

ELEPHANT

In

Serviced Offices

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ELEPHANT IN SERVICED OFFICES

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INTRODUCTION

In the serviced office environment it is imperative that tight controls are kept on the access to and utilisation of the telephone system. Call management provides the means by which accurate bills may be produced for each Client representing their total telephone usage.

Elephant is the call management system that has been tailored to suit this environment and is being constantly enhanced to provide the best solution by monitoring the ever changing nature of the services you offer to your Clients. If your telephone system can provide a service, then Elephant will use information about that service to provide comprehensive management reports. Elephant will help you maximise your billing potential and utilise your resources to the full.

One of the unique features of Elephant is the ability to allocate calls generated using account/authorisation codes to the correct client. This means that a single bill may be generated for each client incorporating all calls made by or on behalf of the client.

The effectiveness of call management reports always depends on the functionality of the telephone system and the upkeep of the tables within the Elephant system (particularly Client lists, extension and account code allocations). If you operate trunk-to-trunk calls or through dials these also need to be programmed in a way that Elephant can easily identify them in order to allocate their cost.

Getting Client bills printed from the Elephant system couldn't be simpler but there are a couple of fundamental things that need to be set up to reflect how you want Elephant to work for you.

CREATING CLIENTS IN ELEPHANT

In order to produce telephone bills for individual Clients it is imperative that the Clients are correctly configured with the Elephant system. This process includes allocating all pertinent extensions and account codes to the Client. Note that for some telephone systems it is also necessary to enter the Clients DDI numbers as extensions in order to automatically allocate through dial calls.

Adding a new Client to Elephant

From the opening screen select the menu option **Configuration - System tables** and then select the **Client** tab. The list of the current clients will be displayed.

Select the **Add** button from the options at the bottom of the window and the system will display a pop up window prompting for the new Client information, all fields are mandatory:

Client name: Free text string containing the name of the client, this cannot be blank.

Client code: Unique code of up to ten characters and is used as an abbreviation or account code to identify the Client. If the telephone bills are to be exported to an invoicing system then the client codes must match those within the invoicing system. This field cannot be left blank.

Carrier / tariff: This field is initially set to Default Carrier and should only be changed if a different tariff is to be applied to the Client.

Charge factor: The Charge factor is a simple multiplication factor that will be applied to all call for this Client. For

example setting the charge factor to 1.05 would add a 5% surcharge to all call charges.

Pressing the **OK** button will create the client. In addition, the table also shows additional fields when the Serviced Office configuration option is set, these are:

Invoice: This box should be checked if invoices are to be generated for this client.

Discount plan: If a discount plan is to be applied to this Client, select the appropriate plan from the pull down list. If this field is blank, then no discount plan will be applied.

Starting: This enables a starting threshold level to be set before the discount plan is applied. For example if this field is set to 100.0, discount will only be applied to calls once the total spend in a charge period has exceeded £100.

Fixed charge: Any value entered in this field will be added to each telephone bill for the Client.

Charge description: Enter the descriptive text that should appear on the telephone bill for the above fixed charge.

Once the client has been created, the next step is to allocate the appropriate extensions.

Adding & allocating extensions to a Client

From the opening screen select **Configuration - System tables** select the **Extension** tab and a list of the current extensions will be displayed in numerical sequence.

Select the **Add** button and the system will display a pop up window prompting for the new extension information:

Extension No. from: Unique extension number or first number in a sequential range.

Extension No. to: If a sequential range of extensions are to be defined, enter the highest number in the sequence otherwise leave blank.

Extension name: Free text string containing the name assigned to the extension, if left blank the extension name will be automatically generated using the extension number.

Client: The client must be selected from the drop down list. Never leave the client undefined otherwise the call charges will not be allocated.

Group: The secondary extension grouping may be defined from the drop down list if required.

Extension Type: It is imperative that all digital data extensions be identified here so that international ISDN calls can be calculated at the correct higher international rate.

Pressing the **OK** button will create the extension and assign it to the appropriate Client. In addition, the table also shows additional fields when the Serviced Office configuration option is set, these are:

Fixed charge: Any value entered in this field will be added to the telephone bill of the Client that the extension is assigned to.

