

ShoreTel and Ferrier Hodgson



Office Relocation Prompts IP Telephony Move for Ferrier Hodgson



CHALLENGE

- Faced with an aging PBX system and the decision to relocate to new offices, Ferrier Hodgson decided to switch to a scalable unified communications system.

SOLUTION

- ShoreTel provided the firm with ShoreGear Voice Switches, ShorePhone IP Telephones and ShoreWare Director for system management. The solution was rolled out to 105 users at Ferrier Hodgson's new offices.

BENEFITS

- The ShoreTel system allows more employees to work from other locations, such as client sites, and use the same robust features as if they were sitting at the corporate office.
- The ShoreTel UC system scales easily, which means Ferrier Hodgson can continue to add users as the company grows.
- With ShoreTel's least-cost routing, Ferrier Hodgson is saving on interstate calls, with call costs between its offices being completely free.
- Because of ShoreTel's rich feature set and ease of use, employee productivity has skyrocketed.



Insolvency firm credits ShoreTel UC system for mobile workforce productivity gains.

When leading insolvency specialist Ferrier Hodgson relocated to new offices in central Sydney, a refresh of its PBX system to voice over IP (VoIP) seemed like the right call. For years, the company had leased a Samsung PABX system and Ferrier's IT manager, Mustafa Mohabbat, felt that it was time to make the transition to a leading-edge IP telephony technology platform.

Mr. Mohabbat wanted a new system that would require minimal time for maintenance and administration, reduce the number of calls to incorrect numbers and improve call routing throughout his organization. Also, he wanted a system that was easy and efficient to deploy, would reduce cabling costs, and would easily scale as his business continues to grow.

"VoIP is the way telephony is heading – I didn't simply want to relocate the old system, which was coming to the end of its lease. We felt it would be more cost-effective to move to a VoIP phone system as part of our new office systems," Mr. Mohabbat said. "The most

compelling issue for me was our need for a system that offered an upgrade path for the future," he added.

With the help of integration specialist, PTS Communications, Ferrier Hodgson conducted an intensive review and evaluated comprehensive demonstrations of IP telephony systems from ShoreTel®, Samsung and Avaya. At the end of this evaluation period, Ferrier Hodgson selected the ShoreTel IP Unified Communications (UC) system. Nigel Sinclair, PTS Communications director, said that the main concern of staff at Ferrier Hodgson in moving to an IP solution was voice quality.

"The audio quality of the ShoreTel UC system during the demonstration was a standout. This feature alone set the ShoreTel offering apart from Samsung and Avaya," he said.

IT staff were also concerned with future scalability and ease of use: "The Samsung system we tested still relied on a PABX at the back-end and was limited in its future, while with Avaya, the handsets weren't that great and the software was a bit cumbersome," said Mr. Mohabbat.



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*IT Manager
Ferrier Hodgson*

An Expandable and Cost-Effective Solution

Ferrier Hodgson also engaged PTS Communications to deploy the ShoreTel UC system. The solution included a ShoreGear E1 voice switch, which interfaces over an ISDN network to its service provider Primus, and two ShoreGear 120 voice switches, which are capable of supporting up to 240 IP telephones. ShorePhone® 560 and 230 handsets were also rolled out to 105 users at the company's new offices.

“One of the primary reasons to move to VoIP was the ability to roll out the solution across several sites in the future and have the capability to establish phone connections for staff when they were working offsite,” Mr. Mohabbat said.

Being a provider of corporate recovery, advisory and forensic services, Ferrier Hodgson has a fleet of “roaming” staff who often work with clients externally.

“If for any reason our staff needs to establish a site elsewhere, the system allows them to create a connection back to the head office here and have their own phone extension up and running within seconds,” Mr. Mohabbat said.

This capability is possible thanks to the Office Anywhere feature of the ShoreWare® Call Manager desktop software, which enables remote workers to make calls from a laptop anywhere in the world once they establish a connection back to Ferrier's Sydney office.

“Employees can answer and transfer calls as if they were at their desks,” Mr. Mohabbat said. “This is a compelling feature and something we can add to whenever required. Also, you can set users up at different sites and use VPN links that are already in place. All of a sudden, call costs between offices become free, and calls interstate are only the cost of a local call because we use least-cost routing. In the future, the cost of calls will be far cheaper.”

Ferrier Hodgson also saved on cabling costs by moving to IP telephony. Instead of having extra cables for voice, the company simply piggybacked onto the data network cabling, eliminating the need for extra telephone cables.

