



## Fourth Generation Family Business Innovates to See a Bright Future Through COVID-19 Restrictions



[www.ehliauctions.com](http://www.ehliauctions.com)

Celebrating its 100th year in 2020, Ehli Auctions – a Washington based family business – faced a surge in online and phone activity when COVID-19 restrictions meant customers could no longer gather onsite as they normally would. Building on a history of digital innovation, Ehli turned to Avaya Cloud Office® by RingCentral® to enable business continuity, build flexible capacity management, and maintain customer service levels.

Since 1920, when Nick Ehli grandfather of Randy Ehli opened Ehli's Auctions, this company has been serving the Northwestern region of the United States. Ehli and his family are proud to celebrate 100 years in business as a four-generation, family-owned and operated leader in the auction industry. Owner Randy Ehli and his son Chad, Vice President of Operations, were careful to honor the Ehli name and tradition when they took the business from Randy's father Bill Ehli in 1999, creating Cyber Auctions, a unique online bidding platform that allows sellers and bidders to track bids and results in real-time.

With onsite workers at their five-acre auction center in Tacoma, Washington and software developers in Portland, OR and the Philippines, Ehli and team needed a communications system that was flexible and easily adaptable to stay connected with each other and to their customers during the Covid-19 pandemic.

## CHALLENGES

- Customers couldn't access auctions onsite as usual because of COVID-19 restrictions
- Needed a flexible platform to connect staff and customers
- Finding suppliers and partners that have same attitude to customer service as the business
- Be ready for future change and innovation

## VALUE CREATED

- Customer service and business maintained amidst pandemic restrictions
- 50% increase in call handling
- Improved reliability and uptime
- Greater experiences and outcomes for customers

## SOLUTION USED

- Avaya Cloud Office® by RingCentral®

Ehli Auctions has a proud history of leading customer service and innovation. The pandemic restrictions accelerated their requirement to digitally transform their communications to match their fast-paced online auction business. In addition to their auction center, they work in the field doing onsite business liquidation auctions. With more customers preferring text and video communication they needed a company-wide and branded solution instead of communication just coming from employee devices.

“To stay open and meet Covid-19 restrictions we had to go to an appointment only system for the delivery of goods, and a curbside pickup system for our buyers. This significantly increased the number of daily calls to our offices,” said Randy. “With our old PBX system our customers were getting way too many busy signals even though we had six lines. Queuing calls and being able to monitor and pick-up calls from anywhere with Avaya Cloud Office® has solved the problem.”

Randy considered several providers when he and his team were looking for a company to meet their business needs. “I wasn't happy with the customer service of one company that I trialed. Their customer service was non-existent and at Ehli Auctions we are all about customer service.”

As a small business, he needed a partner that would not only sell him a solution, but value him as a customer, mirroring Ehli's own principles. “Avaya introduced us to the subscription model with Avaya Cloud Office and still have IP desktop phones that work together with the apps.” Avaya had local partners in Tacoma, that could provide the actual installation of the phones and paging systems. This made it an easy decision to go with Avaya.

Maintaining a competitive edge is critical to Ehli, and the Avaya Cloud Office platform enables him to stay in touch and serve his customers wherever he is. “In this competitive landscape, we lose business if we miss a call. I have the business liquidation calls routed to me both during the day and in off hours and that is helping me work with my clients and close the deal!”

“I think that my Grandfather and Father would be proud that the company is not just viable after 100 years but thriving and transforming the auction experience for customers. Like them, my son and I are pioneering new ways to continue being a leader in the auction industry.” Randy Ehli, Owner



“ Avaya introduced us to the subscription model with Avaya Cloud Office. That concept was new to us, but we like the predictability of cost and the reliability of the cloud solution on top of all of the features we get in a single solution”

—Randy Ehli, Owner

Avaya Cloud Office lets businesses simplify the way their business communicates. Call, chat, meet, and collaborate no matter where employees might be. Stay on task and on schedule with file sharing, task management, and virtual team rooms. Bring together 100+ business integrations, like Microsoft Office 365, Google Drive and Salesforce, to customize a true cloud unified communications experience. Avaya Cloud Office gives employees and customers the features and options you want, all in one app.

As the family business adapts to new challenges, Randy sees his responsibility not just as owner and custodian, but also to make sure they are ready for the next century. “I think that my Grandfather and Father would be proud that the company is not just viable after 100 years but thriving and transforming the auction experience for customers. Like them, my son and I are pioneering new ways to continue being a leader in the auction industry. Next on our road map is to white label our auction platform for other auction companies. This will require more communication to service this growth.”



## About Ehli Auctions

Ehli Auctions first established in 1920, is a trusted commercial/industrial auction company that is based out of Tacoma, WA.

A full-service auction firm that specializes in the sale of business assets through online bidding platform [cyberauctions.com](https://www.cyberauctions.com).



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—Randy Ehli, Owner





## About Avaya

Businesses are built on the experiences they provide and every day millions of those experiences are built by Avaya (NYSE:AVYA). For over one hundred years, we've enabled organizations around the globe to win—by creating intelligent communications experiences for customers and employees. Avaya builds open, converged and innovative solutions to enhance and simplify communications and collaboration—in the cloud, on premise, or a hybrid of both. To grow your business, we're committed to innovation, partnership, and a relentless focus on what's next. We're the technology company you trust to help you deliver Experiences that Matter.

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Experiences  
That Matter