Charge description: Enter the descriptive text that should appear on the telephone bill for the above fixed charge.

Handset rent: If you wish to charge an additional fee for handset rental, enter the amount in this column and the value will added to every telephone bill for the Client that the extension is assigned to.

Adding & allocating account codes to a Client

From the opening screen select **Configuration - System tables** select the **Account codes** tab and a list of the current account codes will be displayed in numerical sequence.

Select the **Add** button and the system will display a pop up window prompting for the new account code information:

Account code: Enter a unique numeric account code (leading zeros may be included).

Account name: Free text string containing the name assigned to the account code. Please note that this field may not be left blank.

Client: The client must be selected from the drop down list. Never leave the client undefined otherwise the call charges will not be correctly allocated.

Charge factor: The Charge factor is a simple multiplication factor that will be applied to all calls with this account code. For example setting the charge factor to 1.05 would add a 5% surcharge to the call charges

CHANGING CLIENTS IN ELEPHANT

It is imperative that the Client information is correctly maintained within Elephant to ensure that all call charges are allocated to the correct Clients. These Client details are maintained within the Elephant system tables that are accessed from the opening screen by selecting the menu option **Configuration - System tables**.

Changing Client code / name

From the system tables, select the Client tab and locate the pertinent Client using either the Client code or Client name. Note that the table can be sorted by clicking on the pertinent column heading. The Client code and name may be amended by overtyping the pertinent field with the new information. The tariff and discount plan may be amended by selecting the relevant setting.

Reallocating extensions

From the system tables, select the Extension tab and the list of current extensions will be displayed in numerical sequence.

The extension number and name may be amended by overtyping the pertinent field with the new information. To change the Client to which an extension is allocated, simply select the relevant Client from the pull down list.

Reallocating account codes

From the system tables, select the Account codes tab and the list of current account codes will be displayed in numerical sequence.

The account code number and name may be amended by overtyping the pertinent field with the new information. To change the Client to which an account code is allocated, simply select the relevant Client from the pull down list.

REMOVING CLIENTS FROM ELEPHANT

When clients leave the serviced office all of their telephony should be removed and particular attention should be given to any automatic diverting of incoming calls. If you divert the incoming calls to an external telephone number then you will incur call charges. For most telephone systems the outbound legs of such calls will be recorded with the extension set to the incoming DDI number.

If possible it is recommended that extensions, DDI numbers and account codes should be quarantined for a period, say six months, after a client moves out. This allows for reports to be generated in the event of a query and also provides a check that the extensions are not generating calls after the client leaves.

To remove the client from Elephant, select **Configuration – System tables** from the main menu. Click on the **Client** tab, locate the pertinent client and press the **Delete** button at the bottom of the window. The system will prompt for confirmation to delete the client and then prompt *Do you wish to delete all associated extensions & account codes?*. Pressing the **Yes** key will result in all the extensions and account codes being removed from the tables whereas pressing the **No** key will retain the extensions and account codes but remove the client association.

Note that the client will not be removed from the screen until the screen is refreshed and the client can be recalled by pressing the **Delete** button again.

PRODUCING TELEPHONE BILLS

The ability to accurately allocate all telephone call charges to individual clients is paramount to the effectiveness of Elephant in Serviced Offices. Consequently, the system has been designed to maximise revenue by helping in the allocation of call charges. Elephant is designed to record call information for all extensions even if they have not been added to the extension table.

Checking that all calls are allocated

Before executing the billing process, it is recommended that you check that all used extensions and account codes have been allocated to clients.

From the opening screen select **Report - Statistics - Resource check** and enter the appropriate start and end dates for the billing period. Providing that Elephant has been configured with the serviced office option, the system will automatically select the most appropriate options to ensure that call charges are maximised.

The system will then produce a report itemising all the resources (extensions and account codes) that have been used but are not set up in the system tables. To allocate a resource, simply right click on the resource and enter the pertinent information in the pop-up window and the resource will be removed from the list. This process should be performed until either the report is blank or the total charges unallocated are insignificant.

