Definity-G(x) Demystified:
By Walt Medak

Because I am late in getting this issue to the publisher, and because some questions never get old, I am putting this column together by revisiting some previously printed topics. Please excuse the reprise if you have already read them, and I hope most, if not all of you will find them interestingly informational.

Q: As the administrator for our Definity PBX, on occasion, I would dial into the system from my home to make minor changes and additions. Since our system was upgraded last spring, I haven't been able to do this. I get a message to the effect that I am now denied that access. Do I have to activate something in software to regain permission to dial into my system?

A: You have been treated to one of the "enhancements" of the newer Definity software releases. I bet you thought all of those enhancements were supposed to benefit you, didn't you? Sorry! It would seem that's one of the benefits the O.E.M. included for their advantage. You must contact them and have them activate that for you in the "system maintenance" screen. For some unimaginable reason, they have defaulted your access to your system as denied when trying to access it via the INADS port. It has been noted on most occasions when a company decides to change maintenance providers, or is self maintained, they change that ability back to "no", along with the ability to have "craft" permissions on the "cust" logins removed. On the face of it, it would appear that anyone without *their* maintenance program is being punished, presumably to encourage them to return to the flock. If this is your predicament, try to find a provider in your area to help you resolve it. *There are great <u>new and inexpensive</u> PBX access devices utilizing TCP/IP now on the market to help with this problem, and at greater speeds than the INADS port*.

Q: We have been told by our vendor that they need to have the dial-up line connected to our system in order for them to be able to properly service our system. In the past, we have disconnected that line to prevent unauthorized access. How can we prevent unauthorized access, and still comply with our vendor's requirement?

A: There are a couple of ways. First, you can control access with a switch that disconnects the line in one position and connects it in the other position. This would require that your vendor call you each time they want to dial into your system, and may not be suitable for their purposes. This also negates the ability of your system to dial out and report a maintenance diagnostic error. The best way, is with a security device installed ahead of the PBX on the INADS line. There are varying degrees of sophistication with these devices. One, called "The Stick", gives a fairly simple password protection ahead of the normal login and password of the PBX. Another, and probably the best, is the one distributed by Lucent known as their "RPSD" (Remote Port Security Device). It uses a very sophisticated algorithm based on a very long PIN that needs to be programmed in both their "Lock" and "Key", and if not matched, will deny access. It is also available on the secondary market, but you will find it difficult to find a vendor that knows much about them. It's a good barometer for determining the proficiency of vendors, too!

Q: Is there any way we can forward voice mail messages between our Definity Audix system at our corporate office, and our DuVoice system located on our Definity at another site?

A: Both of those systems support the AMIS protocol, which was designed specifically for what you are trying to do. AMIS (Audio Messaging Interchange Specification) basically places a call from one voice mail system to the other, accesses the proper mailbox, and the transferring system plays the message while the other system records it via a plain old telephone call. It seems to have a bad rap as an archaic method, but those systems we have implemented were very successful, especially in light of the nominal cost compared to digitally networking two Audix systems. AMIS is an underused and mostly unknown method of transferring messages between systems, and based on our luck with using it, we highly recommend trying it.

Q: Our AUDIX Small 8.2 is serving us well, but we have been told by Lucent/Avaya that we will not be supported any longer. What is the secondary market doing for its support, if anything?

A: Happily, upon the notification you mention, the secondary market is awash with hardware and knowledge to support the AUDIX Small (or Large, for that matter) in any software release for years to come. I say "happily", for the hundreds of secondary market Distributors and Dealers are delighted it is

being abandoned by Lucent/Avaya. That system is, as it has for years, functioning quite well, and serving the needs of the end users needing only voice-mail and/or automated attendant. From here on out, the upgrading to more storage and ports will only get more economical, as many who were scared into upgrading to Intuity Audix have traded-in their old systems, and Lucent/Avaya has auctioned them to the secondary market distributors, and this has caused the pricing to drop significantly. It's a great place to stay for quite awhile if you don't need any other options than voice-mail or auto-attendant, or need to be on the "bleeding edge". All that is necessary is to scan the advertisements in Telecom Reseller to find a secondary market dealer who will, if not themselves, refer you to a dealer who can support you as well, if not better, than you currently enjoy (enjoy?…… whatever!).