

Interview with Doug at Stellar Communications

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Doug DeCeglia is a Vertical dealer and owner of [Stellar Communications](#). We sat down with Doug to talk about his background in the industry, what he thinks about selling cloud communications, and why he loves working with Vertical.



What's your background?

Directly after high school, I studied and earned my degree in computer engineering. I was soon hired by American Communications Systems, installing Intertel systems in Philadelphia. When I moved to Arizona, I worked with a title agency, taking them from 12 to 48 locations. As the title agency was purchased by Chicago Title and, later, Fidelity National, I started Stellar Communications on my off hours. That was 25 years ago.

Now we serve 750 customers, primarily in the Phoenix metropolitan area. We were Vodavi dealers and have been with Vertical since the launch of Wave in 2007. We still sell lots of Wave and Summit. Since 2022, we've also been helping our customers move to the cloud with Vertical's iPECS Cloud. We currently have 18 iPECS Cloud accounts, with more pending installation.

How do Vertical and iPECS Cloud help your customers meet their communications challenges?

Vertical is always awesome. There hasn't been one time that they weren't able to help (even if it means saying "No, that won't work" or "Let me get you more assistance"). And all of the different Vertical products have their own great benefits.

I love that with iPECS Cloud, customers can do their own programming. They can help manage it. They get reports. They can record calls. It's all just so easy! And if anything were to ever happen to me, customers feel better knowing that it's hosted by a cloud company.

When customers sign up for iPECS Cloud they can take advantage of the 3 Months Free Promo where they aren't billed for the first three months. This can be a godsend when dealing with any initial hardware purchases or dealing with a contract buy-out.

Then there's the benefit of not having to house any hardware. iPECS Cloud Integrates with headsets. It works as a softphone on your desktop. There's a mobile app. One license gets you access to the whole thing. It's very flexible. It's all around a much more customer-related system vs an IT or phone company system.

What does it take to be successful as a dealer with cloud products?

It's pretty simple actually. Communication. I drive my customers nuts by calling them, sometimes every day. It's really that important. If I don't keep up with them and get out ahead of problems, they're going to want to leave. For example, we had one customer with remote locations that were having trouble getting calls transferred to their cordless phones. The set-up is a little tricky and it's important to be configured just the right way. When I called in, they said it was fine, but I noticed the problem right away and fixed it anyhow. That's the kind of active role they needed from me.

I work hard to get the IT team (if they have one) involved early on. Collaborating with IT is really important because a lot of the maintenance tasks fall on them. Luckily, iPECS Cloud works through the internet browser, so there isn't

an app on the desktop that needs to be updated.

How does the future look for Stellar Communications and cloud communications?

The future for Stellar Communications looks great. I love the residual payments coming in every month. I'm getting more opportunities than I can even handle, which is a wonderful problem to have.

As far as cloud goes, I find that customers are really intrigued when I share all the extra features. Especially when they find out that, if they're on Summit or Wave, they can even keep the same phones!

Even with cloud communications, customers still want to work with someone they can rely on and trust. If you're not there for them and they're pulling their hair out, they're going to let you know. It's a big deal. Generally, if you've built a great relationship with your customers, you can go in, do a quote, and say, "With cloud, I can save a little bit a month and it will help grow faster". It's almost a given. So, cloud really is a great business opportunity for a local dealer.