

Redstone Converged Solutions Case Study

people who innovate



The Client

Sharp Electronics is a leading manufacturer of electronic equipment, appliances and components for the consumer and business markets. Dedicated to the development and manufacture of electronic equipment, it has one of the widest ranges of business and lifestyle product portfolios under a single brand name in the world.

The Corporation employs 47,750 people, of which nearly half are employed outside Japan. It operates in 30 countries and its products are distributed to 164 countries worldwide. The company's new state-of-the-art UK headquarters is situated close to Heathrow Airport at Stockley Park. The new building boasts a video conferencing suite, training rooms and purpose built showrooms for customer demonstrations.

Realising the benefits

Relocating to its new headquarters presented a number of technology challenges for Sharp UK. Whilst addressing immediate business needs, it also wanted to future proof the building design and IT set-up to accommodate for any future requirements. Having had a relationship with the company for more than ten years, Sharp UK turned to voice and data solutions provider,

Redstone Converged Solutions for the provision of a secure and reliable IT infrastructure, and a new telecoms platform.

The results

- Remote workers have more flexibility as they each have their own personal telephone number and can log on to the system from wherever they are
- Staff can now access their messages via any tool, e.g. laptop, mobile or PDA, no matter what format the message is in, e.g. voicemail or email
- The new network is robust, secure and resilient
- New conference call facilities have reduced operational costs and increased efficiency

Sharp Electronics UK

“Redstone Converged Solutions was the obvious choice to roll out a new IT and telecoms infrastructure at our new office. It has always offered us innovative solutions to resolve our business issues and we have enjoyed an excellent working relationship with the company over the years.”

Ken Hobbs, Network & IT Security, Sharp Electronics UK



The Challenge

Relocating to a new headquarters in Stockley Park, a business park close to Heathrow Airport, led to a host of challenges for Sharp. It meant the closure of its two other offices in Manchester and Watford and the subsequent relocation of 120 office-based staff. The company also employs a large number of home-based and remote workers, so a reliable communications and IT infrastructure was vital to support the needs of all its employees.

The company decided to move to the Greater London area to aid the growth of its brand. It was felt that the relocation and reorganisation of its business was vital in driving the future development of its three strategic product areas of LCD TV, copier/printer solutions and solar systems.

Commenting on this move, Paul Molyneux, Managing Director, Sharp Electronics UK, said. “We are certain that consolidating our business into one office will improve our customer focus, and also enhance communications and business processes. It will also ensure our internal resources are being used more effectively and efficiently.”

The Solution

Having previously supported Sharp’s existing telephony system at both the Manchester and Watford offices, the company called upon Redstone Converged Solutions to provide the IT and telecoms infrastructure for the new headquarters.

“Redstone Converged Solutions was the obvious choice to roll out a new IT and telecoms infrastructure at our new office,” said Ken Hobbs, Network & IT Security, Sharp Electronics UK. “It has always offered us innovative solutions to resolve our business issues and we have enjoyed an excellent working relationship with the company over the years.”

He continued: “We also chose Redstone Converged Solutions as it was one of the few companies that could provide us with all our requirements - new wide and local area networks, structured cabling and expertise in migrating from our existing telephony system to a Cisco platform.”

Redstone Converged Solutions offered Sharp Electronics UK a choice of three competing telephony solutions. A corporate decision was made to deploy Cisco CallManager IP telephony as the board considered Cisco to be the leader in the provision of IP telephony.

Designed as an open, scalable, and highly reliable telephony solution, Redstone installed a Cisco CallManager IP telephony system. The new solution provides an enhanced, robust telephony system for office-based workers and enables the company’s remote workers to work more effectively on the road or from home.

Redstone also designed and implemented a BT wide area network (WAN) and a robust and resilient local area network (LAN) to enable the secure and effective flow of information, and to provide expansion capabilities to meet any future requirements.

The Outcome

Redstone Converged Solutions facilitated the successful migration from the existing telephony solution to the new Cisco platform. The implementation was thoroughly planned as it was essential that this migration be completed before the Manchester and Watford offices officially ceased to operate.

To accommodate flexible working practices, the new headquarters has many hot desks and remote workers each have a direct telephone number that is contactable from wherever they are working. Sharp’s employees can now access their messages more effectively thanks to Cisco Unity, unified messaging software that allows staff members to manage their messages from home, the office or on the road. The software allows staff to access voicemail messages via email and vice versa, and via any device, e.g. laptop, mobile telephone, PDA.

“We are able to configure the new system internally, which will lead to numerous cost savings in the future,” said Hobbs. “We are also able to try a number of new applications such as ‘Meet Me’ which is a conference call facility. These are applications which we previously wouldn’t have had access to with our old telephony system.”

Hobbs believes the company will benefit from the inevitable cost savings that IP telephony brings once other Sharp offices in the UK roll out the system. Indeed some of the other Sharp organisations, e.g. Sharp Mobile Telecommunications, have planned a visit to the new headquarters to see the new IP telephony solution in action.

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For further information please call or visit us on:

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