

people who innovate

The Client

UNICEF is the world's leading organisation working for children and their rights. UNICEF was established in 1946 to meet the emergency needs of children in post-war Europe, China and the Middle East.

Headquartered in New York, UNICEF supports children by providing health care, nutrition and education. It protects children affected by crises including war, natural disasters and HIV/AIDS. The heart of UNICEF's work is in the field, with staff working on the ground in more than 150 countries.

The organisation's UK operation is based at two sites: its head office in central London and the supporter services centre in Billericay, Essex.

UNICEF UK works to champion children's rights and to win support and raise money for UNICEF's work with children everywhere.

Realising the benefits

The challenges of raising funds and awareness in the UK for large-scale humanitarian work while operating and maintaining UK communication systems in a cost effective manner led UNICEF UK to draw on its successful relationship with the leading provider of converged IP solutions Redstone Converged Solutions.

By extending its use of Cisco CallManager from one UNICEF UK site to the entire UK operation, and integrating it with intelligent business communications software from IPFX, Redstone Converged Solutions unified UNICEF UK's communications infrastructure into a single and robust communications platform.

The results

- A single, unified communications platform
- Toll free calls between offices
- Improved employee productivity
- More efficient call handling
- Reduced communications costs
- Improved call monitoring
- Remote management and diagnostics

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Steve Field, IT Support Manager, UNICEF



The Challenge

Redstone Converged Solutions first installed Cisco CallManager and new IP telephony handsets at UNICEF UK's Billericay office in 2003 when the charity relocated its supporter services centre there. This was the first part of a two-phase project to have a fully unified communications platform across UNICEF UK's two sites, enabling calls to be handled transparently and efficiently.

Phase Two was to migrate the London office to the new system, but the Tsunami of 2004 led UNICEF UK to postpone this in order to concentrate on the emergency humanitarian response.

UNICEF UK revisited the project in 2006; its two separate phone systems were costly and inefficient, and the roll-out of the unified system was required urgently to facilitate cost savings. The system's additional functionality was also viewed essential to the organisation, for example, video conferencing and conference calling.

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The Solution

In 2006, Redstone Converged Solutions installed Cisco CallManager, including a new IP telephony switchboard and handsets, at UNICEF UK's London headquarters. Quality of Service (QoS) architecture was included to link the two sites and provide guaranteed bandwidth.

Redstone also installed IPFX software at both sites to enable unified, seamless and efficient communications across the organisation.

Field explained, “Cisco CallManager provides the call-processing platform and the IPFX applications provide the essential unified communications functionality. The system had been long anticipated so all our staff were very eager to use it. This helped enormously with change management and the training Redstone provided was also central to smooth adoption.”

Deployment commenced in October 2006. All staff received training between then and go-live in January 2007. Redstone provided a dynamic training programme to ensure that the system was used effectively and its benefits were maximised. This covered basic users, power users and super users.

The Outcome

Redstone Converged Solutions enabled UNICEF UK to achieve seamlessness and transparency across its communications platform, and money is being saved as calls between the two sites are now toll free.

The Billericay office has 35 people using the system and London has 100 users. It is also integrated across all UNICEF UK meeting rooms.

Benefits have been achieved in terms of presence and productivity. The receptionists are able to see when staff are busy or available to take calls, and they can route calls to them accordingly. Productivity improvements have been achieved because call volume has increased as a result of calls being handled more efficiently.

The system's ability to monitor call times and route them dynamically has also contributed to UNICEF UK meeting its Key Performance Indicators and Service Level Agreements.

The communications system for the two sites can be managed centrally from London. As an additional layer of support, Redstone can see remotely who is logged in, who is taking calls and, if UNICEF UK's IT Manager is unavailable or away, Redstone can perform remote diagnostics.

Summarising, Field said: “Redstone met our needs on various levels, from the correct system specification to their flexible approach during project implementation. We now have a unified and efficient system, which has become part of our everyday processes and puts us in a position to measure our performance and efficiencies more closely.”

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