Producing telephone bills

After completing the resource check, the client bills may be generated. The best method of producing client bills is via the **Report - Telephone bill** option. Upon selecting this option, the Client (itemised) radio button will be selected by default. The Client (Summary) produces a more concise bill showing extension and account code totals rather than call by call.

Enter the appropriate period and select the client from the drop down list to produce an individual report. If all bills are required, leave the Client blank and when you select **Print** you will be asked if you wish to Print a bill for every Client; select **Yes** and all bills will be printed.

To reduce the quantity of paper used, either tick the **Single page** check box which will only produce a single page report listing the forty most expensive calls or set the **Minimum itemised call charge on bill** in the **Configuration - System configuration - Costing** window to the value below which calls will not be itemised although their cost will still be summarised on the bill.

If you only wish to produce bills for Clients and exclude your own extensions then in the **Configuration - System configuration - Options** window, set the Configuration option to Serviced office. This will allow you in the **Configuration - System Tables - Client** tab to select which individual clients are to be included in the invoicing and the export.

Telephone bill summary report

To produce a single report containing the summary billing information for a period, select **Report – Bill summary by client** from the main menu. If the resource check has not been run, the system will offer you the opportunity to run it first.

Enter the appropriate billing period and the system will display a report giving the totals per client.

Exporting telephone bills to billing systems

Elephant incorporates facilities to export telephone billing information to a number of popular billing systems. From the main menu select **Report – Export data** and the list of platforms will be displayed as a tertiary menu. Select the appropriate one and the system will prompt for the billing period and export file name. Note that for some billing platforms additional data may be required.

Automating telephone billing

Once you are happy with the billing procedure you may wish to set these reports up in a schedule which can run automatically at any time you specify.

If you decide to automate the process, it is strongly recommended that you configure a report schedule to generate an unallocated resource check a few days before the end of the billing period. This will enable most resources to be allocated prior to the actual billing date.

For the actual billing schedule, you should include another resource check and a bill summary by client so that a quick check may be made to ensure that the amount of leakage is minimised.

CUSTOMISING THE REPORTS

Setting up an automatic report schedule

From the opening screen select **Reports - Report Scheduler - Create schedule**. A blank schedule sheet will appear. From the menu select **Add** and choose a report type and specify the report period then add another. Once you have entered all of the required reports in the schedule, close the window.

When you want print the reports on the schedule select **Reports - Report Scheduler - Manual Execution**. Select the schedule from the list and then select **Run**. The reports on the schedule will be produced.

Other reports to enhance your service

Elephant provides an infinite range of reports highlighting overall scenarios down to the smallest details so the better you know the system the more you will realise its potential. Certain market sectors though do utilise certain reports on a regular basis along side the Client bills and sometimes to compliment the service provided to their Clients.

Standard reports are as easy to produce as bills and, depending on your telephone system, the system can illustrate such things as:

- Lost calls with the callers number for each call
- Operator response times
- Answer analysis (measured against user defined targets)
- Incoming or outgoing Telesales analysis
- Summary by specified or dialled number
- Optimum exchange line usage
- DDI summaries against CLI

CUSTOMISING THE COST OF CALLS

There are a number of settings that affect the charges for calls generated by Elephant:

Default tariff

The default network carrier/tariff is set in the **Configuration - System configuration - Costing** window. This is the tariff structure that will be used as the default when no specific tariff is specified.

Overall charge factor

The **Charge factor** found in the **Configuration - System configuration - Costing** window is applied to all calls and is a simple multiplication factor applied to the call costs. For example setting the charge factor to 1.175 could be used to add the VAT element of 17.5% to the call charges. Please note that entering a value of 0.0 would mean all calls would be free!

Custom tariff

Different tariffs may be set for each client in the **Configuration - System tables - Client** window. If the network carrier is not set to **Default carrier** for a client, then any call made from an extension allocated to that client will use the carrier defined within the client database.

Client specific charge factor

A **Charge factor** can also be applied to individual clients in the **Configuration - System tables - Client** window and is applied to all calls generated by any extension allocated to that client. This is a simple multiplication factor applied to the call costs. Please note that if an overall charge factor will be the product of the client specific and general charge factors.

