

Definity-G(x) Demystified:  
By Walt Medak

**NOTE:** HAPPY 2000! Now that we have the Y2K scare behind us, we can laugh at how silly it all was. Some of us may have stronger words for it than just “silly”. If you were among those who upgraded your system(s) because of marketing fear tactics, you may just be angered to the max! As we predicted in the October/November edition of this column, it seems there was surely no reason to upgrade the AUDIX-Small (R1V1) because of Y2K incompatibility. As a matter of fact, I was treated a view of the OEM’s letter dated December 20, 1999 that, behind all of the possibly obligatory nonsense phraseology, the message essentially was that if you left your AUDIX-Small alone, and if it were synchronized to the PBX as it should be, it would roll-over to the correct date and day, with the possible exception of the year. The year? Who the @#\$\$%^ cares about the year?

I find it curious that with eleven days left in the year that this information was released only then. Why was it that it was not released earlier in the year while most end-users were making their Y2K decisions? As a matter of fact, I have been told by several that earlier in the year they had received communications from the OEM that were definitively to the contrary. If this were contrived, it is an absolute crime! If it was not, their left hand is unaware of what their right hand was doing, and thus, you, the end-user must be a better informed consumer, as it would seem that depending on the OEM for your consulting needs is tantamount to entrusting the henhouse to the fox.

Another thing I am finding curious is the rapid upgrading of Definity-G3(x)V6, and lower, systems to V7. I have not been privy to all of the comparison tables evaluating the various versions, nor do I have any knowledge of the pricing therein, so there may well be reasons for the upgrades for the end-user. What I have noticed, however, is that with the V7 the OEM has not only protected their software initialization login from entry into the system with a front-end “Challenge” of a 20-digit “Pin” number (which is understandable), but they have also placed the “Challenge” to any login that gives the capability of system maintenance. This, in effect, negates the ability of your using anybody but them for your maintenance needs. If you are among the growing segment that uses the vast group of interconnect companies nationwide, this has implications that will adversely affect your future costs for maintenance service, not to mention, seemingly, the quality of service. We all have been aware of the OEM’s reduction in maintenance personnel over the past decade, and the seeming loss of concern for all but the largest of corporations. If this “Challenge” of the maintenance logins isn’t a sign of a reversal of that trend, then you, my friends, will probably be paying your OEM for the ability to service your own system, if they are even *that* gratuitous. That is, unless you agree to pay them for your maintenance agreement on your system. Meaning, you will have virtually no options but the OEM, not only for maintenance labor, but for any equipment you may want to have installed in your system, because if it’s not purchased from them, you will need to have it “Certified” by them, for which there is a fee, which will probably negate any advantage of purchasing elsewhere. In standing back and looking at all of this, the inescapable term “Restraint of Trade” jumps to mind. I certainly do not pretend to know anything of the legal profession, so I don’t know exactly what that means, but from the purely novice position of one of the interconnect companies trying to give quality service for a reasonable price, it’s the only view I have from here!

Again, Happy 2000, and be aware of what you’re getting into with any upgrades!