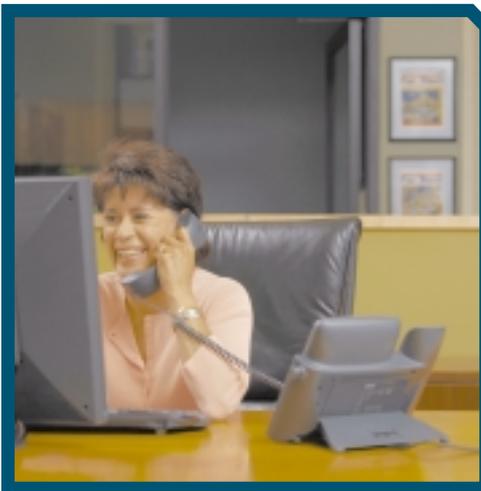


CISCO IP TELEPHONY SAVES MONEY AND IMPROVES CUSTOMER SERVICE FOR LOCAL LIVERPOOL FIRM

For a small business new technology can be a daunting prospect. When Liverpool-based Morecrofts Solicitors invested in a Cisco IP communications solution from BT the company saw customer service improve, contact with its clients was easier, and it even saved money.



Cisco brings enterprise technology to a small business

Based in Merseyside in North East England, Morecrofts Solicitors is a small, local business with 72 employees and 12 partners. With three offices in Liverpool, the company provides a range of legal services comprising commercial and property, probate and inheritance tax advice, and family and civil advice to around 6000 local businesses and individuals.

When Morecrofts decided to move its main office to provide a better working environment for staff and customers and to improve its image with a prestigious new head office, the company saw an opportunity to enhance its communications infrastructure. Morecrofts had been using three separate PBXs (private branch exchange) at each of its three offices. While this was adequate, it meant having to manage and maintain three separate telephone systems which was not ideal. Also, Morecrofts sees new technology as a key enabler for future growth and development for small businesses.

At Morecrofts, communicating with clients in a personal and sympathetic way is essential to its business. The telephone is usually the first way new clients contact the organisation and the main way in which clients stay in contact with their personal solicitor. Fast and easy access to a solicitor is very important especially when clients are involved in complex, stressful and emotional court cases.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

CUSTOMER NAME

- Morecrofts Solicitors

INDUSTRY

- Business Services (Legal)

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Make it easier and quicker for clients to have direct contact with solicitors
- Help improve company image
- Invest in new technology, without the risk of high cost and business disruption

NETWORK SOLUTION

- Cisco LAN and IP telephony solution across three offices, utilising an existing wide area network infrastructure

BUSINESS VALUE

- Complex-free integration of technology that saves money and improves customer service
- Enable staff to respond to, and stay in touch with, clients more efficiently
- Simplification of telephone system management
- Ability to consolidate and rationalise time and resources

“Our business, and the quality of service we deliver to our clients, is dependent on fast and responsive communication. The Cisco IP telephony solution has helped us to save money and to be more efficient but, most importantly, it is improving customer service. It’s all the small, innovative and useful features that make Cisco’s IP telephony system so valuable to a small business like ours.”

Julie Johnson, office manager,
Morecrofts Solicitors

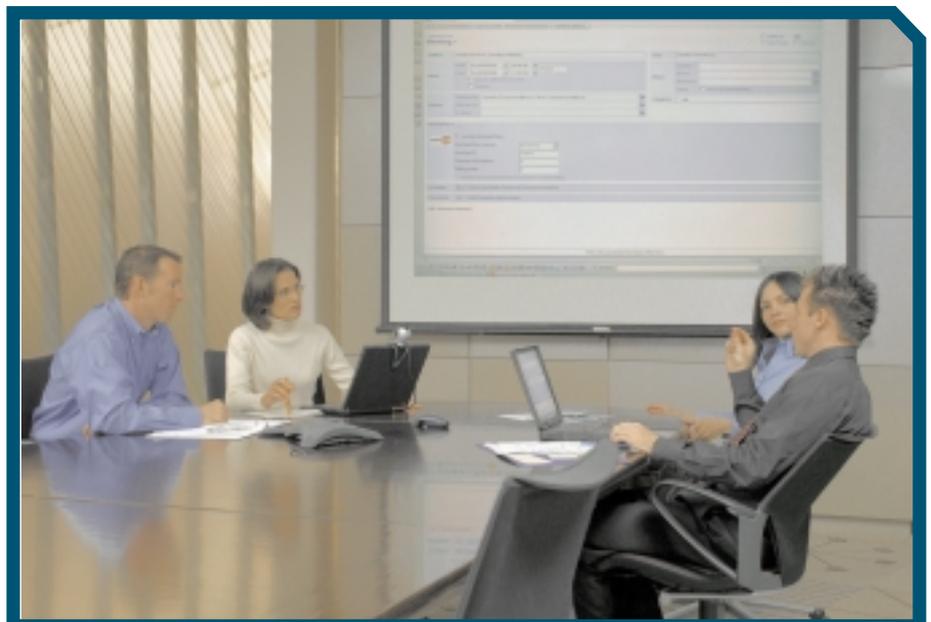
Morecrofts had looked at a number of different technology options, but it was IP telephony that presented the most practical and cost-effective solution. For a small business like Morecrofts, the Cisco IP telephony solution offered the benefit of utilising Morecrofts existing investment in technology. It is also simpler to install and is easy for staff to use.

