

Doing More with Less for a Rural Texas County

How Kinney County Cut Communications Costs by \$2,559 a Month and Opened Public Meetings to Every Resident



KINNEY COUNTY

Kinney County is a rural Texas county with its seat in Brackettville, offering a captivating blend of rugged beauty, deep-rooted history, and small-town charm. Residents and visitors alike appreciate its quiet pace, friendly community, and authentic Texas spirit, making Kinney County a truly distinctive place to live, work, and explore. A small team of county staff serves a large, bilingual community spread across a wide area, with a tight budget and residents who expect fast answers.

Industry

County Government

Size

80 employees

Introduction

Kinney County delivers essential public services to residents across a large rural area. Its officials, deputies, and department heads spend much of the day in the field, and a large share of the people they serve prefer to speak Spanish.

For a county like this, communication isn't a back-office function. It's how residents reach their government, get answers, and take part in public decisions. Every missed call is a resident who didn't get help.

Scenario

Kinney County's on-premises phone system was costing more than it delivered. Maintenance contracts and hardware refreshes drained a tight budget, and even simple changes required a service call.

The system also didn't fit how the county works. Staff in the field missed calls on their desk lines, leaving residents unanswered. Callers pressed through a one-language phone tree, landed in a general mailbox, and often had to call back. Spanish-speaking residents had it worse, using a single-language phone tree that created a language barrier, slowing their journey or sending them to the wrong office or department.

Public meetings were another gap. Commissioners Court needed a simple way for residents to listen, watch, and take part remotely. And the county's small IT team was losing hours to repeat questions like password resets, printer issues, and voicemail setup.

The county needed to cut costs and serve residents better at the same time, without adding staff.

Outcome

IT Director Chad Potts moved Kinney County to net2phone Unite, replacing several separate tools with one cloud platform for calls, voicemail, meetings, and public access. The county now spends \$2,559 less on communications every month, with no on-premises hardware to maintain or replace.

Staff stay reachable wherever they work. With the Unite mobile app, desk extensions ring on their smartphones, so calls from residents don't go unanswered when staff are in the field. Voicemail-to-email delivers every message to their inbox as an audio file, so they can call back from anywhere. And when the county needs to update users or call routing, the IT team can make the change online in minutes instead of waiting for a service call.

Unite's Huddle video conferencing runs the county's internal meetings, with recording when needed and automatic transcription that produces searchable notes, eliminating the need to draft minutes by hand. Huddle is also the county's public conference bridge. Residents connect to Commissioners Court and community meetings with no software required, or join by video to watch the Court in real time, raise a hand, and ask questions.

Next, Kinney County is replacing its phone tree with the net2phone AI Agent for Government. The AI Agent will greet callers in English or Spanish, understand requests in plain speech, and connect them to the specific person they need, not just the department. When that person is unavailable, it takes a message and emails the caller's name, number, and reason for calling, so the follow-up is ready to act on. For staff calling IT, it walks through basic fixes before escalating to a technician. The county will pilot the AI Agent on one main line before expanding county-wide.

For Kinney County, net2phone turned a costly legacy system into a platform that does more for less: residents reach their government in their own language, staff stay connected in the field, and taxpayer dollars go further.

Key Statistics

\$2,559

Lower communications cost
per month

1 platform

For calls, voicemail,
and meetings

"net2phone has helped us do more with less. We cut our costs, gained capabilities we never had, and opened our meetings to every resident by phone or video."

- Chad Potts, IT Director, Kinney County, Texas