

ShoreTel and Prudential Fox & Roach Realtors



Prudential Fox & Roach Realtors Improves Bottom Line with ShoreTel



CHALLENGE

Prudential Fox & Roach Realtors, with over 70 offices, had many disparate phone systems and some of those systems were no longer receiving vendor support. The organization needed to standardize on a single voice system and wanted one that it could cost-effectively deploy in every newly acquired office.

SOLUTION

ShoreTel provided a comprehensive Pure IP Unified Communications (UC) solution for the organization, including ShoreGear voice switches, voicemail servers, and ShorePhone IP telephones.

BENEFITS

- Prudential Fox & Roach can now bring new offices online in one day. ShoreTel's IP Unified Communications solutions are easy to administer, bringing management and control of the system in-house and saving thousands in third-party outsource fees.
- Prudential Fox & Roach is able to stay ahead of the competition with tools that enable it to connect agents and real estate customers more quickly, regardless of where agents are working.
- The ShoreTel UC system is flexible, keeping up with all of the expansion and contraction changes at every one of Prudential Fox & Roach's offices, without the need for IT staffers to travel to administer the system.



ShoreTel's Pure IP Unified Communications (UC) Solution Helps Prudential Fox & Roach Stay Ahead of Competition by Enhancing Client Relations and Maximizing Savings

Prudential Fox & Roach Realtors® is the number one home services company in the U.S with over 70 offices in Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. Like all full services home companies, Prudential Fox & Roach must constantly react to the expanding and contracting real estate business and has a constantly changing workforce. During periods of contraction, Prudential Fox & Roach typically employs an acquisition strategy to grow the business. Not surprisingly, many acquired offices have old PBX phone systems, including some that are no longer supported or for which parts are not available.

"We needed to standardize on a single voice system and wanted a solution that could be cost-effectively deployed in each new office and make it quick and easy for us to adapt to constant staff changes," said William Friemann, vice president of operations, security and compliance.

The Selection Process

Prudential Fox & Roach looked at a number of alternatives to replace its disparate phone systems, including new PBX-based systems from Avaya, Fujitsu and more, as well as hosted IP services from a number of carriers, and IP Unified Communications solutions to bring in-house. According to Friemann, ease of installation, management and administration was one of the organization's top criteria, along with cost of ownership, support and training from the vendor, and a wide set of user features. He was familiar with the ShoreTel® UC system from a previous position and looked closely at it again.

"I knew about ShoreTel's architecture, capabilities and customer satisfaction levels and recognized it would be the perfect solution for Prudential Fox & Roach," he said. Friemann's colleagues soon became fans of the system as well and the ShoreTel UC system was selected.

The ShoreTel Switch

Liquid Networks, a trusted systems integration partner of ShoreTel's, provided Prudential Fox & Roach with more than 400 ShorePhone™ IP



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telephones and a ShoreTel voicemail server for its main co-location site in Philadelphia. Seven of the organization's offices also each have a ShoreGear® voice switch (either a ShoreGear 40 or ShoreGear 60) plus a ShoreGear T1 voice switch that connects to the co-location site for access to the voicemail server. Five more offices are scheduled to come online.

Connecting People Faster for Increased Productivity

ShoreTel's UC systems are easy to use, simple to manage, flexible, and reliable. With the ShoreTel UC system in place and ShoreWare® Personal Call Manager integrated with Microsoft Outlook®, all Prudential Fox & Roach agents, who are now on the same phone and voicemail system, are using 4-digit dialing to reach colleagues and even dialing them by name. The ShoreTel UC system provides them with integrated messaging, such as directory dialing, contact screen pop, and calendar integration. This means that in addition to ShoreTel's highly functional telephones, Prudential Fox & Roach agents and employees get unified messaging so voicemail shows up in their e-mail inboxes, desktop call control allows them to control the way their phones work, and features like Find Me allow them to have calls track them down wherever they are—at their desk, on their cell phone, or at home if they choose. With Personal Call Manager, employees can quickly browse contacts, make calls from local directories, and see who is calling them and where they are calling from.

"It's easy for agents to forward their ShorePhone IP telephones to their wireless phones to ensure they can identify who's calling them and respond to important calls," said Friemann. "It also ensures clients reach people, not voicemail. In real estate, that's imperative. Mortgage folks are always on the move and they absolutely need their calls to follow them—ShoreTel makes that easy. It's also a great benefit in this field to be able to dial by name and not have to remember phone numbers. It's all about connecting quickly with people—more quickly than the competition."

Connect Customers to the Right Agents for Faster Sales

In addition to ShoreWare Personal Call Manager, Prudential Fox & Roach is using ShoreWare Operator Call Manager for its receptionists. This application provides them with critical information necessary for exceptional customer service. For example, when the phone rings, a call-routing log displays the caller's experience within the system to the Prudential Fox & Roach receptionist. Before transferring callers, the call-transfer screen displays information about who is available to immediately take a call—they have information on every agent's "presence." In other words, they know if an agent is at their desk and able to take an incoming call or if they are in their office but already meeting with someone and therefore unable to be interrupted. The receptionist can quickly look at their screen and make call-routing decisions based on each person's presence status. With this unprecedented level of information, receptionists not only connect callers faster than ever, but also give them the highest level of professional service.

Also, dynamic, online directories eliminate paper directories – which are usually out of date anyway and not usually available online. With the complete company at their fingertips, along with knowledge about who is available and where a caller has already been sent, the receptionist can transfer using a simple drag-and-drop tool to the most appropriate person.

"ShoreTel makes our agents more productive, ensures our customers receive prompt attention from a live human being, and the whole experience is more upscale," said Friemann. "ShoreWare Operator Call Manager presents a very professional image to our clients."

Self-Service Means Huge Savings

Prudential Fox & Roach uses ShoreWare Director for end-to-end management of the ShoreTel UC system. ShoreWare Director is a browser-based management interface that provides easy access to the system from anywhere on the network, enabling easy management of everything, including voicemail, automated attendant and desktop applications. It takes seconds to add a new user and the system automatically updates the centralized database and every voice switch. At the time



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the new user is added, a mailbox is automatically created, the automated attendant dial-by-name and number feature is updated, and online directories are revised. Changes are made just as quickly.

The flexibility of the ShoreTel UC system also is perfect for Prudential Fox & Roach's business. Because offices often change just as the market does—expanding and contracting in size in cycles, the ability to centrally maintain the system without having to fly IT staff members all over the place to make changes is attractive.

ShoreTel's IP Unified Communications solutions also fit nicely with Prudential Fox & Roach's strategy of growth by acquisition. "ShoreTel's solutions are so easy to deploy and manage, and we have developed a reliable, cookie-cutter approach to setting up each new office," said Friemann. "We do it ourselves, and there are no cabling costs. ShoreWare Director lets us do all our own moves, adds and changes, eliminating truck rolls and lowering our phone system management costs to near zero. Most important, when we open a new office, we can typically deploy the system in one day and then do training the next, so that office can be productive faster and start generating leads and new business faster than ever before."