



## Small Real Estate Firm Finds its Niche to Compete Successfully Against Corporate Goliaths

### About Cavanaugh and Company

Cavanaugh and Company is a privately owned real estate and mortgage services firm based in Middletown, Connecticut with a full-time staff of three, complemented by part-time staffers and independent contractors. Their business is split almost evenly between conventional residential real estate sales and providing local professional support and closing services for national mortgage companies on a fee basis. They have been in business for more than 25 years.

### Situation

Cavanaugh and Company needed a uniquely flexible approach to telecommunications and networking that would help them support large mortgage companies and handle small-town residential real estate sales at the same time. They were looking for a solution that would suit their business without requiring in-house technical expertise.

### Solution

To meet Cavanaugh's requirements, AT&T outfitted the firm with a range of networking solutions. AT&T High-Speed Internet Pro, an ADSL internet access service, provides Cavanaugh staff with email, and broadband-speed access to the online resources, documents, and transaction systems involved with mortgage services. For their core phone system, AT&T recommended Centralink® 1100 which delivers the functionality of a PBX 'switchboard' but without the on-premises equipment. The service offers a variety of standard and optional PBX-like features and that can be activated and deactivated by using a touchtone phone, without having to pay for costly equipment changes. And to help keep Cavanaugh staff accessible to clients, AT&T also delivers cost-effective wireless voice services.

### High Tech Service for Big-Company Business

Like many small, independent firms, the top challenge faced by Cavanaugh and Company is finding a way to win on a playing field that is increasingly dominated by huge nationally known corporations.

Cavanaugh principal Juliet Cavanaugh has succeeded by simultaneously working with – and competing against – very large and well-known corporations in her two distinct lines of business. "In our conventional

real estate business," said Cavanaugh, "we're pitted against firms that are part of huge, nationally-branded real estate corporations with very deep pockets. We have to focus on things they can't do. At the same time, in our mortgage services business, we have to work very closely with, and attract business from large national mortgage companies – by being everything they want in an associate and service provider."

The AT&T networking solution allows Cavanaugh to accommodate the large mortgage providers who do business almost entirely electronically. Cavanaugh staff has ready access to the online resources, documents and transaction systems involved with mortgage services – as well as highly reliable email service, which is the preferred mode of communication for the mortgage company clients.

To simplify their voice communications requirements, the features and functions of Cavanaugh's phone system are actually provided in the AT&T local network. "It's just there for us," said Cavanaugh. "With our small staff, we have no in-house technical expert. We just want the features we need without having to think about them."

### Cavanaugh and Company Facts

- **Business Needs**  
Reliable voice, mobile and electronic communications to handle diverse customer base
- **Networking Solution**  
Network-based PBX capabilities for voice, with wireless service and broadband Internet access
- **Business Value**  
Cost-effective, easy to administer accessibility to customers and business partners
- **Industry Focus**  
Residential real estate and professional mortgage services
- **Size**  
Private. Three full-time employees, plus part-timers and contractors



### High Touch Approach for Small Town Real Estate

In contrast, the real estate side of Cavanaugh's business relies on a distinctly non-technical approach to the customer. Cavanaugh has been able to create a niche market among clients who long for more personal and human attention.

---

**"We are not technically savvy – and we don't want to be. We depend on AT&T to recommend solutions that help us serve our unique customer communities."**

– Juliet Cavanaugh, Cavanaugh and Company Principal

---

"Clients say they come to us specifically because we are not like the huge national chains," said Cavanaugh. "Our strategy is to bring them back to a kinder, gentler time when service meant coming to an office and actually meeting with a person, not listening to a 'talking house.' It's about showing homes in person, not on the Internet, and about lowering the pressure and speed a bit. That is precisely what we can do better than the corporate firms. We may have only a fraction of the listings of a big firm, but we can service each one far more attentively and personally."

For Cavanaugh and Company, this strategy means keeping the 'technology' in the background, in favor of the personal contact. For example, they see voice mail as a last resort, rather than standard procedure and strive to have agents answer phones in the office whenever possible.

And Juliet Cavanaugh and her team almost always shut off their cell phones after eight pm. "Oddly, clients seem to respect us for that," Cavanaugh said. "And they actually love the fact that we never, ever show their homes on Sunday, which is unheard of in the real estate business. Yet, it wins us customers."

### The Relationship is Key

"I once made the mistake of going with a bargain-basement phone service, thinking I would cut expenses," reports Cavanaugh. "I learned my lesson. Since coming back to AT&T, any issues I have are quickly handled. We are not technically savvy and we don't really want to be. That's why we rely on AT&T for solutions that work for us with minimal attention. I have someone I can go to that can recommend to me what I need and explain it to me plain and simple.

"That is precisely the type of service I offer to my client base," said Cavanaugh. "It's all about personal relationships. If you can delight clients, and make them love you, you will have references and referrals until the end of time. That's what we live on – not to be huge, but to just be really good."

**For more information contact your AT&T Representative or visit us at [www.att.com/business](http://www.att.com/business).**

