

ReadyCLT

Customer case study

ReadyCLT is an organization dedicated to helping minority-owned businesses navigate COVID-19. Launched in 2020, the nonprofit helps business owners stay afloat during the Coronavirus pandemic.



Ready CLT

<https://www.readyclt.com/>

Location: Charlotte, NC

Founded: 2020

Industry: Nonprofit

Users: 7

Setup timeline: 24 hours

Top features: Nextiva App, Call groups, and HD Voice

On March 27, 2020, the federal government approved financial relief for small businesses due to COVID-19. As a part of a \$2.2 trillion economic stimulus package known as the CARES Act, millions of companies sought to receive financial assistance.

Almost 30 million small businesses scrambled to understand relief options — and do it while making payroll. PPP, EIDL, and PUA had different requirements, uses of the proceeds, and a labyrinth of timelines.

CEO of the Charlotte LGBTQ Chamber of Commerce, Chad Turner, grew concerned with the impact on over 35,000 businesses.

With the Charlotte Small Business Coalition backing, Turner founded ReadyCLT as an inclusive way to help the local business community navigate restrictions and stay open safely.

In particular, small businesses needed to:

- ✓ Navigate the paths to obtain small business grants and loans.
- ✓ Acquire Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for employee safety.
- ✓ Inform the community about changes to business hours and availability.

Company owners found it difficult to get relief from the Small Business Administration. America's largest banks had long waitlists while deadlines loomed.

Following public health mandates that inhibit commerce, small businesses risk losses, including closure. ReadyCLT was driven to change Charlotte's economic outcomes stemming from the pandemic.

Solution

Upon founding ReadyCLT, Turner contacted Daniel Pentecost and [CLT Geek](#), an NGLCC Certified LGBTBE, Nextiva partner, and trusted IT expert within the community. Pentecost quickly set up a website and adopted Nextiva for its business communications needs.

“We went with Nextiva because I had used the platform extensively before — including in my own office. I knew it could take us from zero to 100 within 24 hours.”

Pentecost explained. “I trusted it would perform on Wi-Fi and could power the seven phone extensions we needed for the team to start tangibly assisting small businesses. We installed the Nextiva App on their laptops and phones. Then we set them loose.”

ReadyCLT could begin serving local businesses in North Carolina's metropolitan hub seemingly overnight.

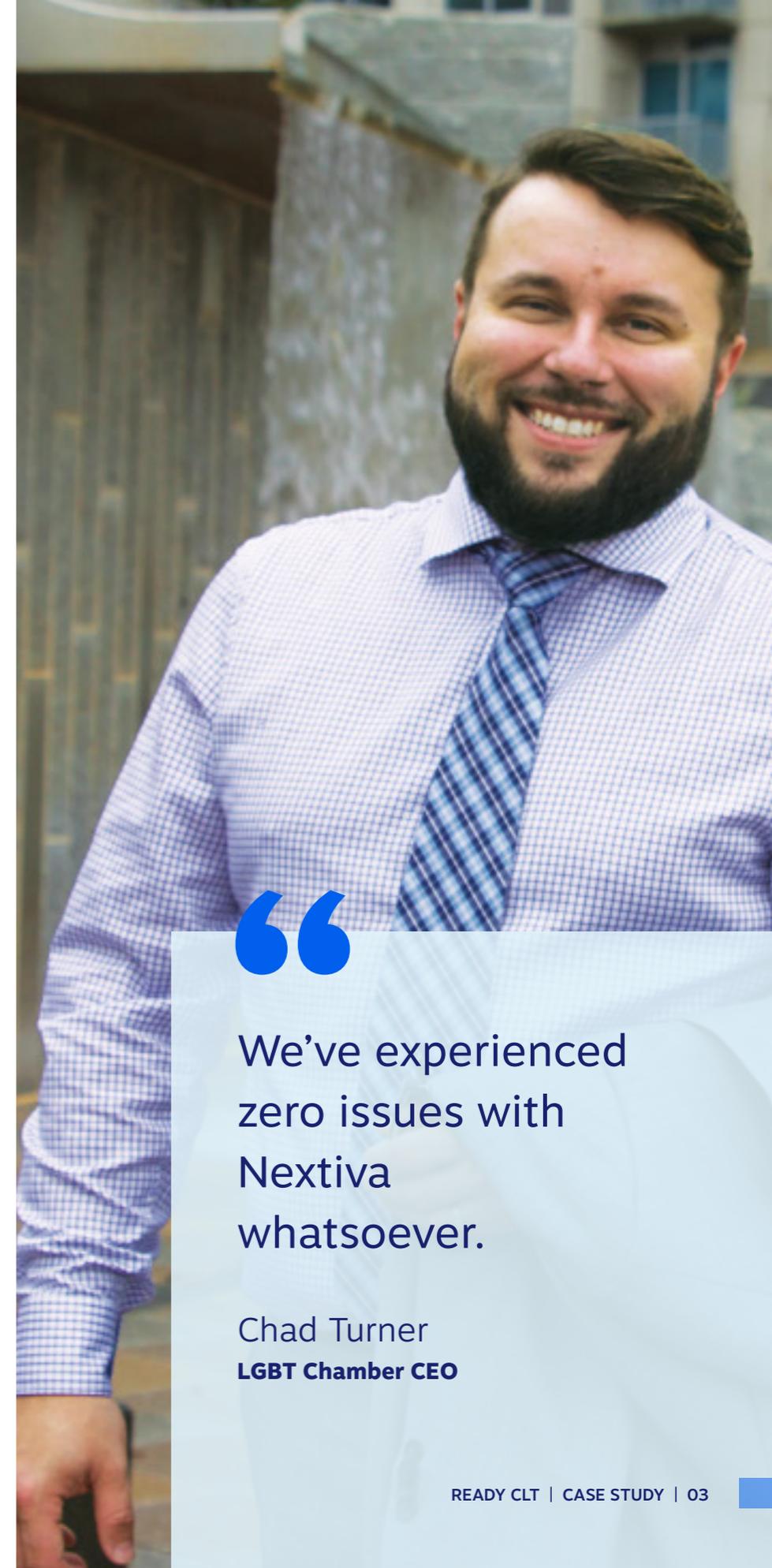
Using Nextiva, the ReadyCLT "guides" began proactive outreach to local minority-owned businesses.