ShoreWare Call Manager software also provides information about incoming calls and call history and enables users to type in a call recipient's name and make the call using a PC without ever having to touch the handset.

The complete phone system can be managed using the browser-based administration interface, ShoreWare Director, from anywhere on the network.

At the server, the ShoreWare Director software enables Mr. Mohabbat to create user groups, account for every call and capture the cost of the call, providing great visibility of all aspects of the voice infrastructure. Ferrier Hodgson purchased 108 extension licences, 98 mailbox licences for voicemail, and one licence for the operator at reception. ShoreWare Director helps reduce maintenance costs and allows Mr. Mohabbat to manage the system entirely in-house, carrying out moves, adds, or changes quickly and easily.

Ease of Installation and Administration

The ease of administration of the ShoreTel UC system impressed Mr. Mohabbat. “Deploying the ShoreTel UC system was as easy as simply placing handsets on desks, connecting them, doing a bit of configuration and up it went. The hardest thing is typing people's names into the system,” he said jokingly. “Compared to a traditional PABX, implementation was a cinch. It was a matter of plugging in the ShoreTel UC system, turning it on and away it went.”

For Mr. Mohabbat's IT staff, the system's ease of management has helped reduce time spent on system administration. “The administration side of the system is easy. The software was rolled out to client sites with minimal effort. We configured it centrally using a Web interface. In addition, all the phones can now be controlled centrally and we have an upgrade path should we need to expand into other offices.” he said.

Return on Investment (ROI)

In addition, the company has already seen a return on investment. “Productivity has increased as you can specify what you want to do with all of your calls. Users can change their preferences – ringtones, routing of messages etc.– to wherever they are located,” Mr. Mohabbat said. “Users can be added or



“Productivity has increased because specifying what you want incoming calls to do and where they go is easier. Users can change the queues, the ringtone, all their messages and route everything to ensure calls go to them wherever they are,”

Mustafa Mohabbat

*IT Manager
Ferrier Hodgson*

deleted by us internally and with a minimum of fuss. With the ShoreTel UC system, users have control over their telephony and can make any changes themselves.”

Other ShoreTel features are helping staff at Ferrier Hodgson improve productivity. For example, manual dialling of numbers is no longer needed. Employees can automatically dial out using a PC with the click of a button. Calls can be directed to the correct location now, saving time.

“The Total Cost of Ownership and the ROI were justified by the fact that IT staff can manage the system in-house,” added Mr. Sinclair of PTS Communications. “Integration with the Ferrier Hodgson billing software and unified messaging, which is planned, will further increase ROI,” he added.

Into the Future

Mr. Mohabbat is already considering rolling out the ShoreTel UC system throughout Ferrier Hodgson's offices across Australia, and potentially into Asia. The company has offices in China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore.

“As PABX systems at our offices across the world come out of lease and there is a business case for it, then ShoreTel will be explored further to replace those systems as well,” said Mr. Mohabbat.

About ShoreTel, Inc.

ShoreTel is a leading provider of *Pure IP* Unified Communications solutions that enable companies of any size to seamlessly integrate voice, video, messaging and data with their business processes. Independent of device or location, ShoreTel's unique distributed software architecture eliminates the traditional costs, complexity and reliability issues inherent in other solutions. Founded in 1996, ShoreTel has achieved broad industry recognition for this

proven technology, and continues to deliver the highest levels of customer satisfaction, ease of use and manageability while driving down the overall total cost of ownership. For more information, visit www.shoretel.com or call 02 9959 8000.

About Ferrier Hodgson

Established in 1976, Ferrier Hodgson is Asia Pacific's most widely recognised and highly respected provider of turnaround, reconstruction and forensics services. The Ferrier Hodgson Group has over 40 partners and 300 staff and offices in all major Australian capital cities, China, Hong Kong, India, Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, Philippines and Singapore. In addition, our affiliation with the world's foremost risk consulting company, Kroll, ensures Ferrier Hodgson can be on the ground seamlessly and quickly in all major international markets to combine global expertise with strong local knowledge. Visit: <http://www.ferrierhodgson.com>.

About PTS Communications

PTS communications has more than a decade of experience in the provision of office technology with a range of telephone systems and accessories to suit a variety of business sizes. PTS provides solutions with a high level of technology, which are easy to use and extremely reliable. PTS Communications supply and service products anywhere in Sydney. Visit: <http://www.ptscommunications.com.au>.