

## Data Mining and Analysis Firm Connects Offices Across United States

Graphet uses Cisco Unified Communications to improve teamwork and customer service.

### Executive Summary

#### Graphet, Inc.

- Industry: Professional Services
- Location: Cincinnati, OH
- Number of Employees: 5

#### Business Challenge

- Integrate remote employees and enhance collaboration

#### Business Results

- Improved remote connectivity and collaboration, through three-digit dialing and transfers
- Added voicemail boxes and other phone features, enhancing customer service
- Increased security, as remote employees access data through VPN

#### Network Solution

- Cisco Smart Business Communications System

### Business Challenge

Graphet Inc. is a small business that helps large commercial and industrial customers across the United States to conserve energy and reduce costs. The company offers management, technical, and systems services, in addition to sophisticated data mining and analysis techniques that allow the firm's customers to profile energy use and develop sustainable programs to be more efficient. Graphet has five full-time employees, and works with subcontractors and part-time employees, plus program developers working out of their home offices in California and Kentucky.

The company's major challenges were integrating its geographically spread-out

workforce and competing with larger companies. "Being a small business makes it important for us to have a professional presence in the marketplace and offer our customers the same methods of communicating with us that they would get from a larger firm," says Nikhila Rao, co-owner and general manager. "We needed the ability to transfer calls, to provide employees individual voicemail boxes, and to securely share data between employees."

In the past, Graphet's remote program developers could tie up all of the phone lines gathering information for their work. This circumstance made it difficult for clients to reach other Graphet employees, potentially costing them new business.

The company wanted to make it easy for its developers to collaborate without tying up all the phone lines. Also, because the staff traveled frequently, "having our developers answer the phone at times and be a transparent part of the Cincinnati office to our customers was very important," says Rao.

### Business Results

AgillIT, a Cisco® Select Certified Partner with a unified communications specialization, installed the Cisco Smart Business Communications System. The Cisco Smart Business Communications System is helping Graphet in a variety of ways:

- Improved connectivity and collaboration. "We are now able to call remote employees by dialing a three-digit extension," says Rao. "And the quality of the call is as if I was making an internal call. Psychologically it makes a big difference. We feel and act more like a team."

This connectivity extends to contract employees, too. “We want each contractor to present himself as a regular employee,” says Rao. “Now, email and a phone number convey that they are part of our team.”

Employees stay connected when they are away from their office by using Cisco IP Communicator to make and place calls or retrieve messages. “One of my colleagues was out of the office, and when he started up his IP softphone, it was like he was in our office,” says Rao. “I can forward all his calls to that extension, and he is available to all his clients. It is creating better teamwork. We are able to reach each other easily and leave messages that we can collect whether we are in the office or on the computer. We can forward calls to cell phones when we go to lunch.

- Improved customer service through individual voicemail boxes and other features. Graphet can now assign contractors personal voicemail boxes. Employees like having individual voicemail boxes because they frequently travel and work remotely. Co-workers can leave or forward messages for each other and transfer customer calls, instead of leaving sticky notes or emailing phone messages.

The Cisco solution is making Graphet more efficient and responsive to its customers. “I can receive voicemails and faxes in my inbox on my computer,” says Rao. “If I’m out of the office, and only have email access, I know who has called and can instantly get back to them. I can be more attentive to my customers. Our response time is an important metric for our company. It’s enabling us to give more responsive customer service and present a more professional appearance.”

“The value of our new Cisco system is that I can connect with a customer so I can get the job done today instead of waiting a few days,” says Rao.

- Increased security. “The customer base we work with is very particular about security,” says Rao. “The integrated VPN solution in the new system has better security than we had before. I trust the Cisco technology, along with our internal processes, to provide the security that our customers expect.”

### Solution

Graphet evaluated five or six solutions. “When we found the Smart Business Communications System solution, we felt like all our needs could be met,” says Rao. “It had all the features, plus the capability to expand. AgillT helped us do the math to demonstrate how, over time, it would pay for itself.”

Cisco Unified IP Phones 7941G models were deployed in the main office. AgillT configured the Cisco Unified IP phones for remote workers and shipped them out. The modems configured automatically from the individual ISPs. All that the employees had to do was plug in the phone, and they were up and running.

Rao appreciated the training that AgillT provided. “I would like to know enough about the system so that, if there is an issue, I can articulate what or where the problem is. AgillT did that, and worked with us on how the backup feature works. So if there’s ever a need, we can recover the configuration they did.” AgillT is also able to manage the Cisco network remotely for Graphet.

### Next Steps

Graphet is considering integrating contract employees into the phone system if the project term is long enough. The company may decide to set up mailboxes for some contract employees, and use the login/logoff feature that would allow those employees to take advantage of the phone system.

“The value of our new Cisco system is that I can connect with a customer, so I can get the job done today instead of waiting a few days.”

—Nikhila Rao,  
General Manager,  
Graphet, Inc.

### For More Information

To learn more about Cisco solutions for small business, go to:

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To find a Cisco partner near you, please visit: [www.cisco.com/go/partnerlocator](http://www.cisco.com/go/partnerlocator)

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### Product List

Cisco Smart Communications System:

- Cisco Unified Communications 500 Series for Small Business, which includes:
  - Cisco Unified Communications Manager Express
  - Cisco Unity® Express
  - Integrated LAN switching capability
  - Integrated wireless LAN access point
  - Secure Cisco IOS Firewall
  - Encryption
  - Cisco VPN Technology
  - Cisco Configuration Assistant
- Cisco Unified Call Connector
- Cisco 800 Series Routers
- Cisco Unified IP Phones 7941G series
- Cisco IP Communicator



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