

GIRL SCOUTS OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA +SHORETEL

Girl Scouts of Northern California chose ShoreTel and experience improved communications, cost savings, easier conferencing, and increased employee productivity



Challenges:

When five different councils merged, the Girl Scouts of Northern California ended up with phone systems from Nortel, Avaya, NEC, and Comdial, which spawned inherent complexities, integration challenges, and support and training issues.

ShoreTel Solution:

ShoreTel provided a unified communications solution, to cohesively simplify business processes, staff interaction, and customer call management, which comprised ShoreTel IP phones, switches, Communicator, a conferencing bridge, and VPN Concentrator.

ShoreTel Benefits:

- Cost savings by conferencing in-house
- \$1000s saved annually via reduction of lines
- Greater staff connectivity

Scouting for optimal communications

In an effort to consolidate local councils and optimize resources, five councils were merged to form the Girl Scouts of Northern California. Unfortunately, along with the merger came five legacy phone systems.

Unify communications for a newly merged council

Post-consolidation, the newly formed council inherited five legacy phone systems from Nortel, Avaya Merlin Legend, NEC, and Comdial, which were difficult to integrate and expensive to manage.

Consequently, staff members were not always able to readily and cost-efficiently communicate with one another, members, and donors. The organization deployed third-party conferencing services to enable staff in different locations to hold group calls. Functionality was also limited, with no extension dialing between separate systems and no hunt group capabilities to simplify customer connectivity to particular departments. Some of the offices are hundreds of miles apart, so calls made between branches were long distance, resulting in pricey usage charges.

“Communications is hugely important to our success. We have so many different areas of contact with members, from events and activities to summer camps, adult education and support for our troop and service unit leaders. And we

actively target donors for potential funding. Staying connected allows us to keep the organization running smoothly," says Glenn Rogers, CIO for the Girls Scouts of Northern California.

To simplify communications across the organization and reduce phone-related costs, the Girl Scouts of Northern California considered Voice over IP solutions from Cisco, Mitel, Avaya, and ShoreTel. "We chose ShoreTel based upon price and because it met so many of our requirements for simplicity, features, cost efficiency, and reliability. One of the main reasons was that ShoreTel was developed as a VoIP platform and we wanted a good current technology platform we would have for a long time," Rogers adds.

ShoreTel earns a badge for simplicity

The Girl Scouts of Northern California implemented a ShoreTel UC Solution to cohesively simplify business processes, staff interaction, and customer call management. The ShoreTel platform provides feature-rich collaboration tools and deep integration with major business applications and mobile devices for seamless unified communications. Using ShoreTel Communicator, employees are able to effortlessly move between voice and data productivity tools on the desktop with the intuitive interface and call management capabilities.

The ShoreTel architecture was purpose-built with switch-based hardware and N+1 redundancy for highest availability, scalability, and ease of use. The ShoreTel Voice Switch V Series was installed at each of the five primary offices to further bolster reliability and coordinate support for the phones, while the ShoreTel Voice Switch T1K was used for higher-density trunking with PRI signaling.

ShoreTel unifies and simplifies how staff can pool resources and work together. The ShoreTel VPN Concentrator removes the isolation from remote locations to enable Girl Scouts staff to easily and securely connect to the rest of the ShoreTel network. Employees can use remote-location broadband routers to securely connect to the VPN Concentrator. The remote phone will then operate as if it were in the office, providing access to all the ShoreTel UC tools.

Conferencing in more choices

The Northern California solution includes ShoreTel IP Phones, including ShoreTel IP Phone 655 conference models, across the five locations. The IP 655 is ShoreTel's most advanced telephone, with 12-line appearances, a large backlit touch color display, crystal-clear speakerphone sound, and haptic feedback.

**"WE'VE REDESIGNED
MANY OF OUR BUSINESS
PROCESSES AROUND
SHORETEL HUNT GROUPS.
CUSTOMERS CAN REACH
US EASIER AND WE MEET
OUR GOAL OF ANSWERING
99% OF INCOMING CALLS
PERSONALLY."**

Glenn Rogers, CIO
Girls Scouts of Northern California

"We absolutely love the conference phones. We have some larger conference rooms and the satellite microphones are very nice. We now have real conference equipment that is such an improvement over the old gear, making calls so much more enjoyable. Phone quality is great—and we even programmed the Girl Scout image on the phones to commemorate our 100th anniversary," Rogers says.

Also earning a badge is the ShoreTel Conferencing, which eliminates the organization's need for expensive external conferencing services by providing employees with the ability to schedule and manage their own conferencing needs internally. From on-demand, one-click scheduling and on-the-fly uploads and caller participation changes to recording and reporting options, the bridge creates a very flexible and easy way for Girl Scouts staff to conference.

ShoreTel Success Story

"Employees love the ad hoc aspects and say the ShoreTel conferencing is really easy to use. They dial an extension and a short number to initiate, compared to longer dialing requirements of the old system," says Rogers.

Changing customer service for the better

The Northern California council is especially enjoying the new hunt group call treatment feature. "We could not enable hunt groups across offices with the previous phone systems. Now we're able to align ShoreTel hunt groups with our different internal teams, such as product sales. So when a member calls in and wants to reach anyone on that team, the hunt group routes accordingly, regardless of geographic location. Hunt groups ensure that our customers are served promptly, that they don't get lost in a voicemail system, and really help us from missing important calls," states Rogers.

In fact, ShoreTel hunt groups have generated greater business efficiency for the Girl Scouts of Northern California. "We've redesigned many of our business processes around ShoreTel hunt groups. Customers can reach us easier and we meet our goal of answering 99% of incoming calls personally," he adds.

Savings as sweet as Girl Scouts cookies

Almost as beloved as the cookies they sell are the savings that the Girl Scouts of Northern California have realized since deploying ShoreTel. "We've been able to unite our offices via a single modern phone platform that offers an intuitive Web-based interface, advanced call features, and extensive

cost efficiencies. Staff can stay more connected by logging in with their extension to any phone in any office, and forwarding calls to external numbers when out of the office," says Rogers.

The hunt groups and extension dialing have improved productivity and accessibility, and the council also added voice-to-text translation functionality with a third-party application, which was integrated by ShoreTel. And leveraging the ShoreTel conference service appliance for internal conferencing had eliminated substantial costs charged by prior external services.

Besides the cost savings and richer features of the ShoreTel conference service, the Northern California council was also able to consolidate and cancel many trunk lines throughout the branch offices to save thousands of dollars per year.

The council is also taking advantage of ShoreTel's built-in least-cost routing to reduce communications costs further. Least-cost routing is the process of selecting a path of outbound communications traffic based on cost, which is ideal for promoting savings for organizations with multiple points of presence, such as the Girl Scouts of Northern California.

"The Girl Scouts of Northern California makes a lot of calls, and we have a huge geographic area. You can imagine the volume of long distance charges we can accumulate. Least-cost routing helps diminish those costs exponentially," says Rogers.

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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