A 'JUCY' communications solution for savvy rental company

By implementing a hybrid Microsoft Unified Communications platform, JUCY have achieved excellent call quality and effective call centre queue management.

SUMMARY

"JUCY gives people the green light to have the time of their lives."

This dynamic tourism company, based in New Zealand, operates services locally, in Australia and the USA, while providing some customer services in Europe for the convenience of their clients. The company has created an experience that caters to the adventurous needs of their customers; whether staying in a hotel, renting a vehicle or taking an ocean cruise. JUCY have it covered in their own unique way. JUCY New Zealand has over 30 locations nationwide and require - quick, effective and instant interaction across its various locations.

In order to deliver the highly robust communications platform JUCY requires to support their business, Lexel worked alongside Zeacom, to deliver a consolidated hybrid Skype for Business solution that provides effective queue management and excellent call quality.

THE CHALLENGE

Running a business with such a diverse product set and multiple locations/countries, requires an excellent communications platform. This platform needs to cater to both customers and staff.

The two key drivers for the business were resiliency and call quality. Through assessment it was determined that JUCY's existing PABX solution running Zeacom Contact Centre was not an economical model to run as this model would require a PABX appliance at each location, which in turn would also require a separate instance of Zeacom at each location. Also this models overblown costs weren't limited to the initial setup costs from a hardware and licensing perspective, there were also significant ongoing support and administrative costs making this model even more cost prohibitive.

In addition, separate instances of contact centre data would have been created in each country, making it impossible to have access to real-time information. Addressing this issue would have required ongoing and significant work in consolidating the data into a single version, causing delays to accurate information.

A workaround had been in place for some time which involved a VPN. While this worked well initially, as workloads increased, this solution no longer met the quality levels required by JUCY. The PABX model also presented a challenge of a single point of failure, which left JUCY feeling exposed and put their mantra of "every call gets answered" at risk.

Offering a 'local' experience to callers was also seen as an effective way of making a great first impression. The challenge for JUCY was to accommodate the multiple regions, covered by a centralised solution.

The above is easy to understand when JUCY's environment is reviewed.

"Our business needs are like white light; until they hit the 'Microsoft prism.' Microsoft technology generates a virtual dispersion of colour, differentiating each requirement and offering a specific solution to address each."
- Tristin King, Head of Technology, JUCY Group.

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LEXEL'S SOLUTION

Ultimately, Lexel believed JUCY were looking to consolidate their environment. With consolidation, JUCY required certainty that whatever solution was deployed, would integrate seamlessly with current technologies. Having the experience of assisting other customers with similar requirements, Lexel was confident a Microsoft solution was the best fit. After an extensive review of several options, JUCY agreed.

Lexel was briefed by JUCY specifically on a Unified Communications project. A discovery workshop was held where all the key deliverables were identified and prioritised.

To achieve the requirement of resiliency, two servers were deployed along with 2 Sonus session border controllers (SBCs) to provide gateway services. The two sets of equipment were installed in different locations to maximize efficiency, improving call quality, while reducing risk. The Skype for Business servers, along with the Zeacom service is installed on a Hyper V platform.

Lexel worked with Microsoft LAR, Insight, to ensure all licensing requirements were met cost effectively, by leveraging existing licensing of JUCY's Office 365 users. Through a discovery process it was determined JUCY were able to upgrade these users to E4 plans (there was a mix of E1 and E3 users). This helped curtail duplications in licensing and contain costs.

Lexel partnering with Zeacom upgraded the contact centre to the latest version. By upgrading Zeacom to run on Microsoft Skype for Business, JUCY gained the ability to run a single instance of Zeacom accessible with high quality audio, eliminating the need for VPNs.

BENEFITS

Contact Centres have changed in recent times and are no longer solely based on traditional phone interaction. Skype for Business's natural integration with Skype consumer was an important benefit. As a typical JUCY client is "on the move" and fairly tech savvy, having one console for support staff to operate in has been a significant benefit. There are also significant cost savings for both their customers and themselves by cutting out mobile calls.

Lexel's solution created a standardised communications platform across the entire organisation. The Skype for Business architecture provided a fault tolerant and very cost effective solution. This was achieved by the underlying application design.

JUCY strive to answer every call. The solution deployed now means calls can be cost effectively routed to and from remote offices, anywhere in the world, if nobody is able to answer the call on the local site.

The PABX function represents only one of many forms of communication both internally and externally. While other solutions can offer features like IM, Presence and Voice, the Microsoft Eco System was able to take the data generated from all forms of communication and interface it with tools that can take advantage of this data. The solution makes data sharing much easier while delivering reduced costs through consolidation.

One of the key values JUCY like to convey is that "they are easy to buy from" (do business with).

JUCY can now offer direct internet based Skype communication into their contact centre, while still capturing the data in Contact Centre reporting system.

Lexel is a New Zealand owned provider of ICT services and solutions to business. We focus on maximising business performance by using industry leading expertise and solutions to streamline IT infrastructure. Twenty seven years in the IT business, Lexel is a known and trusted partner.

We specialise in providing solution consulting, infrastructure design, implementation, project management, outsourcing, support services and procurement. To allow us to deliver this wide range of services, Lexel Systems has partnered with the main technology providers in New Zealand and we have secured the highest level of certifications possible with each of these partners.

This is especially useful for JUCY customers, who are typically youthful, tech savvy tourist. These customers often only have foreign mobile phone plans (incurring roaming charges), and are typically looking to make use of free WiFi connections to reduce costs. The solution has helped reduce Telco costs for both JUCY and their clients without losing data.

Because the Skype for Business solution is an extension of Microsoft products already used by JUCY, staff training was easy and user training costs were minimal.

While competing products can interface with applications like Office, this creates an opportunity for vendors to defer responsibility if an issue occurs. Only Microsoft Skype for Business offers an end to end (from server to user) platform for business.

The use of Skype for Business also supports the use of remote agents from anywhere in world, enabling a single centralised contact centre reporting system. The access to accurate data has helped drive greater efficiency across all global agents.

Managed queues based on region allows for "local" feel and regional customisation.

This was best summarised by Abi Bennett, Contact Centre Manager, JUCY Group, who said "When our American customers call our contact centre they want to hear country music, even if it's not their Genre."

The challenge for JUCY was to accommodate the multiple regions covered from a centralised solution.

SUMMARY

- Skype for Business 2015 Standard Edition.
- Edge services.
- Hybrid deployment.
- Migration from online to on-premise.
- The Contact Centre is running on Microsoft based application utilising SQL.
- Enterprise Voice with SIP trunking.
- NEC PABX Interworking.
- Multi-site deployment - two front end servers with pool pairing.
- Sonus SBC1000 – two sites with inter-site and failover routing.
- All Services run on Microsoft products hosted in data centres.
- All Servers are virtualised on Hyper V.

Based on the current success of the Microsoft platform; additional Microsoft driven solutions are currently being considered. To further extract value from the current platform, a Microsoft CRM solution is currently under review.

KEY BENEFITS

- Cost effective resilient communications platform by standardising on Skype for Business

- Affordable centralised contact centre solution resulting in one single database to manage

- Tailored regional queue requirements from a single centralised system

- Consolidated support for a centralised platform has reduced maintenance costs

- An ecosystem that works seamlessly together based on the Microsoft suite of products

- Enhanced call quality

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