

Case Study

Department of Transport



A busy government department needed to upgrade its communications network to keep up with a fast-changing environment

Challenge

The Department of Transport had a telephony solutions that was maturing, with support and parts no longer guaranteed. At the same time, the Department looked to consolidate six different locations down to three in central Dublin, placing new demands on the ICT team.

Rather than upgrade the existing system, the decision was taken to go to tender for a new IP Local Area Network and telephony solution. While this would require a complete “rip and replace”, the long-term advantages of a more agile network were considered more important than any short-term challenges.

The Department wished to simplify the administration of users. Adds, moves and changes were time consuming on the old telephony platform and required specialist skills.

BT saw off the competition to win the tender with an IP network based around the Nortel CS1000 IP PBX, a best-of-breed system that has over 750 call processing and telephony features. The solution met the Department’s needs for a technology that was both resilient and cost-effective to run.

Despite the scale of the implementation there was no downtime. Most of the work took place after office hours at no inconvenience to general users. 500 people are now on the network with the 360 using the latest IP telephones, a combination of entry-level and executive handsets.

Benefits

Having replaced a telephony system which was displaying an increasing number of outages and was reliant on a number of suppliers, the Department of Transport has reaped the rewards of BT’s Network Optimisation proposition which provides Irish customers with a solution that simplifies network infrastructure and optimises its management through the consolidation of vendors, technologies and contracts.

The Department now has a more stable and resilient telephony system that is easier to manage and more cost-effective to run.

“We are already reaping the the benefits of the new system, particularly with the flexibility of making changes,” said Brian Moyne, ICT Manager, Department of Transport. He said that making additions to the old system would have required more organisation of different suppliers and different skillsets on the ground. “None of that is required with the new system. You can literally lift the phone up and move it to any other location with no further configuration required. This year alone we have moved over 100 staff with minimal downtime and disruption to them.”

According to Jeff Hillis, Head of Specialist Sales, the price point of Nortel and its functionality made it a better option than other more expensive technologies. “The business continuity component is particularly strong and shortens the return on investment cycle and can be as much as 30–35 per cent less than its competitors,” he said.

All three core switches have been mirrored so there is a high degree of resilience. In the event of one going down, it takes seconds to switch to another with no disruption of service.

The Department is pleased with a deployment that is future-proofed for further development. An aim of the upgrade was to have an underlying infrastructure that could eventually support other services such as Unified Communications. “It is a job well done and we’re looking forward to a good relationship with BT in the future,” said Brian Moyne.

“The project showcased BT’s ability to give customers precisely what they want while mitigating the risk of the changeover.”

Jeff Hillis, Head of Specialist Sales

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