

CURRENT TV+SHORETEL

Current TV cable network deploys ShoreTel UC and ShoreTel Mobility for cost-effective, anytime-anywhere communications



current™

Challenges:

Current TV needed a unified communications (UC) platform that would cut pricey long-distance charges, easily scale to meet business demands, and provide less expensive connectivity for its mobile workforce.

ShoreTel Solution:

The ShoreTel UC solution included ShoreTel Mobility, ShoreTel IP Phones, ShoreTel Communicator with Professional Access, and ShoreTel Softphone.

ShoreTel Benefits:

- Flexible and scalable
- Real-time call management
- 99.999 percent availability
- Reduced expenses by 68 percent in the first year

Casting call for system upgrade

Current TV decided to re-architect its communications to facilitate extensive and simpler connectivity, reduce costs, and to take advantage of more integration with essential business applications.

Improve employee productivity with VoIP

Founded by former U.S. Vice President Al Gore and legal mogul Joel Z. Hyatt, Current TV reaches approximately 60 million households worldwide via cable, satellite, and the Web.

To maintain its progressive pace and savvy brand of communication, Current TV wanted to achieve a high level of connectivity. "We are a very

connected company and we are leveraging a lot of new media, like social networks. Ensuring our ability to always communicate requires cutting-edge technology with a short learning curve. It's one of the reasons we turned to ShoreTel," says Ray Panahon, senior director of IT at Current TV.

"Our sales force wanted to be reachable, regardless of where they might be, but wanted customers to only have one contact number to remember, mainly their office numbers. In addition, our cellular and long-distance bills were continuing to rise, and the coverage inside our buildings was not great. The idea that we could improve employee productivity with a Voice over IP unified communications (UC) system seemed the way to go," explains Panahon.

To orchestrate a search for the right UC solution, Panahon engaged KTS Network Solutions, a comprehensive voice and data integrator and service provider. The list of requirements included the need to install distributed systems that could be centrally managed, and a way to extend whatever UC system was implemented to mobile devices in the future.

Current TV considered solutions from Intertel (acquired by Mitel), Avaya, Cisco, and ShoreTel. "We chose ShoreTel because ShoreTel offers a very simple-to-use UC platform that is flexible, easily scalable, and had so many of the essential features necessary to meet our productivity and communications goals," says Panahon.

Changing the channel with ShoreTel UC

The ShoreTel UC solution selected by Current TV comprised ShoreTel Communicator with Professional Access and ShoreTel IP Phones. The platform is deployed across Current TV's studio locations and sales offices worldwide.

With its ShoreTel solution implemented, Current TV was able to deliver voice and data using Internet protocols for faster connectivity, greater functionality, and cost savings. ShoreTel UC has a unique distributed architecture that leverages feature-rich IP phones and provides advanced call controls, extensive integration, and intuitive tools to manage real-time communications from the desktop. The ShoreTel Softphone feature enables workers to use the desktop to handle all call-related activities, and ShoreTel Communicator supplies a built-in interface so that users can effortlessly move among voice, video, and instant messaging.

The ShoreTel platform also guarantees 99.999 percent availability for mission-critical business continuity, with N+1 redundancy and switch-based hardware. In case of a WAN failure, the phone system will continue to make and receive calls. The ShoreTel system is also integrated with Current TV's essential business applications.

Panahon cites a litany of benefits since deploying the ShoreTel system, including improved flexibility and cost efficiencies, and he zeroed in on a few unique capabilities. "Current TV uses live call-in for some of our shows. It's pretty rare for a live show to use VoIP, as most other networks still use analog phones. Not us; we love ShoreTel," he says.

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ShoreTel Mobility earns top ratings

"No one wants to feel tethered to the office, just to stay in contact with customers or each other. We wanted to be more effective with VoIP, get more out of what was already working for us, and meet the growing mobility needs of our workforce. When we decided to further our capabilities for mobile devices, KTS and ShoreTel were right on top of it all," Panahon says.

Current TV deployed ShoreTel Mobility, which enables native integration with the user interface of most mobile devices so that on-the-go Current TV staff has reliable, fast, worry-free access of mobile UC tools. The "office anywhere" technology allows employees to use their mobile devices as they would the desktop to connect with enterprise

ShoreTel Success Story

applications and phone directories. And with easy scaling from as few as 10 users to 5,000 per router, ShoreTel Mobility is at the ready for supporting Current TV's business growth.

"ShoreTel Mobility is simply fantastic. It offers state-of-the-art technology on an already-familiar platform that we like. So far, we have 50 users across the U.S. and internationally who depend on this mobile technology, and we are quickly rolling out ShoreTel Mobility to more staff. Everyone at Current TV is impressed with ShoreTel Mobility and what it can do for us," states Panahon.

"This level of interconnectivity is so helpful. The features we are able to use are awesome, and our remote users love that they are available anywhere at anytime. I, for one, commute and take advantage of my mobile device to stay productive. Even our executives appreciate being able to instantly look up other users in the directory and connect at any time," he adds.

Tuning into cost savings with ShoreTel UC

"Our users are happy. They continue to marvel at how easy the phone system really is, and how the tools are always available. They always want to know what else is possible. From an IT perspective, we have so much less to troubleshoot with the ShoreTel reliability and redundant architecture. And the cost benefits are very

tangible—we are saving on cellular calls, on long-distance charges, for employees who are traveling and across our international communications as well. ShoreTel is very in tune with what we need, what our customers need, and how to make things easier for everyone," Panahon concludes.

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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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