



TRAFFORD COLLEGE SUCCESS STORY

Trafford College credits ShoreTel with big savings

CHALLENGE:

- When North and South Trafford Colleges merged, the newly formed Trafford College needed a flexible and reliable system that would provide seamless communication across the college's four sites, and help reduce the cost of managing communications at separate locations.

SOLUTION:

The previous Philips and Alcatel TDM-based PBX systems were migrated over to a single ShoreTel Pure IP Unified Communications system comprising:

- ShoreTel Voice Switches, ShoreGear-220, ShoreGear-120, ShoreGear-90, ShoreGear-50
- ShorePhone IP Telephones, models IP-560, IP-265, IP-230, IP-110

BENEFITS:

- Strong single-image platform offering simplified management and ease of use
- Flexible, scalable and reliable solution for future growth
- Cost savings with calls now free between the sites

Trafford College was formed in September 2007 following the merger of North and South Trafford Colleges, and has approximately 9,500 students and four sites in the Greater Manchester area. The main goal of the college is to prepare its students for a happy and fulfilled working life in a wide range of sectors: young people leaving school can choose from traditional academic or vocational courses; adults can take up learning for the first time, or enhance their career with higher level qualifications. Local employers also use the college's business training unit to help up-skill their employees.

The mission of Trafford College in Manchester, England, is to prepare learners of all ages for a successful and rewarding working life, through its exceptional engagement with modern business and innovative approach to learning. Trafford College caters for more than 3,500 teenaged students, and more than 6,000 adults from the area. With such a large and disparate student body, effective communications are essential for providing leading educational services—from processing enrolment calls to reporting.

However, after the merger of the North and South Trafford Colleges, the telecommunications department realized it had inherited a conflicting combination of analogue and digital telecommunications systems that were no longer capable of meeting the requirements of a multisite organisation. The phone system was struggling to deal with both internal and

external calls and unable to provide a seamless communications experience across all campuses. As a result, the college decided to completely overhaul and standardise its telecommunications platform, and deploy an easy-to-manage single image IP-based phone system across all sites.

Trafford College's existing communications solutions were not integrated, so all the calls to the college were routed via the PSTN by the two different telecommunications companies that had served the former colleges—all on a cost per call basis. This meant that the college received two sets of bills from different providers, and it was difficult to track the costs as calls could not be logged and all cross-site calls were chargeable. Most importantly, as the two main sites operated on totally different ISDN circuits, it was impossible to transfer calls between sites.



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Head of Telecoms, Trafford College

The college needed a reliable telephone system with modern communications features and a low total cost of ownership to meet the needs of an educational institution. Suzanne Bolton, the college’s head of telecoms decided to look for an IP-based communications solution that is easy to manage and use across the college’s different sites.

“Our staff must be able to work effectively across the various college locations,” Ms. Bolton said. “But it was impossible for users to hotdesk at the different sites because it was too difficult and time consuming to constantly add and remove someone from the different phone systems. Having to manage the different moves, additions and changes to the phone systems became very cumbersome and exhaustive for the support team.”

Trafford College required a single image system that is easy to administer and can be managed centrally across all four sites. In addition, teachers, staff and other phone users needed a consistent feature set as they moved from classroom to classroom and campus to campus, and the ability to reach any user via a single number, regardless of where they were physically working at that time.

The college approached various VoIP vendors and evaluated systems from Alcatel, Philips, Nortel, ShoreTel and Mitel for reliability, scalability, simplicity, a robust feature set and support. ShoreTel’s Pure IP Unified Communications (UC) system was chosen due to its modular architecture, flexibility and reliability. In addition, because many features including ShoreWare® Personal Call Manager come as standard with the ShoreTel system, the total cost of ownership was lower than its competitors.

The college also wanted to achieve cost savings on calls by routing all internal calls over the existing WAN. A network assessment was undertaken to make sure the college’s network was ready to support the implementation, and concluded that some changes were required to the network infrastructure to support the new system. As a result, Power over Ethernet (PoE) switches were installed to help carry the power load, and

the ShoreTel solution was deployed across three sites at first, with the remaining site to follow once the network infrastructure was in place to support the deployment.

ShoreTel rolled out its high powered UC system in just two weeks. The complete system comprised 10 ShoreTel Voice Switches and a total of 460 ShorePhone IP 560, IP 230, IP265 and IP110 telephones to support over 700 users. All of the college’s voice applications including voicemail and automated attendant run on a standard server on its network. As a result Trafford College now has a single-image ShoreTel system in operation across all of its sites with complete feature consistency and integration of all PBXs, voicemail systems, automated attendants and automatic call distribution and a best in class management interface.

The modular architecture of the ShoreTel UC system makes it easy for Trafford College to relocate existing switches for redeployment at another site for migrating users, and to provision new switches to accommodate any future increase in additional users. This is important as the college is planning the addition of new buildings, and can easily relocate or add ShoreTel Voice Switches as required.

The ShoreTel deployment project involved replacing 460 extensions, and adding new functionalities to each work station, including unified messaging (voice and CTI) and automated call distribution (ACD). Ms. Bolton explained: “We were particularly pleased with the modular architecture of the ShoreTel solution which makes it easy to add and move switches around, and enables us to manage the entire telephone system ourselves. The ShoreTel system is extremely user friendly and easy to administer”.

Trafford College has already realized a reduction in costs from implementing a voice over IP system, and consolidating all four sites has saved on calls between sites.

All of the college employees are now on the same phone and voicemail system with a simple interface that is easy for everyone—from receptionists to teachers—to use. The college is also making use of



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ShoreTel’s Hunt Groups capabilities to make sure that all phone calls for a specific group are answered by a live person rather than voicemail. This ensures someone from a department is always contactable as calls are automatically routed to another extension or multiple extensions, depending on availability.

Since the different college sites have varying hours of operation, the college is using the ShoreTel auto attendant feature to handle out-of-hours calls, and ensure they are still routed to the appropriate person. In addition, Trafford College is using ShoreTel’s Work Group capabilities to set up a work group with agents to handle course enquiries from both teenage and adult students, as well as a work group to handle customers’ calls to book appointments at the college’s Enhance Hair, Beauty and Holistic salons.

“There has been a significant improvement in our overall responsiveness and ability to communicate effectively thanks to ShoreTel,” Ms Bolton said. “It’s now easier for staff to contact people both internally and externally, and all of our calls are now professionally handled and centrally administered.”

The ShoreTel solution integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Outlook, allowing the college’s staff to retrieve numbers from their contact address books. It also means that Trafford College employees now have integrated messaging, calendar integration and the ability to have voicemail delivered to their inbox, and at the click of a mouse the call can be returned.

“We are very pleased with the ShoreTel solution” said Ms. Bolton, “We have reduced our operational costs across our sites by switching to a system that supports VoIP and at the same time we have introduced a system that is easier to use and manage, making us a more efficient and productive organisation”.

About ShoreTel

ShoreTel is a provider of business communication solutions whose brilliantly simple unified communications platforms, applications and mobile UC solutions promise a new rhythm of workforce engagement and collaboration. With costly complexity eliminated by design from its award winning, all-in-one IP phone system, UC and contact center solution, and its industry leading hosted business phone system, workers enjoy a freedom and self-reliance that other providers can’t match. Users have full control to engage and collaborate, no matter the time, place or device, for the lowest cost and demand on IT resources in the industry. ShoreTel is headquartered in Sunnyvale, California, and has regional offices and partners worldwide. For more information, visit shoretel.com or shoretelsky.com



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