

# TELECONNECT

BUYING, USING, AND MANAGING TELECOMMUNICATIONS PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

## AND THE AWARDS GO TO...

### *Our Best of Show from CT Expo*

#### **NEC'S INFOSET 408**

Key systems will never be the same now that NEC's (Irving, TX — 800-TEAM-NEC) newest, the Infoset 408, has been introduced. Kind of like a phone version of the Big Bang, this one will influence all key systems that follow. Why? Because besides offering all the basics — call ID, DSS/BLF, paging, and voicemail — NEC has turned a key system into a comms server by including ... are you sitting down? ... an integrated router (with firewall protection), ADSL modem, and HomePNA (Home Phonline Networking Alliance) interface. That last acronym may be unfamiliar to you; it's a non-profit organization, founded principally by 3Com, AMD, Lucent Wireless, Intel, and others, that has developed a networking standard for plain old phone wiring.

If ever there was a phone system to grab the enormous fewer-than-ten-line phone-system market, especially e-startups that wish to be e-quipped for e-commerce, the 408 has it all in e-spades. On the voice side of the equation, the 408

is a solid key system with the same feature set as its larger sister, the Electra Elite, a past Best of Show winner. The 408 supports up to eight digital Infoset stations or the Elite's phonesets, and there's an upgrade option to add two analog station ports. But wait. Those eight digital ports are the universal kind so that you can split off an analog line with NEC's SLT adapter or hang off an analog device from the Elite phoneset's own analog jack. In short, this all adds up to ten voice channels that can be divvied out any way you wish. The trunk side starts out at two analog ports, but you can add more trunking in the form of analog (two ports) or ISDN BRI or ADSL with an analog split-off. Lest we forget, there's a solid-state voicemail that holds two hours' worth of voice messages in up to 40 boxes and has all the features: auto attendant, pager beeping, fax detection, multiple greetings, and some IVR (Q&A).

To even talk about a data side for a key system is pretty extraordi-

nary, but NEC has engineered this phone box into a true Internet gateway. An integrated 10BaseT router supports all the golden standards — RIP, NAT, and DHCP — and NEC has added an ADSL modem, giving this 408 a speedy link to the WAN and the world beyond. There's also a two-channel BRI option for those to whom DSL is still an iffy carrier proposition. Browser-based configuration lets sys admins do voice MACs (except voicemail setup) and networking configuration from anywhere.

For really small offices (or home offices) without CAT 5 wiring, the 408's HomePNA interface, which is built into the DSL modem, lets you create a LAN using existing phone wiring and RJ-11 jacks. HPNA is an Ethernet-like protocol in which multiple devices share the wire — only one analog call, though — communicating at 10Mbps. HomePNA NIC cards vary in cost but can be purchased for around \$50.