



Central place for Cisco in Wilhelm & Co. office of the future

Real estate developer Wilhelm & Co. is installing Cisco IP telephony and network technology in its new head office in Brussels.

COMPANY

Wilhelm & Co. is a Brussels real estate developer primarily active in developing multifunctional projects with a focus on retail. The company was founded in 1988 and has 50 employees, with three branches in Belgium (Brussels, Louvain-la-Neuve, Liège) and three abroad (Lisbon, Luxembourg, Paris).

BUSINESS BENEFITS

- Modern installations in new office
- No more telephone costs for calls between branches
- Convergence of speech and data networks reduces maintenance costs
- Wi-fi network offers scope for connection with BlackBerry



Case Study

CHALLENGE

Until recently, Wilhelm & Co. personnel were located in three different offices in Brussels. This was an awkward way of working, which the company no longer wanted. The project developer moved into its new head office on Goedheidsstraat in mid July 2009. Wilhelm & Co. wanted a modern communication platform for its new offices. They didn't want the classic Matra telephone exchange, outdated and obsolete, to move with them.

SOLUTION

Wilhelm & Co. went to ask Cisco and telecom specialist Damovo for advice, upon the recommendation of its ICT partner. The Cisco partner installed a Cisco CallManager Business, 50 Cisco IP telephones, 5 Cisco Catalyst 3560 switches and a Catalyst 4507R switch. Laptop users have access to the company network and the internet thanks to ten Cisco antennas.

Real estate companies like Wilhelm & Co. like to use their offices to show off, and consider them to be like a business card. The head office, for example, meets all the criteria for a so-called low-energy building; a first for Brussels. The modernisation of the ICT and telephony fits in with this ideal. "These two things have grown towards each other in recent years. This is an evolution that we as real estate developers certainly

don't disapprove of; on the contrary, we fully subscribe to this method of working in the office of the future, and IP telephony is an important building block", says Jean-Philippe de Foy, administrative director at Wilhelm & Co. "It's true that Cisco didn't perhaps offer the cheapest solution, but overall it was the most reliable. And in our business the quality of service is central."

USER BENEFITS

Colleagues in Liège are also in the list of contacts on the telephone. They make telephone calls via the CallManager in Brussels. This means the administrative director expects the communication costs to fall. "We make telephone calls over the internal network", says de Foy. "So we will also link our foreign offices to our communication server. And we are also looking at softphones. This means that as long as we have an internet and VPN connection, we can always be contacted on the same number, abroad, at home, or at any of our sites."

All external calls to Wilhelm & Co. are answered at the reception desk. Wilhelm & Co. is therefore also going to integrate an extra application with the Cisco telephone software. This should help to simplify the management of calls that are waiting. "The advantage of Cisco IOS, the operating system for

"Pay good attention to your telephony project, work out all the details and opt for ease of use, reliability and evolution possibilities."

Jean-Philippe de Foy, administrative director at Wilhelm & Co

the communication server, is that the software is open. You can easily integrate software from other sources. So we also want to link our BlackBerry devices to the wi-fi network. This turns the mobile phones into sort of DECT devices, and the employees within the company walls can call via the CallManager at cheaper rates", explains de Foy. "ICT and telephony are constant concerns for me. I spend almost half my time on optimisation. With the technology from Cisco, the possibilities are almost endless."

PARTNER PROFILE

ICT service provider Damovo is a Cisco Registered Partner and has 30 years' experience of networks and software. "For a company with several branches, IP telephony really is a must", says David Cenci of Damovo Belgium. "Wilhelm & Co. is also targeting top quality in its ambitions for technological innovation. The benefits are there for the taking."