

ShoreTel & DayMen International



New ShoreTel IP Unified Communications System in German and UK operations, now being extended to other global offices



DAYMEN



CHALLENGE

- The need to replace old PBX technology with a more flexible and fully featured IP Unified Communications system with a view to increased customer satisfaction, better productivity, reduced expenditure and improved employee communication.

SOLUTION

- The new system, based around the ShoreTel Pure IP Unified Communications solution, integrates and facilitates communications between multiple offices around the world and with a network of third party dealers.

BENEFITS

- IP connectivity between locations has led to both improved customer service and cost savings, with minimal training needed to achieve high user satisfaction.

DayMen International designs and distributes photographic equipment, its range including high-quality products for both amateurs and professionals.

Headquartered in Canada, the company has UK operations in Wolverhampton, as well as offices in Germany, Australia, the US and a sales team in Switzerland. It sells through a network of partners around the globe.

A Drive For Integration

"Before we discovered IP telephony, our German office was already working closely with the UK," says DayMen International IT Manager Darren Kirby.

The IT systems of the two offices were integrated, he explains, with everything hosted out of the UK: "The UK and German enterprise resource planning (ERP) functions and e-mail systems were designed to work as one," he says. "It's a model we adopted to help with expansion across Europe, so we could just bolt another office onto the system as the opportunity arose," he says.

The German and UK phone systems, however, were run separately, offering no centralised management of voice communications.

"The phone system in the UK was based around a Panasonic PBX, with an old Avaya

set-up in Germany," says Kirby. "The German office needed to relocate following the outsourcing of warehouse functions and a need for more modern office space, so was faced with the prospect of moving an old phone system which nobody liked, or finding something new."

Already alert to the possibilities that a move to an IP Unified Communications solution might bring, Kirby started to explore options. "At first we were only looking to replace the German system with a traditional PBX with an IP module," he says. "We evaluated all the usual suspects – Avaya, Siemens, Mitel – all of whose products could do the job. Then by chance I was talking to our US office which was using an IP Unified Communications system from ShoreTel."

Further investigation showed that not only was the ShoreTel IP Unified Communications system feature rich, and designed with no single point of failure, but could also be attached to a wide area network and work with other products on that network.

"The level of integration that was possible with applications like Microsoft Outlook® appealed to me a lot," said Kirby. "We like to use technology to create efficiencies and keep our headcount down. This looked like a system that we could put into new sites around the world with no difficulty."





Multiple Sites, One Simple IP Unified Communications Solution

ShoreTel's integration partner then set to work implementing the system.

At its heart is the ShoreGear® 120 voice switch, offering call management and the ability to unify communications across multiple locations, increasing employee productivity and enabling customer satisfaction.

The ShoreGear 120 voice switch supports up to 120 IP telephones, soft phones and other IP endpoints using the Media Gateway Control Protocol (MGCP), offering popular features like Caller ID and Message Waiting. Sitting on DayMen's desktops is the ShorePhone® IP 230 telephone.

DayMen's new ShoreTel IP Unified Communications system potentially works across all geographies where the company is active, offering complete feature transparency and replacing the need for multiple PBXs, voicemail systems, automated attendants, and Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) systems.

"ShoreTel's partner did a lot of work off-site so when the new system arrived it pretty much was a case of plug and play," said Kirby. "The UK was up and running first, and I took a configured box out to Germany to plug in there. A morning's work, and we had 28 users ready to go."

Kirby says his wish list for the new system was quite detailed, saving money a key priority: "We were particularly attracted to the ShoreWare® SoftPhone feature, which I thought would help stop our export director running up £600 in mobile bills every time he goes to Russia."

ShoreTel's ShoreWare SoftPhone feature turns a desktop or laptop computer into a telephone regardless of location. As an optional feature of ShoreWare Personal Call Manager, mobile workers can gain access to their complete telephony environment while at home or travelling.

"A number of our people in the UK work a lot from home, so it helps here too," says Kirby. "The beauty of the system is that with broadband in the home, these people can

be dialled directly and the caller is unaware they are not in the office. It's just fantastic to be able to give out a single number that routes through to wherever you are – to your mobile too. There's a definite customer service upside."

The hoped for cost savings on cellular calls have materialised, says Kirby: "We've cut right back on mobile costs, from abroad in particular," he says. "I went to Germany last week and didn't use my mobile once. All my calls went over the Internet."

A Good Reception On The Ground

The new system has been well received by users, says Kirby. "We gave them only an hour's training then sent them on their way," he says. "The way it usually works with new technology is that people only remember 10 per cent of what they are taught and six months down the line need a refresher. After an hour of being shown the ShoreTel IP Unified Communications system they were coming back to me and saying 'Did you realise it can do this?', having figured it out for themselves. Everyone's very happy with it."

Training, he says, was done by ShoreTel and their reseller partner: "My dealings with ShoreTel have been very positive - they all seem very knowledgeable and professional," he says.

Administration, says Kirby, has also been made simple: "The web interface you use for the admin side is very straightforward," he says, a world apart, he claims, from the old Panasonic interface.

"I'm well known for being critical of things I don't like," says Kirby. "If I'm unhappy, I always say so. But I have to say that the ShoreTel system has done everything we wanted it to."

He describes DayMen as 'a business with quite complex needs': "For example, we want a single number for our Swiss staff that will route back to the right place according to whether the caller wants customer services in German, French or English. We've achieved that with a single interface for new Swiss customers, but with the business handled between two different countries. That's quite impressive."



Kirby says that since the initial UK and German rollouts, the Australian office has moved to a ShoreTel IP Unified Communications system, which will be integrated with the UK. "Canada is about to move and the US is thinking of upgrading to a newer ShoreTel system from the one they currently have," he says. "Soon we'll have one system for all needs." This, he says, will aid the user support task: "We will have a single internal IT support number that routes calls based on working hours to the most appropriate team. So, a night time call in the UK will route to Australia."

Kirby says he plans to make fuller use of the ShoreTel system's ease of integration with IT systems. "Here in the UK, we're about to put a Wi-Fi system into our warehouse operation which will integrate with the ShorePhone IP telephones. This is just one of the ways in which our initial ShoreTel investment is still paying us back."