A **Charge factor** may also be applied to individual **Account codes**. This may be used to mark up calls made on behalf of clients, for example if you are providing a telemarketing service making calls on behalf of clients.

Discount plans and Packages

A **Discount plan or Package** may be assigned to each client. Any number of discount plans may be created with different discount percentages for Local, Regional, National, Mobile, International, Premium and Other calls. In addition a threshold level may be set above which the discount plan is applied. Alternatively Packages of included calls or included minutes may be applied to Local, National, Mobile and International calls..

SETTING UP CUSTOMISED TARIFFS

It is possible within Elephant to have separate tariffs for each Client, thereby offering the most comprehensive solution for telephone billing possible. However, in reality, over use of this feature results in the system becoming difficult to manage.

As part of the standard support contract you will have access to the current BT standard tariff which is updated on a regular basis. The latest tariff can be downloaded from the web site www.willsconsulting.co.uk. It is not recommended to modify this tariff as your amendments will be lost when an Elephant update is installed.

To access the call tariffs, from the main menu select **Configuration – Call charges** and the system will display a table containing all charge bands for all tariffs.

Selecting the type of tariff

Elephant supports two type of tariff:

Full tariff: This tariff includes an entry for every charge band of which there are currently in excess of 850 for the United Kingdom. This type of tariff enables full flexibility to charge all calls at special rates but it does require a degree of maintenance.

Sub tariff: A user defined sub-set of the charge bands with calls of all other charge bands being charged at the rate of the full tariff that is set as the base tariff. This type of tariff is much simpler to set up and maintain than a full tariff.

Creating a full tariff

Should you wish to create a full tariff it is recommended that you copy an existing tariff and modify only the pertinent values. From the menu

select **Add – Full tariff** and the system will display a window prompting for the new tariff name and that which is to be copied. It is also possible to factor different charge types within this option. Pressing the OK button will cause the system to create an entire tariff based upon an existing one.

Modify the appropriate entries within the tariff as required.

Creating a sub-tariff

Should you wish to create a sub-tariff select **Add – New sub tariff** from the menu and the system will display a window prompting for the new tariff name and that which is to be the base tariff. Enter the relevant data and press the OK button. The system will then display a screen with two lists of all of the charge bands; the left list has the bands excluded from the sub-tariff and the right list has the bands included in the sub-tariff. To include or exclude a charge band, click on the charge band in the relevant window and press the appropriate arrow button.

Modify the appropriate entries within the tariff as required.

Applying a custom tariff?

To allocate a custom tariff to a Client, from the main menu select **Configuration – System tables** and select the **Client** tab. Locate the Client and select the custom tariff from the drop down list in the **Carrier/tariff** column. Please note that to implement the changes for existing calls it is necessary to recalculate call charges using the menu option **File – Recalculate costs**.

SETTING UP DISCOUNT PLANS AND PACKAGES

Rather than managing customised tariffs, a simpler approach to customised call charging is the use of discount plans and packages. Elephant allows you to create any number of discount plans or packages which can be applied to each client when the bills are produced. You can also set a threshold for each client before the discount or package is applied

To set up discount plans from the main menu choose **Configuration - Discount plans**. To create a new discount plan or package select **Add** from the menu and an empty plan will be created. Type in the name of the plan and indicate the discount to apply to each call type eg 5.0 would be equal to 5% discount. You can also increment certain call types by using a - symbol eg -5.0 would be equal to 5% increase. Alternatively you can apply an included calls or included minutes to Local, National, Mobile and International calls.

To allocate a discount plan or package to a client go to **Configuration - System tables** and select the **Client** tab. Click on the dropdown list for the discount plan and choose the correct plan. You may also set the starting call spend threshold to be reached before the plan applies

Discount plans and packages will only apply when producing telephone bills, profit reports or exporting to service office accounting packages eg BCM and Centre Charge.