Cisco IP telephony delivers quality, reliability and durability

Out of the 12 vendors that were considered as potential suppliers Morecrofts chose Cisco Systems. Julie Johnson, Morecrofts office manager, says, “It was clear that IP technology would give us a telephone system that would last for five to ten years rather than just the next 18 months. We were very impressed by Cisco and the quality, reliability and durability of the equipment. Cisco telephony is easy to use; it offers a lot of bolt-on features and it allows us to add new functions as they come onto market.”

Morecrofts already had a BT wide area IP network (using Cisco routers) providing a connection for high-speed data traffic between the three offices. This network is based on Cisco AVVID (Architecture for Voice, Video and Integrated Data). As well as providing a platform for their existing data requirements, the AVVID architecture allows their inter-office telephony traffic to run across the same network, and is designed to allow other IP applications to utilise it in the future.

Morecrofts is using 100 Cisco IP phone handsets, Cisco Unity for unified messaging and Cisco CallManager, which manages the call traffic. A standard Cisco software application, running on the Receptionists’ PCs, allows them to monitor which employees are on the phone – providing a simple and cost effective way of managing calls and dispatching them to the most appropriate member of staff. Morecrofts has also upgraded its network with new Cisco routers and has deployed new, high performance, Cisco LAN switches in each of its offices to give the quality of service required to support the IP telephony systems.



The Cisco LAN and IP telephony solution was installed at Morecrofts by a team from BT Local Business, a division of BT Business dedicated to servicing smaller business customers.

Andy MacGregor, Managing Director, BT Local Business Liverpool, comments, "The deployment at Morecrofts shows that IP communications is highly relevant, and offers many benefits, to small businesses as well as to large corporates. The cost reductions and productivity enhancements that Morecrofts are now experiencing, as a result of the new IP solution, demonstrate the value that converged solutions from Cisco and BT can offer to all areas of business."

Cisco's unified messaging provides a real business edge

"Our business, and the quality of service we deliver to our clients, is dependent on fast and responsive communication," says Julie Johnson. "The Cisco IP telephony solution has helped us to save money and to be more efficient but, most importantly, it is improving customer service. It's all the small, innovative and useful features that make Cisco's IP telephony system so valuable to a small business like ours."

Morecrofts' solicitors spend a large proportion of their time out of the office in court. The Cisco IP telephone system lets those solicitors easily communicate with the office and their clients wherever they are working. They can call up their own telephone extension and listen to phone messages and, because of the Cisco Unity unified messaging, they can also listen to emails. It means that solicitors can respond to clients more efficiently because, previously, if the relevant PA or receptionist was out of the office, the solicitor would have to wait for their return to pick up client messages.

"Cisco's unified messaging provides the real business edge for Morecrofts, because it means that clients can stay in touch with us easily, and when they need to speak to their solicitor they can do so quickly," says Julie Johnson.

The Cisco IP telephony solution is saving Morecrofts money, since it has eliminated the cost for telephone calls between the company's three offices. Because the Cisco IP telephony solution utilises Morecrofts' existing Wide Area network connections between offices, there is no need to use the national telephone network (PSTN) to route internal calls.

This also helps to improve customer service because a solicitor who needs to consult a colleague in another office, or forward a caller, can simply dial the appropriate extension number rather than dial an external number.

Cisco IP telephony is invaluable to small businesses



Nicholas Maguire, Territory Market Manager for Cisco Systems, comments: "Morecrofts has truly grasped the benefits that a converged infrastructure can deliver to the legal sector, not only has it immediately reduced costs and gained greater operational efficiency, but it has also built a platform for future application deployment. Through careful planning the company now has an architecture that will enable it to create new communication services based around video conferencing and wireless communication. I feel that the company's bold approach, matched with its solid business acumen, will continue to set Morecrofts apart from the competition."

Other features of the Cisco IP telephony solution also help save money and increase efficiency. Morecrofts can now carry out its own extension changes and moves because with the IP telephony system, adding a new handset simply means plugging it into the local area network. This saves calling out a telephone engineer which can take two days and costs £100 each time. Prior to installing the Cisco solution, Morecrofts had four reception staff, in different offices. Cisco's IP telephony system has enabled the company to create one reception serving all offices, which has freed up the reception staff to concentrate on fee-earning work and helping customers.

The ability to have a centrally managed and updated telephone directory, accessible from every handset, means finding telephone numbers is much quicker. Working from home is also made simpler because office phone numbers can be simply re-routed to divert to an employee's home number.

The Cisco IP telephony system is even helping Morecrofts generate new business. Although clients are rarely left on hold for long, if they need to wait for an extension to answer, a standard Cisco software application allows them to listen to brief information about all of Morecrofts services which they may have been unaware that the company provided.

Morecrofts is proud of its position as a leading small business in Liverpool, a point underlined when the Lord Mayor of Liverpool opened its new headquarters. "Morecrofts has achieved the reputation for being the leading provider of family law in Merseyside by providing a high-quality service. Our customers – particularly those involved in family law – need a fast and simple way to contact their personal solicitor and the use of Cisco's IP telephony solution has made that so much easier and more efficient," says Julie Johnson



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