Case study snapshot
Customer: ADECCO
Industry: Recruitment, HR

Solution
- Fully managed, Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) solution on the Cisco Hosted Collaboration Solution platform.
- Collaboration features include voice, video, instant messaging, presence, web conferencing and mobility.
- Delivered via data centres in Sydney and Melbourne, allowing for a highly available service.
- Cisco Jabber Softphones enable staff to move between offices while retaining the same extension and user experience.
- Optus Managed Router Services are deployed at all sites.
- Detailed reporting, including billing and service levels.

Results
The solution cut Adecco’s telephony costs; improved productivity; gave the in-house service desk power to fix simple moves, additions and changes; shifted management and procurement accountability to Optus; and moved the company’s IT investment from capex to opex.
Overview

Adecco is the largest human resources (HR) solutions provider in the world, with more than 5,000 branches in 60 countries and territories. It has more than 35 branches across Australia and New Zealand, encompassing multiple brands. The company matches more than 2,500 candidates to full-time roles every year in Australia and places 8,000 temporary employees with more than 3,000 domestic clients every day.

Challenge

Adecco relies heavily on its phones; according to Adecco’s Information Management Country Business Partner, Shaun Jessop, the company could survive for a few days without its information technology (IT) systems but would be lost without telephones.

The initial business case for Australia to upgrade its telephony system was driven by the finance department and based purely on cost. It began with an evaluation of the operating cost of using Adecco’s existing platform, quickly broadening to also count the cost of procurement and vendor management from an IT perspective.

The project also presented an opportunity to challenge the company’s culture and working practices. Ultimately, it became much more than an IT roll-out, kick-starting a change-management process and an employee engagement program, resulting from the productivity gains Adecco experienced.

Solution

Adecco has between 650 and 700 users locally. Optus built a dual data centre and Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) platform with built-in redundancy and video conferencing. All sites were brought under Optus management in the new system.

About 80 per cent of Adecco staff opted to switch from desktop handsets to ‘soft’ phones connected by headsets through a computer or personal device. Surprisingly for Adecco, the result has been a cultural shift and enhanced employee engagement because the system is so simple to use. For example, the system shows whether someone is online and Jabber, Cisco’s softphone application, enables users to reach them instantly via click-to-call for voice and video. It also links to Microsoft Outlook, with click-to-call usability.

In choosing Optus, the deciding factor for Adecco was Optus’ value proposition, both for the project itself and the ongoing annual cost. Moving to a UCaaS platform wrapped all the necessary applications together into a single Optus cloud-hosted platform with one monthly invoice covering all communications functions.

“From an IT perspective, Optus provided a very straightforward solution involving a single provider and help desk,” Mr Jessop says. The management and procurement services that come with the UCaaS platform are an added bonus. Adecco worked with Optus to plan and design the two-month rollout. Then a fairly aggressive branch-by-branch rollout began, with work done every night, Monday to Friday. This meant sending one or two people from the project teams to each of the branches to supervise the conversions.

Adecco’s Melbourne head office was left until last so teams could use the lessons learned from the other branches to ensure the most critical and impactful part of the project went smoothly. The four-hour installation went largely to plan.

The moment of truth came when head office employees arrived on Monday morning to find their desk phones had disappeared, replaced by headsets on their keyboards. The system is so intuitive to use, “even the non-technical people simply picked up their headsets, plugged them into their laptops and their laptops started ringing,” Mr Jessop says. “Within an hour they were making their own phone calls.”

Outcome

Adecco achieved its goal of reducing its phone bills but the new platform also delivered other benefits that have increased productivity and introduced wider cost savings.

“The biggest driver was ensuring that we had a reliable telephony supplier and one supplier for all our services, meaning we had one helpdesk to deal with and one set of invoices. That’s simplified not just the IT support, but also procurement and vendor management and so on,” says Mr Jessop.

The Optus UCaaS solution enables the in-house service desk to fix almost all Adecco’s telephony issues, including adding new users and automating call routing and diversions.

Adecco no longer worries about software versions, end of life hardware or technology becoming obsolete. Instead it can focus on other parts of its business and leave the management and procurement of its voice-related IT and communications to Optus.

Importantly, it has also enabled Adecco to move the emphasis of its IT investment strategy from capital expenditure, where it invested in equipment, to operating expenditure, or just paying the bill.

However, most transformative of all for Adecco is its discovery that in an activity-based working environment, a soft phone offers workers mobility that’s not possible in a desk-based environment. Features like click to call and real-time availability have enabled company-wide productivity and cultural benefits.

“You’d be surprised at how quickly our entire workforce picked it up – across our metro areas, but also within our regional branches.”

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