



Links of London choose Vivo Exchange hosted phone service

a vivo case study





introduction to Links of London

LINKS OF LONDON was founded in 1990 and over the last 20 years the company has grown significantly and now has over 60 stores across the globe in cities including London, New York, Tokyo, Athens, Dubai and Hong Kong.

In 2006 the company was acquired by the Folli Follie Group. Folli Follie design, manufacture and distribute jewellery, watches and fashion accessories, with a presence in 25 countries and employing almost 6,000 staff. The group's turnover was approximately €1 billion in 2010.



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background

In early 2010 Links concluded that their head office could no longer accommodate the company's continued growth, and a new head office was necessary. A new office would also allow staff from other locations to join their colleagues under one roof.

Once premises had been identified that could support both the company's immediate needs and long term growth plans, the IT and telecommunications services it would require needed reviewing.

Would it be possible to simplify the infrastructure required, and lower running costs by integrating voice and data services over a single network?.

The existing telephone system had served the company well, but technology had changed significantly over the last few years and the relocation was a chance to consider the benefits of a new phone system. Links evaluated conventional on-site phone systems and hosted telephony services. Key factors included:

- > Speed of implementation – could a new phone system be installed and operational by the 'live' date for the new head office?
- > Could the new phone system deliver the features and facilities that would be needed?
- > Costs – what would the initial capital outlay and on-going running, support and upgrade costs be?
- > How scalable would any new system be? Could it cost effectively support the addition of new users and facilities and the growth of the business over the next few years?
- > Could the head office, other corporate sites and the retail stores be integrated into a single unified environment, with improved and cost efficient site to site communication?
- > Would it be possible to simplify the infrastructure required, and lower running costs by integrating voice and data services over a single network? Could a controlled, phased transfer over a few weeks be delivered? It would be essential to minimise disruption to staff, and more importantly suppliers and customers.



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the approach

Links decided that a hosted phone service would meet their key criteria, and selected the Vivo Exchange hosted phone service.

No separate voice lines are required – the connection is built on dual, geographically diverse 30Mb connections from different providers, accessing a MPLS (multi-protocol label switching) network to support data and voice.

Polycom IP phones connect to dedicated LAN points at each desk, and onward to the MPLS network, which is directly interconnected to the Vivo Exchange hosted platform.

New phone numbers were provided for each user, however their existing direct dial in (DDi) numbers were retained and diverted to the new extensions. So on the morning of the move to the new office, both old and new numbers could get through, eliminating any disruption to outside callers.

Receptionists operate a PC based ‘reception console’ to handle incoming calls, with overflow calls during very busy periods being directed to an auto attendant, so callers can select which department they go through to. Out of hours call go directly to voicemail and are dealt with the following day.

Standalone fax machines around the office are no longer needed as inbound faxes are now delivered by a ‘fax2email’ facility straight to users’ Outlook inbox, as part of the initiative to simplify network connections. Outbound faxes can be sent from Microsoft Outlook using ‘email2Fax’.

Vivo set up facilities such as departmental hunt groups, voicemail and so on. Links’ own administration staff can now access the service via a web portal to make changes to the service configuration, for example managing moves and changes, adding out of hours messages etc. Such changes can be implemented quickly, and without the involvement of the supplier.

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benefits

The service is highly scalable – the initial configuration of 100 or so users can easily be expanded at short notice

- ✓ The service was delivered on time, for each phase of the move, without disruption to users or incoming calls.
- ✓ The hosted approach kept capital expenditure on equipment to a minimum, and also eliminated the annual support, maintenance and upgrade charges that a conventional phone system typically require.
- ✓ The zhosted platform delivered all the facilities required, such as auto attendant, music on hold, receptionist console and so on, and can also provide a wide range of additional facilities.
- ✓ The existing phone numbers ran in parallel with the new number range for a period to ensure a smooth transition for external callers.
- ✓ Access to the web portal allows administration staff to make changes when needed without the involvement of the service provider.
- ✓ Conventional ISDN line rental costs have now been eliminated, as voice traffic is consolidated onto a unified voice and data network.
- ✓ The service is highly scalable – the initial configuration of 100 or so users can easily be expanded at short notice.
- ✓ Other sites and retail stores can be added to the service in the future, potentially delivering further cost and integration benefits such as no cost for site to site calls, and simplified dialling plans.

interested in finding out more?

If you'd like to discuss these issues further and see what initiatives may be most appropriate for your business, please contact Andy at Vivo Telecommunications for a free consultation. We can look at the specific issues your business is facing and talk through the sorts of ways you could save and the typical savings you might expect to make.

To find out more contact Andy

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