

subsea 7

Objective

- Reduce telecommunications costs and increase global productivity

Approach

- Migrate to Microsoft Skype for Business worldwide to streamline operations and simplify communications

IT Matters

- Simplified management by migrating 45 Cisco Call Managers to four Skype for Business pools
- Implemented a distributed datacentre strategy to increase reliability and redundancy
- Deployed a unified communications solution that streamlines operations

Business Matters

- Estimated first-year calling savings of over 50%
- Reduced conferencing costs by 80%
- Increased productivity worldwide by simplifying communications and collaboration

Subsea 7 reduces costs by migrating worldwide to Microsoft Skype for Business

HPE Technology Consulting Services builds unified communications infrastructure



Subsea 7 worked with Hewlett Packard Enterprise (HPE) to design and implement a unified communications solution based on Microsoft Skype for Business that supports over 6,500 users around the world.

A global leader in seabed-to-surface engineering, construction and services

Subsea 7 is one of the world's leading global contractors in seabed-to-surface engineering, construction and services to the offshore energy industry. It provides technical solutions to enable the delivery of complex projects in all water depths and challenging environments.

The company had a single datacentre infrastructure hosting Microsoft Skype for Business (formerly Microsoft Lync) without enterprise voice functionality. This platform was being used by employees around the world, and there was no disaster recovery solution in place. HPE provided Subsea 7 with a complete solution to transform to a more manageable, cost-effective, and reliable communications approach.

“HPE has helped us reduce operating costs while increasing workplace connectivity. HPE consultants designed a reliable distributed datacentre approach and successfully migrated Subsea 7 to Microsoft Skype for Business in over 25 locations worldwide.”

— Adele Leport, IT Engagement and Operations Director for Subsea 7

HPE consultants designed and implemented a robust unified communications solution with highly available data recovery by upgrading worldwide to Microsoft Skype for Business and deploying three new datacentres to support unified communications. Most of the company's land-based facilities have been provided with localised bandwidth management, and all facilities are being provided with rich unified communications services, including presence management, audio and video conferencing, calendaring, and desktop sharing.

Moving to unified communications

Subsea 7 was looking to reduce the cost of its services so it could continue to provide a competitive ROI for its projects. The company had Cisco Call Manager at 45 locations, and had legacy contracts with multiple telephone service providers.

Subsea 7 sought to design and implement a long-term unified communications and telephony road map and leverage Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) trunking to implement Tier 1 voice services worldwide. Subsea 7 wanted to increase efficiency throughout its internal operations, and HPE was chosen as the company best-suited to provide Subsea 7 with a unified communications solution worldwide.

HPE had a longtime relationship with Subsea 7—primarily providing storage solutions, and Microsoft also recommended HPE as the partner of choice for deploying a single unified communications solution across five continents. “HPE has been a forerunner in the adoption of the unified communications technology, which gave us confidence in HPE's ability to act as an agent for change for Subsea 7,” says Adele Leport, IT Project Manager for Subsea 7.

Subsea 7 selected HPE services for Microsoft Skype for Business, part of HPE digital collaboration solutions. HPE consultants designed and implemented the Skype for Business solution and associated infrastructure, in addition to designing and implementing disaster recovery capabilities for Subsea 7. The company consolidated onto a single global service provider, and SIP trunking was implemented at all major land-based locations to better control costs.

The global dependency on a single datacenter was eliminated, and HPE built three additional datacenters to eliminate the need to backhaul all calls to a single datacenter so Subsea 7 could increase performance and enable redundancy and disaster recovery. By deploying a dedicated Skype for Business mediation pool in each of the four datacenters, Subsea 7 is able to retire its legacy Cisco telephony solution and rely on a single unified communications infrastructure to support global operations.

HPE upgraded all major land-based operations to Microsoft Skype for Business. HPE consultants also migrated Subsea 7's data from one datacentre to four datacentres around the world and implemented a highly available disaster recovery solution.

Implementing a global solution

The original datacentre is located in Redditch, England, and HPE designed a solution based on distributing the call loads worldwide. HPE designed and built additional datacentres in Houston, Singapore, and Aberdeen, and implemented a disaster recovery solution to ensure continuous operations. This has not only reduced bandwidth costs, it has improved the performance of voice calls by reducing delays.

"We didn't have a disaster recovery solution in place and we needed to ensure reliable failover so we could successfully implement SIP trunking to carry calls over the Internet while ensuring performance and reliability," states Leport. "HPE established Skype for Business mediation pools in each datacentre with an efficient disaster recovery solution." The new Singapore, Houston, and Aberdeen datacentres failover to the original datacentre in Redditch. In the event of a failure at the Redditch datacentre, it will failover to the datacenter in Aberdeen.

"We worked with our service provider to deploy SIP trunks to all of our land-based locations worldwide, except for our smallest offices and locations in countries like Egypt that do not allow SIP trunking," says Leport. "SIP trunking now allows us to consolidate our voice traffic worldwide and dramatically reduce our calling costs by virtually eliminating international calling costs by in effect routing all of our calls as local traffic. We estimate that the company will save more than 50% in calling costs in our first year."

HPE implemented Microsoft Skype for Business at the four datacentres on HPE ProLiant BL460c Gen9 Server Blades, and also deployed Skype for Business at Subsea 7 locations on five continents. Among the locations deployed include: 8 in the UK; 3 in Brazil; 2 each in the U.S., Singapore, and Australia; and one each in Gabon, Nigeria, Canada, France, Portugal, and Angola.

Subsea 7 also deployed Microsoft Skype for Business on all Subsea 7 vessels, providing them with conferencing, presence, calendar, and desktop sharing capabilities. "We consider our vessels 'floating offices' and have provided them with collaboration features," explains Leport. "But because they're at sea they still rely on satellite calling services to make voice calls."

Case study

Subsea 7

Customer at a glance

HPE Services

- HPE technology consulting services
- HPE digital collaboration solutions

Hardware

- HPE ProLiant BL460c Gen9 Server Blades

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Simplifying and streamlining operations

By migrating Subsea 7 to a newer version of Skype for Business and adding voice connectivity that the organisation did not previously have, HPE has enabled a higher level of workplace productivity while reducing the company’s telecommunications operating costs. Subsea 7 now has a unified communications system with a single-source supplier, providing the organisation with a more efficient cost structure.

“One of the reasons that we selected HPE services was that the consultants who were involved in selling the solution would also manage the implementation,” says Leport. “The HPE consultants gave us a lot of confidence in their ability to understand our objectives and deliver on them.”

HPE also integrated Subsea 7’s unified communications implementation with critical suppliers and customers. “Because we federated our implementation with deployments by other companies that we do business with, employees can easily understand the availability of people across multiple companies. This has led to streamlined communications and easier and faster scheduling of meetings and conferences,” explains Leport.

Subsea 7 is also driving down the costs of mobility. According to Leport, “We operate in parts of the world where mobile calling is expensive, such as in Africa and Latin America. This deployment is freeing people from their desks and allowing them to place international calls from a Skype for Business client on a mobile phone at the cost of a local call because they connect to the Internet through one of our local facilities. This gives us the potential to make savings on mobile voice calls moving forward.”

By migrating to a unified platform, Subsea 7 has achieved a universally compatible communications solution that supports its Skype for Business-enabled users throughout the organisation, all at a lower cost than before.

With its new disaster recovery solution, even if one data centre goes down, the other three data centres can keep operations running smoothly to ensure 100% uptime. “This unified communications solution has enabled more efficient intra- and inter-company communications for Subsea 7 and allowed us to increase our communications and collaboration capabilities while lowering our communications costs,” Leport concludes.

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