

SpliceCom Familiar faces, New product

'No distributors, no direct sales.' That's the unique channel commitment to dealers, value added resellers and systems integrators being made by a new entrant to the business telephony marketplace - SpliceCom.

Comms Business talks exclusively to the names behind the company.

The name might be new to you, but the faces behind the company and their past achievements are written large in the folklore of our industry.

Managing Director Sean Harding was the man behind Network Alchemy, whilst Chairman Frank Bretherton and Sales and Marketing Director Jeremy Cooke are synonymous with the other UK voice and data convergence success story of the 1990's - SDX Business Systems.

This trio are joined by another ex-SDX stalwart, Graham Harris, as National Sales Manager, with former Network Alchemy man Robin Hayman completing the management line-up.

CHANNEL STRATEGY

But back to SpliceCom's channel strategy. 'The comms business has grown up, but along the way it's lost something fundamental,' said Jeremy Cooke. 'The channel is the lifeblood of our industry - but it's very rarely treated in that manner by manufacturers.'

'Selling directly, dealer account management and sales to resellers via distribution are all valid channel models, but any strategy that encompasses more than one of these methods can only benefit the vendor - and will be to the detriment of its channel. It's our belief that a direct relationship with a select number of channel partners is the only way forward - particularly when you consider the rate at which we, as an industry, are asking our partners to embrace new technologies and the ways in which to sell and support them.'

'It's at these times that those with direct access to the manufacturer at all levels, not to mention the higher margin sales that this approach enables, will invariably be more successful.'

As befits the rich heritage of the SpliceCom team, their target is to provide a product range that meets the communication needs of small and medium sized businesses and those who sell to them.

'We'll be providing a modular and scalable system which won't limit the ambitions of those channels who wish to grow their business,' says MD Sean Harding. 'We're a UK company, and as such, have developed a single product range which focuses on the needs of small and medium sized UK

organisations. 'Having said that, our ability to design this system from scratch, without the need to consider a legacy installed base or protect on-going revenue streams, has allowed us to come to market with a system that scales up to 5,000 extensions.'

DEPLOYMENT

However, it's in the area of just how its products can be deployed by these small and medium sized companies to create business advantage, that SpliceCom will be concentrating its initial marketing efforts. This 'straight talking' approach is something that business analysts have clearly identified as lacking in the communications industry at present.

'The NOP Business Internet Survey from February 2002, shows us that of 462 UK companies not intending to implement convergence technology over the next 12 months, 67% state that they are taking this stance because they perceive that there would be no benefit in them doing so,' says Niall Rae, director at NOP Technology.

'SpliceCom's commitment to focus on promoting the true business benefits that their system provides, rather than the underlying technology, can only be good for the communications industry as a whole', said Frank Bretherton. 'Telephone systems are sold, not bought. Customers need them because they have specific business issues to overcome, not because they're based on the latest technology.'

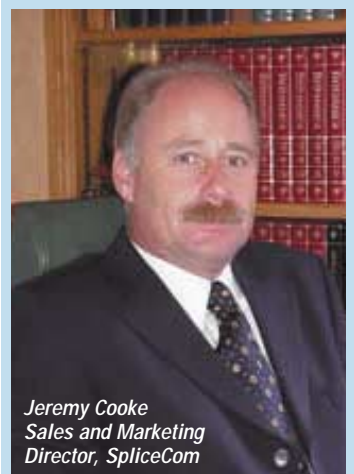
While our products meet the current business needs of small and medium sized companies, they can also deliver unparalleled advantages that our potential customers may not have even considered. It's up to us and our chosen channel partners to explain this to prospects in a clear and concise manner that they can relate to their business, not by blinding them with technical acronyms,' SpliceCom view the choice of channel partners as key to their future success - let's face it, how many companies can you name who've unveiled their channel strategy before they announce their products? If the company has paid as much attention to the development of this system, due for launch next month, as they have on their 'go to market' strategy then Messrs Harding, Bretherton and Cooke may just have another success story on their hands.



Frank Bretherton
Chairman, SpliceCom



Sean Harding
Managing Director, SpliceCom



Jeremy Cooke
Sales and Marketing
Director, SpliceCom