

# STRATA

Toshiba STRATA CTX



## Professional Career

Development Institute

E d u c a t i o n



# STRATA CTX

## Toshiba Strata CTX Takes Top Honors At Professional Career Development Institute

With more than 40,000 graduates, Atlanta-based Professional Career Development Institute (PCDI) is one of the top college correspondence schools in the country. PCDI has educational programs ranging from medical and auto mechanics to associate of arts degrees and high school diplomas, helping its students reach their academic and career goals while giving them the flexibility of studying remotely from anywhere in the world.

The institute relies on its Toshiba Strata CTX670 business communication system to handle the thousands of calls it receives each week from current and potential students.

"Professional Career Development Institute has been growing by leaps and bounds every year," said Mike Rutsky, director of operations for the school, which currently boasts more than 150,000 students. "With more and more people returning to school to start new careers or further themselves in their current careers, we've seen our enrollments jump by more than 25 percent in the last four years."

As its attendance grew, so did PCDI's telecommunications needs. In fact, the institute's telephone system grew from just 25 extensions with its first Toshiba system to more than 250 extensions today on its new Toshiba Strata CTX system, according to Rutsky.

### Toshiba Gets High Marks For Reliability And Migratability

A Toshiba user for more than 15 years, PCDI worked with Authorized Toshiba Dealer ALT Communications, also based in Atlanta, to upgrade its existing Toshiba Strata DK424i to the Toshiba Strata CTX670 system.

ALT Communications CEO Larry Brown said, "With 3,500 to 5,000 calls coming in to PCDI every day, the institute needed a dependable system that would provide reliable call handling for its nearly 100 operators. We recommended Toshiba because its products are absolutely the best choice when it comes to 24/7 reliability and durability."

Rutsky added, "Since our telephones are our primary link to new and existing students, it's imperative that we have a reliable system, and that's why we chose Toshiba."

In fact, PCDI's management team has been so pleased with the reliability and migratability of its Toshiba systems that the Strata CTX670 is the fifth Toshiba system they've purchased. They first started with a Strata DK96 in the mid-1980s, moving to a Perception in the late 1980s. As the institute grew, they upgraded to a Strata DK280 before moving to the DK424i in the mid-1990s. Continued growth spurred their decision to migrate to the Strata CTX670.

Rutsky reaffirmed, "We have been so pleased with the reliability of our previous Toshiba systems that we didn't even consider

From left, Larry Brown of ALT Communications with Mike Rutsky and Dana Nye of PCDI, who are able to handle calls more quickly for the school's 150,000 students with their new Toshiba Strata CTX.



another vendor. The smooth migration path of the Toshiba systems made it possible for us to move to the newer, more powerful system as our company expanded and our needs changed."

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## Toshiba ACD Groups Take Top Honors

Rutsky is pleased with the Strata CTX670 system's Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) routing and reporting capabilities. PCDI's ACD system routes incoming calls to the nearly 100 agents that staff the institute's four call center groups. The dealer set up the telecom system using one PRI and seven T1 lines, which easily manage the high volume of call traffic so callers don't get busy signals.

Most of the incoming calls are from prospective students calling for information and current students calling in for academic help on assignments. A separate group handles non-academic student calls, such as assistance with student loans. Another group handles calls related to the school's administration and operations.

"With surges of up to 7,000 calls a day, it's important that we have the staffing right and that our calls are answered promptly by the appropriate group," Rutsky said. "With the system's automated reporting process, I can instantly find out how many calls have come in, to which ACD groups they've been routed, and even what the hold times have been for each group," he pointed out.

The ACD system has helped PCDI meet its goal of improving the service PCDI provides to its callers. Rutsky said, "Our call center groups are set up to efficiently route incoming calls, so our prospective and current students get the help they need as quickly as possible. Being able to set up separate groups to handle the different types of calls we receive enabled us to dramatically improve our service to callers."

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## Durable Toshiba Handsets Weather 13 Hours A Day Of Nonstop Use

For PCDI's ACD groups, Rutsky purchased Toshiba's new DKT3000-series digital telephones. "These telephones really get a workout, about 13 hours per day of nonstop use," he pointed out. "Toshiba phones can really take a beating while the audio quality remains crisp and clear."

The telephones used by PCDI's agents include LCD screens that enable the operators to see visual information about the queues, so they are aware of how many calls are holding and how many other agents are able to handle the call volume. "Knowing if there's a back-up in calls helps our operators speed things along when needed, but it also allows them to spend more time with our callers when queue volumes are lower," Rutsky said.

Most of the other employees were able to continue using their existing Toshiba DKT2000-series telephones without any disruption since they are 100 percent compatible with the Strata CTX system.

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## Seamless Move To The Strata CTX

By migrating to the Toshiba Strata CTX system rather than moving to an entirely new system, PCDI's 250 employees had virtually no learning curve. According to Rutsky, the transition to the new system was particularly smooth because many of the PCDI employees were able to keep their existing handsets and continue using their voice mail in the same ways they've always used it.

Rutsky explained, "While we dramatically increased the power and capability of our Toshiba system, there was little change to the way our employees actually use their telephones. In fact, most of them didn't even need to re-record their outgoing messages."



From left, Larry Brown of ALT Communications with Mike Rutsky (standing) and Alan Harmon Jr. of PCDI, who use the Toshiba Strata CTX to handle up to 7,000 incoming calls each day.



Mike Rutsky of PCDI (left) and Larry Brown of ALT Communications are pleased with the Toshiba Strata CTX's contributions, which include a 50 percent increase in productivity.

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## Productivity Increased More Than 50 Percent

Rutsky estimates that the Toshiba Strata CTX system has improved productivity at PCDI by more than 50 percent. "With the Strata CTX, everything just flows better. From managing our incoming call capability to routing calls to our call center agents, we can now better plan our staffing needs."

In addition to providing an improvement in how incoming calls are handled, reducing the queues also means that hold times are cut dramatically, even though call volume continues to grow. Rutsky said, "Our callers are happy with the speed with which we take their calls, and our operators are less stressed because they're able to more easily manage their call loads."

"In addition, being able to reduce our queue times also provides us with a substantial cost savings in our long distance charges," he added.

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## Migration To The Strata CTX Saved 300+ Percent Over A New System

One of the benefits of PCDI's migration from its existing Toshiba Strata DK424i system to the larger capacity, more powerful Toshiba Strata CTX670 is that the institute was able to keep all of its existing telephone handsets and many of the interface system boards, which added to the cost savings.

Brown estimates that the migration would have cost PCDI three to four times more to buy a completely new telephone system. He said, "Toshiba's legendary migration path really paid off for PCDI. They get to keep much of their existing equipment, which provides them with a tremendous cost savings while they have all the benefits of moving to the more sophisticated system."

ALT Communications was also able to migrate PCDI's existing Toshiba Strategy Enterprise Server (Strategy ES) voice processing system for use with its new Toshiba Strata CTX670. Originally used with its previous Toshiba Strata DK system, the Strategy ES is the most powerful voice processing solution available from Toshiba and was designed for backward and forward migratability.

Brown said, "Being able to keep the Strategy ES system saved PCDI the cost of a new voice processing solution, which would have been thousands of dollars."

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## Toshiba Makes The Honor Roll At PCDI

With its 50 percent increase in productivity, a dramatic increase in overall power and capacity, and cost savings in long distance and migration path of more than 300 percent over buying a new system, Toshiba has earned high marks at PCDI.

Rutsky said, "You could definitely say that Toshiba is at the top of the class here at Professional Career Development Institute."

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