They guided business owners through relief options, launched advertising campaigns, and distributed PPE (masks, face shields, and hand sanitizer).

“We've spoken to over 8,000 businesses, directed 170 small business grants, and provided 165,000 pieces of PPE to the city,” says Turner. Over half of the businesses ReadyCLT engaged with had less than two weeks of capital available.

Turner estimates ReadyCLT interacts with 100 businesses per day using Nextiva's [virtual phone system](#). Turner credits the company's industry-leading uptime, reliability, and usability as key benefits of adopting the platform.

“What we've been able to accomplish using Nextiva's platform is amazing,” says Turner. “We've experienced zero issues with Nextiva whatsoever. That's been a major benefit for us — given the high volume of calls we're on every day and the magnitude of those calls for the business owners we are helping.”



We've experienced zero issues with Nextiva whatsoever.

Chad Turner
LGBT Chamber CEO



Nextiva was a miracle for ReadyCLT and the Charlotte small business community.

Daniel Pentecost
Founder of CLT Geek

Swift deployment resulted in more meaningful conversations

Pentecost attributes Nextiva with his rapid launch of ReadyCLT. He established a new website, logo, marketing package, and phone service, over a span of 24 hours. He has kept running continuously throughout the pandemic. As Turner describes it, CLT Geek succeeded in "building the plane while we were flying it."

"Our usage of Nextiva, while seemingly simple, is powerful and a testament to the trustworthiness of the platform," says Pentecost. "The core desire of ReadyCLT was to answer every call. We couldn't risk missing calls or sending them to voicemail. This was in stark contrast to the hours-long hold times businesses faced when calling government offices. We knew we could do better."

Pentecost configured Nextiva with call groups to distribute calls to its distributed team. The staff installed the Nextiva App on their laptops or mobile phones to begin making calls.

Since the phone system is cloud-based, there wasn't a need for physical phones.

"This lean, iterative deployment is the kind of project CLT Geek loves but with which most other voice providers fall short. Nextiva helped us exceed client expectations."

Lasting impact on the Charlotte business community

The City of Charlotte has received over \$154 million in CARES Act funding. The U.S. government directed \$30 million to small business grants and \$20 million for ancillary assistance with partner grants and workforce development.

"Nextiva was a miracle for ReadyCLT and the Charlotte small business community," says Pentecost. "To think that we've been able to help hundreds of businesses with thousands of employees receive these much needed funds is a testament to the strength of Charlotte's small business leaders. We are grateful to Nextiva for helping us be of service to the community through this time."

Results

- ✓ Set up a commercial VoIP phone system in one day
- ✓ No additional hardware or telecom equipment
- ✓ Made over 8,000 inbound and outbound business contacts
- ✓ Local business community received more than \$154 million in relief

About Nextiva

Nextiva powers cloud-based communications for over 100,000 companies. Its phone, video, customer experience, and analytics solutions work seamlessly in one platform. U.S. News recently named Nextiva the best business phone system of 2021, out of eight VoIP providers.

See how Nextiva accelerates your growth a [Nextiva.com](https://www.nextiva.com).