February 19, 2014

Online Travel Agency iCruise.com Solves Business Communications Challenges with 8x8's Cloud-Based Unified Communications and Contact Center Solution

Popular US Cruise Seller Selects 'One Stop Shop' Solution from 8x8, With Built-In Disaster Recovery, for 60+ Locations

SAN JOSE, Calif.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- 8x8, Inc. (NASDAQ: EGHT), a provider of cloud-based unified communications and collaboration solutions, today announced that iCruise.com, one of the largest cruise sellers in the U.S., has deployed 8x8 Virtual Office and Virtual Contact Center services in its corporate headquarters and 60+ remote locations, creating a scalable, secure and reliable unified communications platform with built in disaster recovery for its widely distributed organization.

Founded in 2004 and headquartered in Delray Beach, Florida, iCruise.com, a division of WMPH Vacations, sells cruises under various brand names and private label packages. The company serves 80,000 passengers a year and has the most downloaded mobile Cruise Finder app in the U.S. While most customers find the travel agency online, only 20% complete their bookings online; the other 80% call in to speak with an agent.

Following a rapid integration of the 8x8 Virtual Contact Center solution with its back-office CRM system through 8x8's out-of-the-box integration framework, iCruise.com can now use incoming call data to differentiate its brands and present the answering cruise travel agent with an appropriate call-handling script. For example, if a customer calls in on a number designated for Hawaii Cruises, agents see a script on their screen prompting them to answer "Aloha, Hawaii Cruise Outlet, how may I help you?" 8x8's real-time API also annotates the in-house CRM system with caller information, including location, phone number and the advertisement that generated the call, enabling brand differentiation and personalization of future customer experiences.

"8x8 has a combined voice and contact center solution that can do it all: provide inbound and outbound calling and call management, live agent chat, click-to-call, call recording and live routing options," stated iCruise.com co-owner Don Walker. "It's a one-stop shop for all our needs."

"The ability to have both a cloud-based phone system and cloud contact center was the tipping point for us," agreed co-owner Uf Tukel. "The other business VoIP providers we considered could only do one or the other. With 8x8, we didn't have to compromise—we got everything we wanted."

8x8's integrated solution also provides rich features such as "click-to-call" that boost agent productivity throughout the marketing cycle. iCruise.com agents can now easily place "bon voyage" and "welcome back" calls to customers just by clicking on the phone number listed in the customer's account record. There's no need to look up phone numbers or switch to a different communications system to place outbound calls.

Call recording, which had historically been very costly for the company, is now included as part of its standard 8x8 service. iCruise.com records calls in order to train employees, improve agent performance, and enhance the effectiveness of marketing campaigns. Managers can organize and listen to calls by agent, queue, or distribution channel.

Tukel and Walker also credit 8x8's hosted solution with helping them prepare for the seasonal storms that sweep through southern Florida. Now when the office loses power, employees stay in business by using the 8x8 mobile app on their smartphones and tablets, switching to the "soft" 8x8 phone on their laptops, or plugging their desk phones in at home.

"Our employees can work practically anywhere, as long as there's an Internet connection," said Tukel. "If there's no power at the office, we can all work remotely. Customers don't even realize that the office is closed because our phone service is seamless. Thanks to 8x8, we're much better prepared for the hurricane season than we have been in the past."

"We are glad to share our comprehensive cloud communications expertise with customers like iCruise.com who want to integrate their corporate telephony and contact center capabilities with back-office CRM systems," said 8x8 CEO Vik Verma. "8x8's flexible and configurable API integrates easily with in-house CRM solutions as well as with standard CRM software such as NetSuite and Salesforce.com. By streaming call information in real time, 8x8's solution enables detailed reporting that can be invaluable in analyzing key performance metrics for agents, queues, campaigns and channels."

About 8x8, Inc.

8x8, Inc. (NASDAQ:EGHT) is a provider of unified communications and collaboration (UCC) services in the cloud to small and medium businesses and mid-market and distributed enterprises. The company delivers a broad suite of UCC services to in-office and mobile devices spanning cloud business VoIP phone service, virtual meeting web conferencing, contact center software and virtual desktop through our proprietary unified software as a service, or SaaS, platform. For additional information, visit www.8x8.com, or www.8x8.com/UK or connect with 8x8 on Google+, Facebook, LinkedIn and Twitter.

About iCruise.com

iCruise.com is a division of WMPH Vacations, a Florida-based travel company specializing in cruises and resort vacations. Our travel partners include all major cruise lines including Carnival, Celebrity, Cunard, Disney, Holland America, Princess, Regent Seven Seas, and Royal Caribbean and our cruise specialists are trained in all cruise destinations including Alaska, the Bahamas, Bermuda, the Caribbean, Hawaii, Europe and the Panama Canal. For additional information about iCruise.com, visit www.icruise.com or download the Cruise Finder App by iCruise on iTunes, Google Play, or Amazon.com.

8x8, Inc.
Tim Polakowski, 669-200-6638
tim.polakowski@8x8.com

Source: 8x8

News Provided by Acquire Media