

BKF+SHORETEL

ShoreTel VoIP system promotes collaboration, cuts TCO in half, and saves BKF \$65,000 per year



Challenges:

The company's 200-plus employees were frustrated with the phone system. All but the most basic features were too hard to use, message lights were erratic, and the smallest administrative changes required a site visit from an outside service representative.

ShoreTel Solution:

BKF deployed a ShoreTel VoIP solution, ShoreTel Voice Switches, Call Manager, and ShoreTel's remote teleworker solution.

ShoreTel Benefits:

- Reduced costs by \$65,000 a year
- Enhanced collaboration among sites
- Better call handling with presence
- Integration with Microsoft Outlook

Poor phone system results in loss of business

Callers weren't getting connected, important voicemail messages ended up in dead-letter boxes, and the manufacturer couldn't get the auto-attendant up and running. BKF was losing jobs due to the perception of poor customer service.

Affordable communications solution with modern telephony features

You don't land new business if prospective clients can't reach you, and BKF entered the new century with an old phone system that would often frustrate rather than facilitate contact.

Derrick Crandell, director of information technology for BKF, Silicon Valley's largest engineering firm, decided the price of traditional PBX solutions was prohibitive, and the systems were too rigid and hard to use. A presentation of VoIP technology opened his eyes to the possibilities of voice/data convergence. It was a far more flexible solution than traditional circuit-switched telephony at a much lower purchase price.

Crandell started evaluating VoIP alternatives against a checklist of requirements, and the two largest VoIP vendors at the time were both rejected. Cisco's solution required a pure-Cisco IP environment, including IP phones that were then \$700 each, and early implementers reported reliability challenges. 3Com offered better price

points, but its products had a single point of failure and didn't include least-cost routing for toll bypass.

Then Crandell heard about ShoreTel, an IP PBX vendor that could meet all his requirements, and then some, including reliability with site independence to protect against the Bay Area's notorious rolling blackouts; least-cost routing among sites; one unified information database that would enable dial-by-name capabilities across the entire network; a software-based technology for easy upgrades; a choice of IP phones or a wide range of traditional handsets; system-wide voicemail; and browser-based management with a single-system view, so that moves, adds, and changes (MACs) could be made internally on demand.

ShoreTel enables better client collaboration and customer service

ShoreTel's seamless, distributed technology facilitates collaboration across sites, enabling BKF to organize its client resources. Virtual workgroups are easy to set up and make the physical location of resources transparent to the caller.

Using ShoreTel's graphical Call Manager interface, operators can see the presence status of everyone at all four sites and direct calls accordingly. The Call Manager integrates with a central database of employee information, so callers requesting someone by job function or project affiliation, rather than by name, can be accommodated.

Crandell and his staff were able to get ShoreTel's auto-attendant up and running in no time. Clients can now dial by name to reach any extension at any hour, and from any ShoreTel Voice Switch in the multi-site network.

The location transparency helps BKF leverage its experts more fully, because some clients require that the BKF project managers be local to a specific client job. "When the person's office is not local, we can set up a virtual presence at the office near the client," says Crandell. "The client dials a local number, and the call is automatically routed to the BKF employee's desk, wherever it might be."

ShoreTel VoIP boosts employee productivity

BKF employees no longer have to remember or look up extension numbers for colleagues. Outgoing dialing has been similarly simplified by taking advantage of ShoreTel's integration with Microsoft Outlook. A master contact list was created in a public Outlook folder available to everyone.

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Director of Information Technology
BKF

With the Outlook integration, the Caller ID shows information about who is calling. Voicemail messages can be routed into sub-folders associated with specific client projects and stored as WAV files. "Important messages are being archived," says Crandell. "We've never been able to do that before."

ShoreTel's support of such a wide variety of phone types enables mobility inside the office. External mobility was simplified by modifying cell phones so that they forward unanswered calls to the employee's desktop. This eliminates the need to deal with two separate voicemail accounts and sift through duplicate messages.

Streamlined operations generate rapid ROI and save BKF \$65,000 per year

Moves, adds, and changes can now be handled internally with a few mouse clicks, eliminating outside service calls and saving a minimum of \$150 per incident. Maintenance and upgrade costs have been decimated, and least-cost routing has reduced BKF's toll charges by more than half.

Crandell initially was backing up the ShoreTel data directory manually as a safety precaution. But the reliability of the ShoreTel platform gradually put his fears to rest, and he now lets his ArcServe system automatically back up the ShoreTel data directory along with all the other servers on the network.

After getting hit twice by rolling blackouts, BKF installed an off-site data center at an AT&T collocation facility in Redwood City. This "colo," which costs \$5,000 per month, is being entirely funded by the return on BKF's investment in the ShoreTel system. It cost less than half as much as the voice platform it replaced, and is saving BKF more than \$65,000 per year.

BKF is using ShoreTel's remote teleworker solution to connect a trailer facility being set up on-site at a Stanford University project. Connected via either a T-1 or a VPN-over-DSL link, it will function as a direct extension of the ShoreTel system, with access to all the same voice features as any BKF desktop.

"We were almost led away from ShoreTel because they didn't offer turnkey installations, and we weren't telephony guys," recalls Crandell. "But it was so easy, it made us wonder what the telco experts were feeding us all those years. When our old service rep came by to hook the PA up to the

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ShoreTel system, his jaw was on the floor. You install it and it works."

"The ShoreTel system has paid for itself already," sums up Crandell.

ShoreTel. Brilliantly simple business communications.

ShoreTel, Inc. (NASDAQ: SHOR) is a leading provider of brilliantly simple IP phone systems and unified communications solutions powering today's always-on workforce. Its flexible communications solutions for on-premises, cloud and hybrid environments eliminate complexity, reduce costs and improve productivity.

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