Definity-G(x) Demystified:
By Walt Medak

Q: We are about to add another Definity system, which we intend to network to our current one. It is a secondary market purchase, so we are attempting the software implementation ourselves. We are also going to have to change our dial-plan from 3-digit to 4-digit dialing in order to utilize DCS and UDP. Is there an easy way to accomplish this without hand-entering each extension number, and if not, and we have to do it that way, are there any pitfalls you know of we need to avoid?

A: You are attempting a courageous mission, but one that's easy to perform with some time, patience and with paying detailed attention to the following steps. First, there is no fast and easy way (other than letting us do it for you), but it's not difficult either. I would suggest to first print-out all existing stations, data-modules, hunt-groups, terminating-extension-groups, and vector-directory-numbers (i.e., "display station 200 count 1000 print"), and for quick reference, a "list station print". You will loose the personal-abbreviated-dialing lists of the stations, and if you want to re-enter them for the 4-digit stations, you will need to print them out, too. Then, beginning with the first extension, give the command "list groups-of-extension (extension number)", and note what groups the extension belongs to, as you will have to put the new 4-digit extension back in that group (this is probably the most forgotten step, and causes more problems than all the rest combined). Then "duplicate station (station number)" and add the new 4-digit station number with a port assignment of "x" and the same name as the 3-digit station. Next do a "remove station (3-digit station number) AND NOTE THE PORT NUMBER BEFORE PRESSING "ENTER" to remove the station. Then "change station (new 4-digit station number)" and add the port that was on the 3-digit station in place of the "x" you originally entered. It is at this point you must go to the groups the station belonged to and enter the 4-digit station to them, if any, and don't forget the personal-abbreviated-dialing lists if you are going to replace them. I would be happy to discuss this with you if it's too convoluted here; just call.

Q: We experienced a power failure, and now our Attendant Console isn't able to forward calls for our president and sales manager as it did previously. We have looked at the software assignments for "Attendant 1", and it all looks the same as the print-out we have of it when it was installed. What else can we look for?

A: You probably won't find anything wrong with the software for "Attendant 1", or anywhere else. Power failures can cause strange problems, some from which you will never recover without replacing costly hardware. In your case, however, I would bet you will recover by simply powering-down your system, waiting a minute or so, and powering it back up. DON'T FORGET TO SHUT DOWN YOUR DEFINITY AUDIX <u>FIRST</u>, if you have one.

Q: We have a System75 that was removed from an office we closed some time ago, and now want to install it in another location. Our account rep has told us we will need to upgrade to a Definity-G3V8 because there is no North American Numbering Plan in our ARS. Is this the only thing we can do with our System75?

A: Not by my standards. I felt the NANP upgrades were about 50% useless at the time everyone was scrambling to get upgraded before the NANP axe fell. First, remember ARS lost it's usefulness for it's intended purpose when long-distance network providers gained the "PIC" capabilities. It does have a good means of restricting calling, but there is another method that was intended for that very purpose, so ARS isn't really necessary for that. There was a time when it was normal procedure to dial a 9 for local, and an 8 for long-distance. If you institute that criteria (only needed if you have long-distance provided over a different trunk group than the local trunk group), then you have no need of ARS whatsoever if you give the local trunk group a TAC of "9" and the long-distance trunk group a TAC of "8". Remove it. Get rid of it. Kill it. 'Nuf said? Now use your System75 for at least the next five or more years and spend your telecommunications budget on necessary things.

Q: We constantly hear about the TCP/IP capabilities of the Definity G3v8 and wonder what we are loosing if we don't upgrade to it. What's your opinion?

A: I view it about the same as Video Tele-Conferencing. Did you install one? If you did, you're probably among the 70% who hardly ever use it, and maybe among the many who have disconnected it. If you didn't, have you missed it? Probably not. The attribute of TCP/IP is it's functionality over your LAN.

That means you can send your voice calls over the same wiring that your PC network uses. If you are a Mega-Corporation with a new installation of a campus somewhere, that's probably an option to consider. If you are a Mid-to-Large Corporation, even if you are contemplating moving to a new location, do you know how much wiring you can install for the cost of an upgrade and the hardware necessary for your Definity to become LAN compatible? I think TCP/IP is going to be a thing for all end-users to consider one day, but I don't think that day has arrived yet for the masses. It's another of those "bleeding edge" commodities at this time that's probably best left to those who have bulging budgets and a curiosity that dictates living on that "bleeding edge". Someday, however, even I will join 'em, I bet.