St. Luke's Hospice Case Study

SpliceCom

Britain's leading developer of telephone systems

Background

Based in Plymouth and founded in 1982, St Luke's Hospice provides the best possible care to more than 3,500 patients, facing the reality of a life-limiting illness, each year across Plymouth, South West Devon and East Cornwall. This incorporates practical, financial, emotional and spiritual support, in addition to medical and nursing care. Patients can receive this care as an outpatient, by visiting the Day Hospice or by a stay at the Hospice, which normally lasts between one and two weeks. The majority of these stays are for those looking to have their symptoms controlled so they can return home to a higher quality of life.

The organisation has grown from a small, seven-bedded unit in Plymstock to a purpose built 20-bed inpatient unit at Turnchapel, with a Day Hospice at Pearn and a variety of specialist community services. These include a Specialist Palliative Care Team on the wards of Plymouth's Derriford Hospital and Community Nurse Specialists who provide care for people in their own homes.

In communication terms St Luke's Hospice was utilising two completely separate telephone systems. Around 80 extensions at the main Turnchapel site had been driven by the same Panasonic system for well over ten years, whilst Community Services at Pearn relied on some 50 Mitel IP handsets operating as extensions hanging-off the main NHS system at Derriford Hospital and running over a 100Mbps circuit. As St Lukes' IT Manager, Andrew Sims, explained, "Staff and volunteers could make and receive phone calls and transfer them internally – but that was about it. Calls between Turnchapel and Pearn had to be routed over the PSTN, which incurred call charges, the link between Pearn and Derriford Hospital would dropout several times a week and we'd receive cross-charges for the calls we made out on the Mitel system. In addition, Panasonic had just made the system we were using obsolete. Replacement parts could be sourced but they were "second user" - sourced from equipment that had been removed from service and that was on the shelf. At the final count, we had 35 different types of handset in use, whilst 6 different internal phone lists existed, all in paper format. It certainly wasn't the most efficient way to communicate, from either a user or administration perspective."

New Distribution Centre Drives Change

The opening of a new Distribution Centre facility in Plympton during May 2011, to better serve the 34 Charity Shops run by St. Luke's Hospice, proved to be the first piece of the jigsaw for a new communications infrastructure. "The new building only required a small system, around 20 extensions," explained Andrew, "but we viewed it as an opportunity to evaluate, install and verify a product to bring us in to the 21st Century and meet our needs across three sites and in-excess of 150 extensions."

The search for the right system eventually led Andrew and his team to two possible vendors; SpliceCom and Alcatel. Both were evaluated through local partners, with SpliceCom eventually winning out, as Andrew explains, "We'd heard good things about the British manufacturer from several sources, including another Hospice that was using the system and an IT Consultant we often worked with. Having compared systems on the market we felt that **max**imiser best suited our needs. It appears future proof, operator friendly and easy to administer – something that was high on our list of requirements as our IT team is small. **max**imiser was both highly flexible and competitively priced in comparison to the other systems we looked at."

"We initially rolled out some 15 IP handsets in the new Distribution Centre. This not only gave us the opportunity to work closely with both SpliceCom partner Three Cherries and the manufacturer themselves, but also gave some of our staff the chance to use the system before we made the final decision at our other two sites. Once the feedback from the staff proved positive we put the business case before the Senior Management Team and so, when finances allowed us to do so, we extended the system by installing two more SpliceCom Call Servers at both the Hospice in Turnchapel and our Pearn site," continued Andrew.

Up And Running

Since September 2012, St Luke's Hospice has been running a single **max**imiser system across all three of its sites, with each one running its own local Call Server. This greatly simplifies overall management of the system as changes can be made from anywhere via a standard web browser, with modifications made to one Call Server being automatically replicated on the other two.

Over 90% of the 150+ IP phones deployed are SpliceCom PCS 56x's and all are from the same family of phones. This makes it easy for staff and volunteers to access **max**imiser's advanced features and facilities from any phone on any site. The six separate typed internal phone directories have been replaced with a single integrated and unified Contact database, allowing internal staff, departments

and external contacts to be searched for, viewed, selected and dialled with a single action – with the ability to store multiple telephone numbers against each entry. Each staff member can also easily see the status of co-workers before they call, greatly reducing time spent on fruitless calls. Or as Andrew summarises it, "The main difference the **max**imiser system has made from an operational viewpoint is that we are now on one unified system with a searchable directory so that calls can be made "internally" on our Local Area Network rather than out onto the public telephone network."

St Luke's Hospice has also deployed SpliceCom's modular Vision Business Management System. This currently provides historical call management information and reporting with integrated call recording, again accessible from anywhere via a standard web browser. The flexibility of the system allows real-time wallboard and/or call centre modules to be easily added in the future should they be required.

Conclusions

In the immediate future it's a case of "more of the same" for St Luke's Hospice. "We want to increase both the mileage we obtain from the system and the return on our investment," says Andrew. The **max**imsier system has so much potential; we know we are just scratching the surface at the moment. We need to educate our staff in the additional functionality that's available to them, without the need to add anything else to it."

The final word goes to Andrew, "I have been impressed with both Three Cherries and SpliceCom and not only for the pre-sales service and installation assistance - post sales technical support has also been excellent. If only all suppliers could be as professional as this! The **max**imiser system itself has proved reliable and flexible during the time it has been in service on all three sites. Thus far I can thoroughly recommend the SpliceCom telephone system."

Summary

St. Luke's Hospice has been caring for thousands of terminally ill patients, across Plymouth, South West Devon and East Cornwall, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week for the past 30 years. Like many similar organisations the Hospice has grown from small beginnings to the position they find themselves in today; a major organisation spread across three major sites, running 34 separate charity shops.

St Luke's communications infrastructure had grown in a similar manner to the organisation itself, to the point where they were using two completely separate telephone systems from two different manufacturers - one which they managed themselves and one which was the responsibility of the local NHS hospital. The installation of SpliceCom's **max**imiser IP-UC Business Telephone System has allowed St Luke's Hospice to;

- Unify communications across all sites
  - Single system, providing local call processing and call break-out
  - All IP phones supplied are from a single family
  - Over 90% of IP phones deployed are the same model

- Reduce ongoing telecommunications costs
  - Provide free calls between sites
  - Drastically lower annual maintenance costs

- Simplify everyday communications for staff and volunteers
  - Just two different types of IP phone from the same extensive range to use
  - Centralised, system-wide phone book for internal and external contacts
  - Ability to see Status of staff before calling them

- Reduce cost of management
  - Single system, spread across three-sites
  - Easy to manage from anywhere using standard web-browser
  - Adds, moves and changes can all be administered in-house
  - Integrated Business Management System, providing call management and call recording, with further options for real-time wallboards and call centre
  - Phone system, IP phones and Business Management System all developed by the same company to guarantee operation and interoperability

St Luke's
Hospice Plymouth

About SpliceCom

SpliceCom is Britain's leading developer of Unified Communication / IP-PBX / Business Telephony systems, delivering tangible business benefits for all types of company, irrespective of size. SpliceCom's **max**imiser product family combines the delivery of voice, video, IP TV and web enabled IT applications at the desktop within a single, scalable system. All SpliceCom solutions are sold, installed and maintained by the SpliceCom Community - a group of highly trained organisations offering complementary skill sets and services.

maximiser based solutions help companies to reduce their carbon footprint by enabling daily communications, conferencing and collaboration without the need for travel. SpliceCom products comply with the directive for the restriction of the use of certain hazardous substances in electrical and electronic equipment (RoHS) and the regulations for the disposal and recycling of waste electrical and electronic equipment (WEEE).

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