New Era Cap's Chief Information Officer and Vice President of IS, *"An average cost to activate a port, move an extension, make a change to a prompt or greeting for the operator from our old vendor was \$100 every time we made a call. We made 21 of those calls in the year 2000 ranging from \$100 to \$400 a call. Since we implemented the AltiGen solution, New Era is now self sufficient with making these simple moves, adds, and changes and it is estimated that we have saved over \$5000 in the past year alone as a result."* Eliminating the need to call a technician every time a change needs to be made has driven down the total cost of owning the AltiGen system. Dan Marmion outlined their cost savings indicating that, *"With our old system, one year of maintenance on phones, at just one facility, was \$12,814. Now, one year of maintenance for parts at five facilities and part/labor at our two local facilities, is only \$8736."*

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### Unexpected Benefits:

Using the AltiGen solution has also supported New Era Cap's development and management of strong, long-term customer relationships. Before implementing AltiGen, New Era Cap did not have the personnel organization to efficiently assist their customers. By implementing AltiGen's contact center solution, New Era Cap has revolutionized the way they service their customers. By utilizing the powerful contact center functionality, New Era Cap now has a 45 agent contact center, staffed not only to assist customers with order placing, processing, and tracking but to also help foster customer loyalty and build strong customer relationships.

Using the AltiGen solution, New Era Cap is able to accomplish their customer service goals. With sales representatives separated into groups that are responsible for different geographical territories throughout the United States and Internationally, every New Era Cap customer call can now be quickly routed to the appropriate sales representative for efficient call handling and service. Additionally, the contact center agents are using Microsoft's Outlook™ to help manage their contact with clients. Integration with Outlook is quick, seamless and is provided out-of-the-box with every AltiGen system shipped so the integration of Microsoft's Outlook program did not cost New Era Cap a dime. By integrating the AltiGen systems with their Outlook contact management tool, New Era Cap can now contribute to the bottom line every month by improving the overall efficiency and productivity of every customer interaction.

### Dealer Value:

Brian Maouad, Owner and President of Advance2000, has been a long-time Authorized AltiGen Reseller in the New York market. Their dedication to AltiGen and commitment to excellence is the foundation for their tremendous success in delivering IP-PBX communication solutions. New Era Cap has been working with the Advance2000 team since they first installed their AltiGen system approximately three years ago. Dan Marmion indicated that, *"Advance2000's professionalism and success in demonstrating the benefits and value of AltiGen's IP-PBX, played a large part in our decision making process."* Dan also indicated, *"New Era Cap was very impressed with the strength of Advance2000's site references. With the importance our organization places on quality vendor relationships, this really help put New Era Cap over the top and allowed us to make a decision to take advantage of the cost savings and telecommunication benefits that the AltiGen solution could provide our business."*

### Dealer Contact Information

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