

Equipment Dealer Closes Sales Faster with Cloud Collaboration



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Raymond Handling Concepts Corporation

- Equipment Sales, Rental and Service
- Headquarters in Fremont, California; operations in nine Western states
- 225 Employees

CHALLENGE

- Improve communications reliability in remote offices
- Gain a competitive edge by making it easier for teams to collaborate
- Keep costs down

SOLUTION

- Switched to collab9 Hosted Collaboration Solution for voice, video, unified messaging, presence and instant messaging, screen sharing, and paging
- Limited on-premises equipment to Cisco phones, fax adapters, and routers

RESULTS

- Acquired reliable, high-quality voice and video in all locations
- Shortened time to close sales, and resolved customer help desk issues 40 percent sooner
- Lowered total cost of ownership (TCO) for voice communications

Raymond Handling Concepts switched to collab9 Hosted Collaboration Solution, for better collaboration and lower costs.

Challenge

Raymond Handling Concepts provides advanced material-handling systems, forklift service, parts, and rentals, and used forklifts. Approximately 225 employees work at headquarters in Fremont, California, and from seven other offices in the Western United States.

Before, each office had its own private-branch-exchange (PBX) system. But unreliable service in remote areas led to lost sales and service revenue. "When the link to one of our California offices failed, the carrier couldn't restore service for two weeks," says Richard Johnston, IT manager for Raymond Handling Concepts. "We lost US\$20,000 a day in sales and service business because customers couldn't reach us." Even very brief outages disrupted the business. During conference calls for the sales organization, for example, sometimes everyone from one office would lose their connection. Or voice quality became so poor that people couldn't hear each other.

The old PBX systems were also expensive to maintain. "Anytime we made a change, an IT staff member had to take time out to travel to

that office," Johnston says. "Replacement parts were becoming harder to locate. And user downtime was becoming unacceptable."

The IT team wanted a more reliable WAN and a better communications solution. Company executives agreed, but only if the total cost of ownership (TCO) would not increase.

“Salespeople usually get price quotes in minutes instead of waiting 24 hours or more. The collab9 HCS service is improving the bottom line by helping us close sales sooner.”

– Richard Johnston, IT Manager, Raymond Handling Concepts Corp.

Solution

Now Raymond Handling Concepts uses the collab9 Hosted Collaboration Solution (HCS), a Cisco Powered cloud service based on the Cisco Hosted Collaboration Solution. “We prefer hosted solutions because we don’t have to manage on-premises hardware,” Johnston says. “We like the quality of Cisco IP phones and collaboration applications. And we had confidence that collab9 could make the transition smooth.”

Now communications is a predictable operational expense. The company pays a simple, monthly per-user fee that includes voice, video, unified messaging, presence and instant messaging, and screen sharing. The only capital expense was for Cisco Unified IP Phones and a fax adapter because offices connect to collab9 using the same Cisco ISR they already used for Internet access.

Employees can collaborate from anywhere, using Cisco Jabber software on company-issued laptops.

All employees who work in an office also have a Cisco Unified IP Phone 8945. A color display plays high-quality video. Making a video call is exactly the same as making a phone call. “It’s easier to communicate with video,” Johnston says. “We can see if someone is concerned about a timeline, for example, even if they don’t say it. Better communications leads to better decisions.”

The transition went smoothly and did not interrupt business. “The collab9 team is fantastic and worked with me at every stage of the process,” says Johnston. At the suggestion of collab9, Raymond Handling Concepts moved to the hosted solution in phases. First came the hosted WAN solution. The communications and

collaboration applications followed. Now collab9 is making the caller experience even simpler by providing a single company phone number to reach anyone, in any office. An auto attendant routes calls over the WAN to the right office.

Results

Faster Pace of Business, for a Competitive Advantage

“The collab9 HCS service has helped us reinvent the way we collaborate as a company,” Johnston says. Before, for example, field salespeople who needed a price quote left a voicemail or email message for someone at headquarters. They often had to wait a full day or two for a response because their message got buried in crowded voicemail or email inboxes.



“Not only does the hosted collaboration solution increase productivity, it also reduces recurring monthly costs. It made an immediate positive impact on our bottom line.

– Richard Johnston, IT Manager, Raymond Handling Concepts Corp.

Now salespeople can use presence software on their laptops to find an employee who is authorized to give quotes and is available right now. Then they just click to send an instant message. “Salespeople usually get price quotes in minutes instead of waiting 24 hours or more,” says Johnston. “The collab9 HCS service is improving the bottom line by helping us close sales sooner. We project higher sales as a result.”

PRODUCT LIST
Routers
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cisco ISR 2901 and 2921 Integrated Services Routers
Collaboration
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• collab9 Hosted Collaboration Solution (HCS), a Cisco Powered cloud collaboration service• Cisco Unified IP Phones 8945• Cisco ATA 187 Analog Telephone Adaptor

The IT team, distributed across several offices, also collaborates more easily now. With a click, they can send an instant message, share screens, share files, or start a video call. And when employees leave voicemail messages for the IT team, recipients can see them in their email inbox and listen from anywhere. “As a result, we’re resolving employee helpdesk issues 40 percent sooner, on average, helping people get back to work sooner,” Johnston says.

Agility to Add and Remove Users

Collab9 can add new employees to the hosted solution in just 15 minutes. That means new employees can start using voice and collaboration services on their first day, helping them get to work right away. Turning off accounts is just as quick, keeping costs down. “If we later merge with or acquire a company, adding the new employees to our communications system will take almost no effort on our part,” Johnston says.

Lower Total Cost of Ownership

Overall TCO has decreased. One reason is lower capital costs. The new Cisco phones cost just 20 percent of a new voice system. In addition, the company no longer has to train staff to manage servers and applications for communications and collaboration. “Not only does the hosted collaboration solution increase productivity, it also reduces recurring monthly costs,” Johnston says. “It made an immediate positive impact on our bottom line. Our initial investment in phones was just \$40,000, compared to \$200,000 for a new phone system. At the same time, we reduced our overall monthly recurring costs.”

Next Steps

Raymond Handling Concepts plans to start using more capabilities of the collab9 HCS cloud service. One is the contact center cloud service. Another is a Cisco TelePresence service that employee teams in different offices will use to communicate and collaborate with very high-quality video and audio, for an in-person experience. The company president might also use Cisco TelePresence technology to supplement his quarterly in-person visits to each office.



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