ShoreTel
Brilliantly simple™

ICON MATERIALS+SHORETEL

ShoreTel VoIP paves the way to communication cost savings and increased sales for ICON Materials

ICON
MATERIALS

Challenges:

ICON's outdated PBX system was too costly in terms of telephone line leases, toll charges, management, and service fees.

ShoreTel Solution:

ShoreTel provided the pavement and site development company with a comprehensive VoIP system, including voice switches and IP telephones.

ShoreTel Benefits:

- Cost savings on long-distance and lease lines
- Increased sales due to improved efficiencies
- Ability to manage the system in-house
- Improved call routing accuracy

ICON sets its sights on improving communication

ICON was using a Merlin PBX and Centrex lines. The company decided it was time to take advantage of the leading-edge infrastructure that had been put in place to capitalize on the benefits of Voice over IP (VoIP).

Lower-cost system was simple to manage

While conducting an annual budget review, ICON looked closely at its communications costs, including phone lines, service fees, toll charges, and management. The company considered switching to a VoIP platform to improve its overall communications and simplify management.

Once it was decided that VoIP was the way to go, the criteria by which ICON would choose its new VoIP provider included cost-effectiveness, scalability, reliability, ease of use and management, and a strong local support team.

The short list came down to 3Com, Avaya, Cisco, Inter-Tel, Mitel, and ShoreTel. 3Com, Avaya, Cisco, and Mitel were eliminated fairly quickly due to the cost and complexity of the systems and the limited capabilities of those vendors' resellers. The choice was then narrowed down to Inter-Tel and ShoreTel. Based on total cost of ownership (TCO) of the system, the quality of the phones, and simplicity of management, ICON decided on ShoreTel VoIP.

"ShoreTel offered a lower bottom-line cost, including the cost to implement, monthly costs, and maintenance costs," says Andrey Marchenko, ICON's network administrator. "ShoreTel was just much cleaner and more efficient than the Inter-Tel solution, which was not built as a pure VoIP system."

ShoreTel VoIP provides the lowest cost

While the deployment required a fair amount of up-front work to get ICON's LAN/WAN ready for VoIP, the entire implementation still took only about three weeks. With the ShoreTel system in place, all ICON employees are now on the same phone and voicemail system, using four-digit dialing to reach colleagues at any location and dialing co-workers by name. The least-cost routing capabilities also allow the organization to minimize costs by avoiding toll charges.

"ShoreTel's partner did an excellent job training users, and the ShoreTel system was very easy for everybody to learn," says Marchenko. "We put the new IP phones in alongside the old analog phones so users could use either one, but users quickly became familiar with the ShoreTel system and the analog phones were gone soon after the install."

ShoreTel Personal Call Manager's friendly, graphical interface provides easy access to sophisticated features, including on-the-fly conferencing and document sharing. Marchenko is also using ShoreTel SoftPhone with Call Manager, a utility that delivers telephony capabilities to any PC. With calls directed to a laptop and a headset plugged into the USB port, he can work from anywhere.

Enhanced customer service translates to increased sales

In addition to powerful Personal Call Manager, ShoreTel Operator Call Manager software provides ICON receptionists with key information and control, enabling a significantly higher level of personalized attention for callers. For example, before even answering an incoming call, a call-routing log displays the caller's experience within the system and displays who is available, avoiding the possibility of sending callers to an extension that is busy.

ShoreTel's workgroups enables ICON to consolidate all its inquiry calls to one number, and calls are routed to the next available call center staff member. Workgroups also provides basic reporting capabilities to help ICON measure call volume and make work schedule changes as necessary.

"The ShoreTel system has already improved our response time to customers," says Marchenko. "In addition to cutting long-distance costs, phone line charges, and management costs, we've increased our sales because we can handle more calls at the same time."

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Management simplification means control and savings

ICON uses ShoreTel Director, a browser-based management interface that allows IT to launch a Web browser and gain access to the system from anywhere on the network to manage voicemail, automated attendant, and desktop applications. Adding a new user is simply a matter of clicking "add new" and entering the user's name, which automatically updates the centralized database and every voice switch. The entire process takes just a few seconds.

"With ShoreTel, I can bring up a new user at a new site within 10 minutes—an activity that took about four days with the old system," states Marchenko. "With the old system, I had to contact the phone company and then wait for a technician to come out. Now I have full control and things run so much more smoothly."

"Managers particularly like the history reporting capabilities to help monitor the performance of users in order to better manage their departments," says Marchenko.

Finally, ICON has a spare telephone line at each of its locations dedicated to emergency 911 calls, and when the ShoreTel system senses such a call, it routes it to the local emergency number at the specific location it is dialed from.

ShoreTel helps ICON realize concrete savings, increased sales, and improved business processes

ShoreTel has saved ICON money in every way, from wiring costs to recurring line and toll charges. In addition, employee productivity is enhanced and sales have increased. System management has been brought in-house and ICON is in full control, which saves time, hassle, and money.

"I don't know of any other system that's as easy to use as the ShoreTel system," concludes Marchenko. "From the IT standpoint, it's easy to deploy, configure, reconfigure, support, and maintain. From the user standpoint, ShoreTel gives them the ability to manage all of their communications from their desktop, which improves productivity and customer service. And finally, from the corporate viewpoint, ShoreTel lowers the cost of wiring new offices, lowers toll costs, provides the reliability we require for our business, and gives us great functionality. It's an all-around win for ICON."

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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.