



SUCCESS STORY: J.H. COHN

PHONE SYSTEM REFRESH RESULTS IN LOWER COST, ENHANCED PERFORMANCE



SITUATION

The administration of J.H. Cohn’s legacy phone system was becoming increasingly expensive and burdensome. The company had 10 independent PBX systems spread across its 13 offices. While they were all tied together with point-to-point links that allowed four-digit inter-office dialing and a centralized voicemail system, managing and provisioning those aging PBX systems had to be handled by administrative personnel on a local level.

Since the legacy system would be coming off-lease soon, J.H. Cohn decided it was a good time to explore its total communication system options. One of those options was Voice over IP (VoIP).

“We had just made a significant investment in building a converged communications architecture, so we knew we had the backbone to support it,” says Jon Garlock, systems manager at J.H. Cohn. “The timing just seemed right.”

Garlock and his team put together a detailed Request for Proposal (RFP) outlining the company’s requirements. It wasn’t meant to be 100 percent comprehensive, but they did want to be sure they were providing a level playing field.

“We wanted to improve mobility for our employees, and we wanted to simplify inter-office communications,” Garlock says. “Business continuity and disaster recovery were also huge for us. With our old system, one little problem in one office would create a domino effect across the company. We wanted to eliminate those as well as the larger problems a LAN outage might cause.”

SOLUTION

At first, the field was narrowed to Cisco and one other candidate. But when John C. Harris, president of Aspire Technology Partners, showed Garlock the total cost of ownership over the five-year expected lifecycle on top of all the other benefits, it became clear that Cisco was the right choice.

Aspire Technology Partners, a Cisco Silver Certified partner, had been working with J.H. Cohn for nearly four years, and had been closely involved in building the converged architecture on which the new system would reside.

With its established track record and high level of familiarity with the architecture, Aspire became the logical choice to bring J.H. Cohn’s voice, video and data communications onto the converged network.



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– Jon Garlock, Systems Manager, J.H. Cohn





J.H. COHN CUSTOMER PROFILE

J.H. Cohn is an accounting and financial services firm specializing in tax and audit issues. Founded in 1919, the company today has 1,200 employees spread across 13 offices in New York, New Jersey, Connecticut, California and the Cayman Islands.

ABOUT ASPIRE

Aspire Technology Partners is a professional technology services firm specializing in the delivery of robust, secure business infrastructure and communication solutions designed specifically to support and achieve the business goals of our clients. Our solution designs are driven by an unwavering focus on transforming enterprise infrastructures into enablers of business value. Our dynamic team is comprised of seasoned business professional consultants and proven technology specialists. This powerful combination ensures the performance, availability and security of our clients' infrastructures and business-critical assets.

RESULTS

Work on the new system began in January of 2009. Aspire installed Cisco Call Managers and Unity servers, and replaced roughly 90 percent of the existing phones with Cisco Unified 7965G IP phones.

The cost savings began almost immediately. J.H. Cohn was able to eliminate the lease lines between offices for voice traffic, and now hosts both voice and video over the Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) network. As a result, management of all communications is centralized under IT instead of running separate systems with different parts of the organization managing them. Garlock also says the Cisco Unified Workstation Licensing program has been a "blessing" by simplifying user licensing for the solution.

The changeover has the desired effect on business continuity/disaster recovery as well. Under the legacy phone system, if one of the PBX units went down, that office would lose phone capabilities until it was brought back online. That is no longer the case.

"Our main publisher is at our co-location facility, which is the Roseland, New Jersey, data center," Garlock says. "It is a hosted system with redundant everything. We have a subscriber in our main office, and another

on the West Coast. If we lose Roseland, the entire company immediately fails over to one of the other facilities, allowing us to maintain voice communications until it comes back."

Garlock says the only concern some users have had was they didn't think the phones "sounded right." He attributes that to the much higher quality level of Cisco's VoIP technology. Instead of hearing a "phone voice," users are hearing the caller's actual voice.

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