Blount Fine Foods Serves Up Communications with Vertical’s Wave IP Platform

Background
Blount Fine Foods has a rich history of providing gourmet soups, sauces and entrees to national food service, retail and restaurant clientele. To accommodate its growth, the company moved into a new facility in Fall River, Massachusetts, from its original Warren, Rhode Island, headquarters. The Warren building had housed Blount family businesses for more than 100 years and remains a secondary location. Many of Blount Fine Foods’ employees conduct business via smartphones, notebooks and tablets.

Blount maintained a rudimentary, decades-old phone system at its original Rhode Island facility, and, thinking it would save money initially, opted to keep the existing phone system that came with its newer headquarters building in Massachusetts. However, the disparate systems were not networked together, so communications between the two locations required a long distance call—and related costs. A third-party instant messaging (IM) platform used by employees to communicate also increased costs. In addition, the TDM
network was administered through individual handsets and offered no centralized management. It also lacked any recording or data analysis tools, and only supported 100 users.

Due to the age and condition of the system, when the previous communications vendor informed Blount it must sign a waiver before proceeding with an upgrade, the company abandoned any further thought of investing in the existing equipment.

“We knew there were capabilities out there that would allow us to be much more productive and versatile in our communications,” said Phil Pitzer, director of information services at Blount Fine Foods, “and that we could achieve much more through an advanced unified communications solution.”

Solution

When Blount began evaluating new phone systems, Scott Medeiros, vice president of sales at Voice Systems, Inc., a Boston-based certified Vertical Communications® dealer, introduced the company to Vertical’s Wave IP platform.

He offered concrete examples of how the Wave IP’s powerful applications could be customized to meet Blount’s business needs, such as enabling multiple human resources managers to monitor a dedicated employee call-in line.

Vertical’s WaveNet application networked Blount’s two locations together through SIP Trunking, making employees in both states no more than an extension away. Requiring little training, employees quickly mastered Vertical’s award-winning ViewPoint UC desktop interface, which allows each user to administer the system from any endpoint through a standardized dashboard. ViewPoint also gives users access to the Wave IP’s built-in softphone, which can be used as their primary phone directly on their PCs, so they can work from anywhere as if at their office workstations. Instant messaging is also accessible through ViewPoint and available to all employees at no additional cost through Vertical’s unique singular licensing model.

Voice Systems also installed Wave’s ViewPoint Mobile application, giving Blount’s fleet of iPhone and Android users immediate access to the full capabilities of the corporate Wave IP system—including messaging, call forwarding, presence and call recording—through their mobile devices.

Vertical’s Wave IP solution also enhances Blount’s accountability as a company, giving employees and managers complete visibility into all call activity at a glance. And with the Wave Call Reporting application, company management can maintain and access detailed call records at any time, which it was never able to do before. “It’s a great tool for generating reports on our phone activities,” relates Pitzer. “If there is ever a performance issue, we can review that data. We never had any such documentation before.”

Results

“The savings for Blount Fine Foods started on day one,” reports Medeiros. “Right away, they were able to realize a 15% reduction in long distance calls between facilities. That savings accumulates each month, accelerating their return on investment as they go forward. And their capabilities have increased substantially. The system went from the equivalent of a go-kart to a Ferrari practically overnight.”

As Blount continues to grow, the flexible, software-based Wave IP system is able to expand right along with it, protecting the company’s communications investment while keeping the system up to date with the latest technologies and applications.

“Our old system was hardware-based, which made it much more difficult to evolve over the years,” said Pitzer. “The beauty of the new solution is it can accommodate an upgrade at any time.”

“The integrated mobility applications sealed the deal for us,” sums up Pitzer. “Other vendors had to jump through hoops and add expensive extensions to achieve any kind of mobile capability. The Wave IP included a truly effective mobility function within the license, along with a comprehensive list of other features. It’s simple to use, and it all works right out of the box. Vertical’s solution outpaces the competition, and gives us the ability to perform as a streamlined, efficient and organized company.”