

Industry: Graphic Design
Installation: 14 ShorePhone
IP 230 phones
ShoreGear 40
BRI Router
Date of Install: Early 2006



Challenge:

Conservatree, a graphic design and print company, knew it wanted to find an alternative supplier that would offer an IP-based communications system at a reasonable price and not tie it into any future upgrades.

Solution:

ShoreTel's IP telephony system was installed within three weeks of the order being placed, and enables employees to work remotely and enjoy the same voice functionality as if they were at their desk.

Benefits:

- Future-proofed IP-based communications system that does not tie the company into any future upgrades
- Cost-effective telephony solution from the equipment perspective as well as the ongoing maintenance - Conservatree expects VoIP to be the mainstream voice technology of the future
- Expected ROI in two years – achieved twice as fast as a traditional non-IP-based communications system
- Greater productivity, as employees can log in to their phone preferences from anywhere in the office or even connect through a VPN when working remotely; using speed dial lists it is quicker to contact clients and suppliers
- Advanced call features – for example, integrated voice mail and e-mail plus a choice of five voice mail greetings
- Ease of use and management – with IP-based telephony systems, Moves, Adds and Changes are easier to administer, and it also reduces the number of network access points required, as voice and data can use the same connection
- Rapid roll-out – implementation within three weeks from order placement
- Shorter lease times and Conservatree owns the equipment at the end of the contract

Summary

When it was time to upgrade its Siemens voice communications system, Conservatree, a graphic design and print company, knew it wanted to find an alternative supplier that would offer an IP-based communications system at a reasonable price and not tie it into any future upgrades. ShoreTel's IP telephony system was installed within three weeks of the order being placed, and enables employees to work remotely and enjoy the same voice functionality as if they were at their desk. In addition, ROI will be achieved in two years and the system is far more cost-effective than other solutions available on the market today.

Conservatree

Conservatree is a graphic design and print company based in Reading and employees 16 people. Conservatree has been designing and printing stationery, promotional literature, marketing collateral, books, reports, newsletters, posters, postcards and leaflets for more 14 years.

Time for a change

By 2006, Conservatree was ready to upgrade its voice communications system. The company had been leasing a system from 3Com for five years, but it was only as the contract reached the end of its life that Conservatree realised it would not own the telephone system at the end of the five years. So the company decided to look elsewhere, especially as the cost of upgrading to Voice over IP (VoIP) was prohibitive using the same technology as their existing system.

Telephony companies were asked to provide quotes for the cost of upgrading the voice system and providing new communications features using brands such as Qualcomm, NEC and the incumbent, Siemens. By coincidence, Chris Goslar, partner at Conservatree, had met Ron Brand from Link-Connect, a communications reseller, at a networking event when Brand had discussed the possibility of Conservatree creating a corporate identity for Link-Connect. Since then, the two had developed a trusted relationship and so Goslar asked Link-Connect to pitch for the communications business as well.

Link-Connect recommended an IP-based telephony system from ShoreTel®. "Brand told me ShoreTel had a good system and suggested I come and look at it", recalls Goslar.

"We knew the Siemens system already, as we had been using it for five years," continues Goslar. "We looked at the NEC system, but we did not test it because once I had seen the ShoreTel system in action and tested it, I knew we had found a system that offered everything we wanted. I also trusted Link-Connect to install it, so I felt comfortable choosing the ShoreTel IP-based telephony system."



“ShoreTel’s IP telephony system is future-proofed, does not tie us into any upgrade plans and allows people to work remotely or log on from anywhere in the office. I would definitely recommend it to others.”

– Chris Goslar,
Partner at Conservatree

Conservatree had made a list of features any communications system it chose had to offer. These included:

- The ability to handle calls coming in for three different companies and identify which company the caller is trying to contact, as Conservatree operates under three different trading names;
- VoIP functionality, as Goslar wanted a software-based system in order to simplify administration, conduct Moves, Adds and Changes (MACs) easily and future-proof the system;
- Intuitive voice mail programme;
- Call handling solutions;
- Autoattendant functionality.

“With the ShoreTel system, all these features were bundled into one system, so it had everything we needed and was pretty much plug and play,” says Goslar.

Rapid roll-out in three weeks

In addition to the ShoreTel IP-based telephony system, Conservatree bought 14 ShoreTel IP 230 telephones. Two engineers from Link-Connect visited Conservatree’s offices after the order had been placed to check the company had sufficient cabling and to assess its needs in order to programme the communications system accordingly.

This meant that when Link-Connect installed ShoreTel’s system at Conservatree, it was pre-programmed and could replace the Siemens system extremely quickly. “The whole process from the time we placed our order until it went live took three weeks”, reveals Goslar. Link-Connect was also responsible for training Conservatree’s 16 staff on how to use the system. “But”, adds Goslar, “the phones are so intuitive it does not take too long for users to work out how to use them.”

A cost-effective and future-proofed system

Conservatree is extremely pleased with its new phone system: it is not only resilient and secure, but also enables staff to work more productively. “Using VoIP technology, I can now work anywhere in the office and only have to log into the phone system to enjoy the same features as if I’m at my desk”, explains Goslar. “I can also log on remotely from home through a VPN connection, which means I can work more productively wherever I am.”

He is also confident that the company’s new communications system will cover their needs in the future as well. “The future is going to be VoIP, which means we will be able to talk to customers without paying for calls”, believes Goslar. “From that point of view we have a future-proofed system”. What’s more, at the end of this lease (which is three years instead of five), Conservatree will also own the phones, a benefit it did not enjoy under its last supplier’s contract.

Goslar believes the ShoreTel IP-based telephony system has tremendous cost advantages for Conservatree. “With our old Siemens system, I had to buy a separate card or system to have VoIP, at quite a high cost”, exclaims Goslar. “With ShoreTel the overall cost for the system is significantly lower, but more importantly, the whole system is geared towards VoIP, which is a big benefit for us”. He estimates that the company will achieve a return on investment in two years—less than half the time he would expect from a traditional non-IP-based system.



“Another big benefit is that because the system is network based, we have halved the number of network access points we need.”

– Chris Goslar,
Partner at Conservatree

In the meantime, Conservatree’s employees are enjoying many new telephony features they did not have before. For example, the voice system is integrated with the company’s email system, so when an employee has a voice mail message waiting for them, he or she receives a message in their email inbox. There are also several voice mail options available, in fact, users can select from up to five different greeting messages. “It’s a benefit as we did not have that functionality before”, explains Goslar. Other features the company is looking at implementing include directory listings for all clients and suppliers on short dials, thereby speeding up the communication time, as well as introducing some remote cordless phones.

“Another big benefit is that because the system is network based, we have halved the number of network access points we need”, adds Goslar. “We used to require two network points—one for the phone and one for the computer. Now the phone has a switch on the back, so we can plug the phone into the network point and the computer into the back of the phone. This means we can have more devices on the network, which is a huge benefit.”

“I had not heard of ShoreTel before I spoke to Link-Connect, but it’s a good telephony system”, concludes Goslar. “It is future proofed, we are not tied into any upgrade plans and it allows people to work remotely or log on from anywhere in the office. I would definitely recommend it to others.”