

Avaya Demystified  
by Walt Medak

Q: We have several different operators who staff our attendant console at various times during the day. Some of them prefer to use the physical console telephone set, while others prefer the IP Soft Console. I'm having trouble figuring out an easy way for the operators to be able to switch between the two. I've tried setting up a combination of hunt groups and coverage paths, but can't seem to make it work the way they would like. Is there an easy way to accomplish this?

A: There is a configuration that we have used for a number of similar situations. For example, sending calls to a different number if a group has a meeting, or the business has to be closed at a time during otherwise normal business hours. I think it would work fine for your situation as well.

What you can do is set up a new ACD hunt group with one member. In your existing attendant vector, insert a step immediately before you route the call to your primary attendant position, which in this case we'll say is the physical console phone. That step would check for "*staffed-agents*" in your new hunt group. If it sees that the new agent is logged in, it would send the call to a step further down in the vector that would route the call to the Soft Console. The operators would simply have to log the new agent in when they want the calls to go to the Soft Console, and back out when they want to use the physical console phone. You could set up a couple abbreviated dial buttons on the console to manage the log in and log out functions.

Q: I have been trying to set up a better way for our IT help desk to be able to answer calls. I set up a DID extension number as a station with a coverage path to the first two people I want to answer the calls, and then to voice mail. I then tried to add another station by adding another coverage path. It works when the call comes from the outside. However, if someone internal calls the group using the same extension number being called via the outside DID number, it never goes to voicemail. What can I do to fix it so both internal and external calls work the same way?

A: At first I thought the problem would have been something simple like one of the coverage paths wasn't programmed the same for internal and external calls. But, after checking those out I can see that isn't the problem. I set up a test in our lab and was able to duplicate your scenario exactly. Internal and external calls behaved differently. However, I think this is a fairly inefficient way to program calls to ring to your group anyway. Since you already have all of the options turned on for ACD and vectoring, it would be much better to create an ACD group and have your help desk staff log in and take calls in a call center type environment. You can program the vector to wait a specific amount of time to see if one of your staff becomes available to answer a call before sending the caller to voicemail. This also eliminates the multiple coverage path issues. The only downside, if you can call it that, is this will take a little training and supervision to make sure they understand and maintain their log in and work status buttons, but calls will be handled much more efficiently.

And as always, if questions please call 800-452-6477.