

Dimension Data

Delivers Leading-Edge Customer Service Using the Cisco IPCC Bundle



Background

A world leader in providing network infrastructure solutions to global corporations, Dimension Data strives to provide its customers the highest possible levels of service and solutions. Part of an emerging new category of systems integrator, Dimension Data does much more than simply bundle and sell networking equipment: the company offers multichannel e-business solutions and services designed specifically for the integration and connectivity requirements of global companies.

"We're not a traditional integrator focusing only on routing and switching," explains Chris Wolff, Vice President of Marketing for Dimension Data Boston. "We carefully evaluate our customers' business needs, develop applications to serve those needs, and then provide the infrastructure and lifecycle support."

Key to this lifecycle support is the Cisco IP Contact Center (IPCC) Bundle, an integrated call management solution that includes all the communication hardware and software modules needed to quickly deploy an IP telephony-based call center. Dimension Data is initially deploying the Cisco IPCC Bundle at its Boston support hub to enable its staff to respond to customer inquiries more efficiently and effectively, using IP telephony call handling technology.

Meeting the Need for Seamless, Integrated Service

A cornerstone of Dimension Data's support strategy is the ability to provide immediate support to its global customers, regardless of whether the customer contacts them via phone, Web, or e-mail. To deliver this high level of support and flexibility, the company is moving strongly toward embracing IP technologies, especially IP telephony and unified messaging. Cisco solutions have proven a key part of that strategy.

"We want to give our customers a seamless interface to Dimension Data," explains Wolff. "We want them to be able to have choice and flexibility in communicating with us, and we want to be able to provide them with consistency of response for the service delivered, regardless of the media that they choose."

Dimension Data chose the Cisco IPCC Bundle because of its ability to support this multi-channel access. An integral part of Cisco AVVID (Architecture for Voice, Video and Integrated Data), the IPCC Bundle is built on standards-based IP telephony technology that can easily support voice, data, Web, and e-mail communication. A complete call management solution designed to work "out of the box," it includes the Cisco Intelligent Contact Management Server (ICM), Cisco CallManager PBX software, Cisco Queue Manager software, a Cisco Voice Gateway, and Cisco IP telephones.

Prior to installing the Cisco IPCC Bundle, Dimension Data had only basic call management capability. The Cisco IPCC Bundle integrates with the company's existing call center database applications, and adds a rich array of features such as intelligent call routing, automatic call distribution (ACD) functionality, network-to-desktop computer telephony integration (CTI), Queue Management (QM) for call queuing, and consolidated reporting. Cisco's ecosystem of support partners complete the solution, providing the services needed to smoothly install and maintain the IPCC Bundle as part of any company's existing infrastructure.

Rapid Deployment Supports Mission-Critical Services

Dimension Data is initially deploying the Cisco IPCC Bundle to a select set of users at its Boston operations center, but needed a solution that could easily expand throughout the company's call centers and could integrate seamlessly with other applications.

"We take calls using a Siebel Systems call center, and can pass the calls to other Dimension Data call centers around the world to apply subject matter expertise to a specific technical issue, or when a center exceeds its capacity for call management," explains Rich Schofield, Vice President of Strategic Technology at Dimension Data. "We needed a very scalable, fault tolerant, redundant call management application that can integrate well with the critical databases we use for our services."

At the same time, Dimension Data needed a system that it could install and run quickly in the Boston location, to support its mission-critical applications. Fortunately, the Cisco IPCC Bundle is a turnkey solution—a standard package that includes everything needed for a small to midsize support site.

"The ability to roll anything out quickly is critical in our industry, and we're running a production facility, which runs on a 24x7 basis," explains Wolff. "When a customer has an event occur, our service-level agreements mandate that we respond to that customer under very tight deadlines. We don't have the luxury of being able to take our systems down, work through a lengthy install, and bring them back up again. So for us, the Cisco IPCC Bundle made a lot of sense, because it could ensure us of a rapid deployment of the call management solution. We could tap the advantages quickly with very little downtime. Our test deployment was up and running in a couple of hours."

Gaining the Competitive Edge

Dimension Data's investment in Cisco IP technology is already paying off, providing a distinct head start over its competitors.

"I think the competitive advantages are tremendous," says Wolff. "From our global operations center, we deliver services unlike anybody in the world. If you're a multinational company that needs to have high-end infrastructure or application support, whether it's in the U.S., China, or Brazil, we can deliver those services efficiently from our operations center. And the Cisco IPCC gives us the ability to seamlessly integrate our support to customers, using any method they choose, extending that competitive advantage even further."

As part of the deployment process, Cisco engineers worked closely with Dimension Data's technical team to help tailor the solution to meet its specific requirements, such as support for the Siebel Systems call center.

"Dimension Data holds elite engineering credentials, and we are constantly interfacing with Cisco's engineers to exchange ideas, share best practices, etc. Deploying the IPCC Bundle provided a fantastic opportunity for our teams to work in parallel, and compare thoughts about contact center management approaches. As engineering experts, we held Cisco's team to a high standard. They helped us feel confident about the new solution, and we are very pleased with the results," says Wolff.

"The IPCC Bundle made sense because of our existing commitment to Cisco and the AVVID environment, as well as our overall comfort level with Cisco," says Wolff. "The solution is performing very well for us right now, and in terms of engineering project management, technical support has been fantastic."



Best of all, the Cisco IPCC Bundle provides plenty of room to grow. Dimension Data is expanding rapidly, with more than 12,000 employees in over 30 countries, and needed a solution that could accommodate new needs quickly, without sacrificing performance or reliability.

"The Cisco solution can potentially be extended dramatically," explains Schofield. "Our Boston site is a sort of North American hub location for delivery of services. We have satellites in New York and Washington, and we expect to extend our services with additional satellites in other time zones in the U.S."

With its IP-centric architecture and rapid deployment capability, the Cisco IPCC Bundle will enable Dimension Data to meet its commitment to deliver world-class service to customers, no matter what method those customers choose. And, by choosing industry-leading Cisco networking technology and services, Dimension Data can be confident that its solution will meet its needs well into the future.

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