THROUGH DIALLED (TRUNK - TRUNK) CALLS

The ability of Elephant to allocate through dialled calls to the correct Client is one of the unique features that make Elephant the ideal solution for Serviced Offices. These calls may be generated in any of three manners:

- Manually answering an incoming call and transferring the call to a manually dialled outgoing call.
- Using the *divert all calls* feature from an extension.
- Setting the PBX so that all calls coming in on a DDI are diverted unconditionally.

Whatever the method of generating trunk to trunk calls, it is imperative that the cost of the outgoing legs of every trunk to trunk call is allocated to the appropriate Client for billing purposes. However, the method for allocating these calls is dependent upon the information output from the telephone system as well as the method by which a divert was generated.

Manually diverted calls

These calls are normally answered by an operator and then diverted to a virtual client via a *speed dial*. The simplest method to allocate these calls is to include an *account code* within the *speed dial*. Providing that the account code is assigned to a Client, the call will then be charged to the Clients telephone bill.

Automatic diverted calls from an extension

Many telephone systems report the outgoing leg of a through dial call when an extension is configured to automatically divert against the extension number. In this case Elephant will automatically allocate the calls to the correct Client.

However, some telephone systems do not record the extension number for such calls and the only useful information that is available

is the destination telephone number. If this is the case then it is possible to configure Elephant to automatically assign an account code when a call is identified as through dial but without an extension number. Please contact the Elephant help desk for assistance to configure this option.

Automatically diverted calls by telephone system

When an incoming DDI number is configured to unconditionally divert to an external number, the manner by which the call is reported is dependent upon the telephone system. Some telephone systems will report the DDI number which should be added in the extension table and assigned to the pertinent Client.

If the telephone system does not record the DDI number then the recommended approach is to include an account code within the call divert. Assigning the account code to the Client will ensure that the call charge is correctly allocated.

For telephone systems that are incapable of supporting neither of the above approaches then it is necessary to configure Elephant to automatically assign account codes to telephone numbers. . Please contact the Elephant help desk for assistance to configure this option.

AUTOMATIC CALL ACCOUNT CODING

Although disabled by default, Elephant has the unique ability to automatically assign calls with account codes when specific telephone numbers are identified. There are two configuration options for this feature:

- Insert account codes on all calls to and from the telephone number.
- Insert account codes on outgoing legs of through dial calls only.

This feature needs to be activated using the advanced configuration screen and you should contact the Elephant help desk for assistance.

When activated, an additional column will appear on the telephone directory within the system tables for the account code. When pertinent calls are identified during the logging process they will be assigned with an account code on the provision that no other account code is already applied to the call.

This process enables through dial calls to be assigned to pertinent clients in situations where the telephone system does not report either the extension or DDI number that caused the divert.

MAINTENANCE

Which files should be backed up

The system stores data in a number of database files all of which should be backed up on a regular basis using a routine backup facility. These database files all have the suffix .DBF, the index files which have a suffix of .CDX do not need to be backed up as they can be rebuilt by the system.

All the system tables may be backed up to a removable media, such as floppy diskette, using the option **File - Backup data - System tables**. The system will prompt for the date period and location of the backup files.

How much data will the system store?

Although there are no limits to the quantity of calls that may be stored within Elephant other than the physical size of the hard disk, it is advantageous to remove old data once it is no longer required. The calls are divided into separate databases for incoming and outgoing calls each of which may be archived (backed up) as separate files.

There is an option to automatically archive and then delete calls after a defined number of months. To enable this option, select **Configuration - System configuration - Options** and set the **Auto archive - number of months to retain** to the required value. Once calls are older than the specified age, the system will archive the calls to disk files with a generated filename. The format of the filename is **DBF_YYMM.nnn** where **DBF** is the database abbreviation (INC-incoming, INT-internal or OUT-outgoing), **YY** is the last two digits of the year, **MM** the month and **nnn** a sequential number. For example INC_1306.001 would be the first archive file for incoming calls in June 2013.

Call data may be archived manually. From the opening screen select **File - Database management - Backup calls** and then select either **Incoming calls**, **Outgoing calls** or **Internal calls** as required. The system will then prompt for the archive period and file name, a suitable convention for naming monthly backup files is to use the year, month and call type (eg 201306.OUT for outgoing calls during June 2013).

