Midwest Freight Systems Communicates in Real Time with RingCentral Glip

Company profile
Midwest Freight Systems is a trucking and logistics company with a subsidiary that does truck repair.

Size
About 300 employees (Mid-size)

Industry
Transportation

Business need
Collaboration

Website
midwestfreightsystems.com

Headquarters
Warren, Michigan, with additional operations in Bosnia and the Philippines

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—Almir Latic, Director of Operations

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Midwest Freight Systems is in the business of keeping freight moving. The company has 250 trucks and 700 trailers, plus its own third-party logistics service and a truck repair division. When Director of Operations, Almir Latic, got access to RingCentral Glip as part of his RingCentral Office subscription, he gained a better way of organizing, coordinating, and tracking the work that gets done on any given day.

RingCentral Glip's unified team collaboration workspace allows Midwest Freight's staff to communicate better, while spending less time on the phone. "Now, instead of calling, we just type a message and it works perfectly for us," he says.

Although messaging with RingCentral Glip makes the business run more smoothly than before, when a phone call is required, that option is just a click away. While Glip can be used independently of RingCentral Office, Latic believes the products are more powerful together. "I like the way we can dial from Glip," Latic says. Buttons for calling and Glip Video Chat appear at the top of every conversation. His staff uses the RingCentral client software to make calls from their computers rather than traditional desk phones. Glip can be configured to either launch the RingCentral for Desktop softphone or use a web-based dialer. The option to invite a team of coworkers to a conference call through a RingCentral Glip team, where those same people are already collaborating, is more efficient than sending out email invitations, Latic says.

Mostly, Latic values RingCentral Glip as a way of eliminating unnecessary and time-consuming phone calls when information can be shared more easily in a Glip chat message. Work can also be organized more efficiently with Glip Tasks.

The challenge

Midwest Freight handles shipments within the US and Canada, but the global scope of its business is larger than that. Latic and his brothers built their business partly on the strength of an offshore operation in Bosnia that takes the lead on bidding for contracts. Midwest Freight also has a customer service call center in the Philippines. Headquarters is an 180,000 square foot facility in Warren, Michigan, with more than 16 acres of secured parking.

Midwest Freight was already a RingCentral Office customer before discovering RingCentral Glip, and previously used a different online chat room product for messaging between employees at different locations. Among other shortcomings, that software did a poor job of notifying users when new messages arrived or at supporting long-running conversations. "Everything would disappear every couple of weeks," Latic says.

Also, a chat room alone did not meet his goal of supporting close collaboration between employees whether they were in the same office or on opposite sides of the world.

He tried RingCentral Glip because he was looking for a better instant messaging solution, but it turned out to be much more than that for his organization.

The results

In the six months since Midwest Freight Systems switched to RingCentral Glip, Latic says he has come to particularly appreciate its support for task management side by side with team chat.

First and foremost, he was looking for a better way for all of his people to communicate. Organizing the online workspace into Glip Teams allows him to

separate communication and collaboration by business function. That makes sense because the dispatchers typically don't need to know what is going on in the repair shop or vice versa.

"If you get too many messages in one place, then you can't follow them," Latic says. That tends to be the problem with email, where people receive so many messages they don't know which ones are important. In contrast, when a Glip message is posted to the dispatch team, the work context is clear and all the right people pay attention.

After a couple of months of using RingCentral Glip to improve communication, his teams started making more use of Glip Tasks as a more efficient way of organizing and assigning work.

"In Glip, you can assign a task, and you're good to go—instead of calling someone and explaining what you want them to do," Latic says. Team chat conversations allow people to discuss problems that need to be solved. Once they have a plan, assigning tasks makes clear who is responsible for getting the work done and when it must be completed. Communicating in this way also avoids a lot of confusion and duplicate work, such as two people calling a customer about the same issue, he says.

"Employees in the Philippines or in Bosnia create tasks for each other, and if the people in the Philippines have a problem, they can ask the people in Bosnia to help out," Latic says. "Or if we get a call from a customer, we can chat between each other in real time so we get the best answer to their question, rather than putting the customer on hold."

Midwest Freight has about 40 active users on RingCentral Glip, most of whom are in one of the two offshore locations, coordinating their work with 10 administrative staff members at headquarters. If a driver calls in with a problem, Midwest Freight's administrative staff will use Glip as a tool for communicating the issue and coming up with a plan.

An example might be a driver who calls in to report that he needs to rush home because of an illness in the family. To support that change of plans, the operations staff might need to set a half dozen tasks in motion to reroute the truck, replace the driver, and make sure a shipment still reaches its intended destination on time. RingCentral Glip provides an efficient way of figuring it all out and making it happen. "We can get multiple people involved in helping the driver get back home," Latic says.

On a more routine basis, the Operations team uses Glip Tasks to map out their master plan for the day and make specific assignments. "Every morning, we start out looking through what we need to do and making plans," Latic says. "We create plans and tasks, and then use Glip to watch live how it's getting done." Even if he is not in the office, he peeks in on the activity in the Glip Teams from home or uses the RingCentral Glip app on his phone for an overview of everything that is going on in the business.

"Maybe down the road we will have the majority of employees work from home, which would be better for us as well," Latic says. With RingCentral Office, authorized users can make and receive calls or collaborate through Glip from anywhere they have internet access. "With RingCentral Glip, you don't need to be in the office to get work done."

"I haven't tried to measure how much time it saves, but I'm sure it saves a lot of time," Latic says. If he were to hazard a guess, he says, it probably saves every Glip user 30 minutes to an hour per day by streamlining communications and clarifying tasks. That is how RingCentral Glip helps keep this transportation business moving.