

## Success Story: Durham Travel

“Fortunately, we converted to GoTo Connect before COVID-19 hit. Thank God it’s there. We would have been in deep trouble because we had to shut down and were not allowed to go into the office. It has helped us survive.”

**John Wood**  
President, Durham Travel

Durham Travel is a full-service, award-winning travel agency serving corporate and leisure customers since 2000. Located in Courtice, Ontario, they pride themselves in offering superior customer service, travel selection, and value for their customers’ travel dollar. Their competitive edge is far more than just selling travel and packages. It’s taking the time to know their customer’s needs and matching those needs with the best possible choices.

### Challenge

The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been felt by all companies and industries in some capacity, but perhaps not as directly and severely as the travel industry. With international travel halted between most countries and domestic travel within Canada on hold due to lockdown mandates, travel agencies like Durham Travel found themselves in a difficult situation. Durham Travel prides themselves in offering superior customer service, which they deliver by building strong relationships with their customers by way of deeply understanding their needs.

*They realized that in order to continue providing best-in-class, personalized support for customers in need of their services, they needed to pivot their business model and move their standard in-person client meetings to occur remotely.*

What further prompted this decision was their existing analog phone system. Between its lack of seamless call transfer and mailbox features, it was clear that it wouldn’t be able to handle the transition to the flexible nature of remote work. Additionally, Durham Travel needed to enable their agents to work from anywhere, especially since their offices were now closed.



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## Solution

Fortunately, Durham Travel decided on and moved over to GoTo Connect (formerly Jive Communications) prior to the beginning of the pandemic. Almost immediately, they started reaping the benefits including GoTo Connect’s call routing feature, which they have set up to seamlessly transfer between agents if one is already on a call. “We’ll have three agents on call. We’ve established a sequence with GoTo Connect. If the phone rings, agent number one picks up. If they’re busy, agent number two can pick up and so on. We can transfer calls, just like we were in the office. It’s painless and seamless,” explained John Wood, President of Durham Travel.

The agency has also enjoyed GoTo Connect’s Virtual Voicemail feature. Now agents have access to their voice-mails from anywhere because messages are stored online. This saves the agents valuable time instead of previously needing to call their voicemail boxes to pick up any missed messages and then call back a customer. “There is no additional cost for individual mailboxes in GoTo Connect. We have the ability to transfer the call either directly to their cell phone at home, or to a voicemail, at which point the system e-mails them, and they can actually listen to the voicemail from their e-mail. Whether we’re working in the office or at home, it makes no difference,” said Wood.

Finally, the system’s flexible interface is user-friendly and straightforward, allowing for quick and easy changes when necessary. When Wood needs to add new agents, extensions, or update office voice messages to reflect changes in hours, he knows that the process will be simple. “We have two offices, one with different hours. Before, the calls would be directed to one office and the customer would hear a message that the office was closed. Not a great user experience. Now, calls are automatically transferred to the open office. That’s the benefit of GoTo Connect,” stated Wood.



## Results

Not only has Durham Travel saved time and increased agent efficiency, but they have also gained a competitive advantage, as most of their competitors don’t have the capabilities GoTo Connect offers. Most importantly, they have been able to survive as a small business in the travel industry during a global catastrophe outside the realm of what anyone thought was remotely possible.

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