

ACCESS HOMEHEALTH+SHORETEL

ShoreTel UC system transforms multi-office health service and treats the bottom line to \$450,000 in annual savings



A New Zealand national nonprofit health service struggles with ailing phone system

Organic growth and acquisitions had resulted in Access Homehealth's multiple and disparate telephony, including POTS and hybrid offerings from Panasonic, Samsung, and Nortel, which resulted in a "system that never worked." Neither system was connected to the other in any way.

With sites throughout New Zealand, telephony servicing required multiple technicians and all the resources of the Access Homehealth IT team for problem solving. Phillip Hendry, Access Homehealth CIO, said telephony maintenance

was a constant issue. "We had to maintain relationships with lots of different vendors and service people. As far as costs were concerned, we just couldn't get a handle on them," says Hendry.

Access Homehealth needed a single-image system that could provide nursing and other caregivers with improved resources to deliver better Homehealth care. It also had to be robust, easy to maintain, and flexible. "Staying with old and failing technology and trying to keep it operational is dead time," comments Hendry. "It almost always proves ineffective in assisting an organization and actually costs you money rather than saving it."

Challenges:

Through organic growth and acquisitions, Access Homehealth was using 13 multi-vendor, disparate telephony systems that were time-consuming and expensive to maintain, and unable to provide business efficiencies.

ShoreTel Solution:

Homehealth deployed a ShoreTel UC system comprising ShoreTel 90 BRI voice switches and 150 easy-to-use IP230 and IP115.

ShoreTel Benefits:

- Reduced salaries by more than \$450,000 annually
- Minimum 30% savings in telephony costs
- Savings of \$2,500 per month in system costs
- Eliminated travel costs with ShoreTel Conferencing

ShoreTel IP enables Access Homehealth to reassign 10 employees and save \$450,000 in annual salaries

Following a review of leading telephony systems, and working with consultants Telesmart, Hendry and his team selected a ShoreTel Unified Communications (UC) system comprising ShoreTel 90 BRI voice switches, and 150 easy-to-use ShoreTel IP Phones models IP 230 and IP 115, ShoreTel's Converged Conferencing Solution, and later, ShoreTel UC features.

Other IP telephony systems reviewed during the evaluation process could not match the performance of ShoreTel. "Avaya could not provide a single-image system, and the other vendors similarly could not deliver a logical pathway going forward," says Hendry. "No vendor except for ShoreTel had a solution that made sense in terms of us being able to administer it in one place, once. They could not match ShoreTel for its ease of use and flexibility."

ShoreTel's distributed architecture enabled businesses to push the boundaries of what could be achieved with communications. "ShoreTel helps you create a world of new telephony-based services that takes your business to a higher level," he says. "Everything ShoreTel is largely out-of-box and is simple to use. Staff find it easy to learn, it's friendly, and it provides you with the flexibility to move or add additional phones at almost no cost beyond handsets."

Scalability offers Homehealth flexibility

ShoreTel's scalability was an unexpected benefit. "The ShoreTel solution can comfortably accommodate up to 10,000 users on the one system and, importantly, scale down to three users, which is not an unusual small office size in New Zealand. ShoreTel's larger competitors were unable to match this flexibility," remarks Hendry.

The benefits of ShoreTel's scalability hit home for Access Homehealth when it created a new site at Nelson. "Our service consultants, Telesmart, provided us with a ShoreTel switch for line access and installed a couple of ShoreTel IP Phone model 230 handsets that were basically plug-and-play.

The whole setup took a couple of hours at best and we were fully operational from then on," says Hendry. Since the installation of ShoreTel, Access Homehealth had acquired an additional two branches and increased its staff from 150 to 220 people.

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Phillip Hendry, CIO
Access Homehealth

ShoreTel enables major cost savings and improved services

A clearer picture of the cost savings created by ShoreTel did not emerge until after installation. "The rollout of the telephone system produced savings of \$2,500 per month even after accounting for the leasing costs of ShoreTel and installing an upgraded data network to hold it together," comments Hendry.

The savings were later reinvested in a Quality of Service WAN that has improved the delivery of its health support services for 15,000 people. "The real savings came from eliminating on-call part-time call center roles in our regional centers and consolidating operations to the main center in Christchurch, which services the entire country," says Hendry. "We were able to reassign 10 call center staff to more productive work. In that move alone, ShoreTel must have saved us at least \$450,000 in annual salaries." Hendry estimates that ShoreTel directly contributed to Access Homehealth gaining a minimum 30 percent cost savings in telephony.

ShoreTel's conferencing bridge reduces expenses further

Hendry says Access Homehealth was the first organization in New Zealand to install a ShoreTel Conference bridge. This resource allows you to eliminate the need for third parties when hosting conference calls, which usually incurs high call costs.

"ShoreTel's Converged Conferencing solution enables you to conference internally among your branches and with people externally. You can also share applications through a web browser, enabling you to undertake a multi-site conference call and go through a set of PowerPoint slides at the same time. It is pretty cool," says Hendry.

ShoreTel's Converged Conferencing solution is being used by staff at all levels at Access Homehealth. "The business case for it was very simple. We were spending more on external conference calls than the cost of conference bridging, and the external services could not provide us with anywhere near the functionality we now have. It is a value-add that other telephony vendors don't provide," says Hendry.

"You can do things with ShoreTel that you cannot do with other telephony systems," he says. "It becomes an integral part of your business far removed from the commodity approach that other phone systems operate in. It is an entirely different business proposition, not an add-on," concludes Hendry.

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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.

World Headquarters
960 Stewart Drive
Sunnyvale, CA 94085
USA
shoretel.com

+1 (800) 425-9385 Toll Free
+1 (408) 331-3300 Tel
+1 (408) 331-3333 Fax

EMEA
Inspired
Easthampstead Road
Bracknell, RG12 1YQ
+44 (0) 1344 208800

APAC
8 Temasek Boulevard
#41-03 Suntec Tower 3
Singapore 038988
+65 6517 0800