Auto archiving of call information

After call data has been archived, the calls may be removed from the system using a two stage process. First, from the opening screen select **File - Database management - Delete calls** and then select either **Incoming calls**, **Outgoing calls** or **Internal calls** as required. The system will prompt for the period during which the calls are to be marked for deletion.

To permanently remove the calls from the database, from the opening screen select **File - Database management - Remove deleted calls** and then select either **Incoming calls**, **Outgoing calls** or **Internal calls** as required. Please note that once the calls have been deleted, they can only be recovered from an archive file.

Checking the system is logging calls

In order to prevent any loss of call data Elephant it is important to regularly check the system operation. For additional security Elephant has an alert system in place which will flash on the screen or sound when the log calls screen fails to receive any calls for a specified number of minutes.

To set up the alert time thresholds select **Configuration - System Alerts** and specifying the number of minutes you would expect calls to be recording for each period. A zero setting switches the alert option off.

The alert can also flash and sound across the network on another PC with Elephant installed and the **Utility - Monitor Logging** activated.

Where the PC has been configured to send E-mail an E-mail notification of the alert can be sent to an address set up in the System alert screen.

Updating Elephant

As part of the standard support contract you will be entitled to all updates including software updates, STD code updates and BT Business base tariff updates. When significant changes are identified within either the BT tariff or the STD codes you will be sent an Email informing you of the changes and advising you to update your system.

Providing that your logging PC is connected to the Internet the recommended procedure is to close all other copies of Elephant and click on the menu option File – Web update. The system will check the status of your support contract before automatically downloading and installing updates.

INSTALLING ELEPHANT ON THE NETWORK

The Elephant licence allows for multiple copies of the software across a network with one PC collecting call information from a single telephone system and others to reporting only.

Before attempting to install network copies, ensure that the folder containing the Elephant database files (default is C:\Elephant on the logging PC) is configured for sharing with full access rights to other users. If you are inexperienced in configuring folders for sharing it is recommended that this be performed by your IT administrator.

Locate the shortcut to Elephant on the logging PC using Windows Explorer. Right click on the Elephant Call Management icon and select the properties option. In the shortcut tab append /L to the target to identify that this system is the one that will log calls, typically the target should be:

C:\Elephant\Elephant.exe C:\Elephant /L

Next ensure that the Elephant database files are set to be opened in shared mode. From the main Elephant screen, select the menu option **Configuration - System Configuration** and tick the box labelled **Share Database files** on the **General** tab and press **OK**. To activate this change it is necessary to close and then restart Elephant Call Management.

To install the system on another networked PC for reporting only, insert the Disc into the CD ROM drive. The program should start automatically, if not select the **Start - Run** option from the Task bar and enter the command **D:\SETUP.EXE** in the dialog box (where **D:** is the CD-ROM drive).

Follow the screen prompts to install the system and then remove the CD-ROM.

When you start the system for the first time you will be prompted for the installation option, select **Install remote (network) access**. The

system will then prompt for the location of the database files which may be specified as a network IP address and folder (eg \\192.168.1.4\Elephant\) or a network name with folder (eg \\Logger\Elephant\).

CONFIGURING ELEPHANT FOR A SERVICED OFFICE

Elephant incorporates a number of features that enable it to be ideally applied to Serviced Offices. To activate these features the Serviced Office configuration option must be set.

From the main Elephant screen select **Configuration – System configuration** and select the **Options** tab. The screen contains a number of options that are pertinent for Serviced Offices:

Primary extension group name This defines the title for the main method of grouping extensions. In this document *Client* has been used as the primary group name but you may prefer either *Tenant* or *Company*.

Secondary extension group name This defines the title for the secondary method of grouping extensions and should be set to reflect a suitable name such as *Department* or *Group*.

Configuration option This must be set to Serviced Office to enable some of the advanced features that are specific to Serviced Offices.

One of the unique features of Elephant is the ability to automatically include calls made using account codes on telephone bills. To enable this function select the **Costing** tab from the **System configuration** and check the box labelled **Include account code calls on bills**.