Ascert and VoIPstudio

The people who test mission-critical payments systems put their trust in VoIPstudio

Background

Ascert builds best-in-class automated software testing solutions that help many of the world's biggest and best companies measure application performance, reliability and scalability. The company's products and consultancy services are used in the most rigorous testing conditions on the most mission-critical applications to reduce risk of failure, improve time to market and increase quality.

Challenge

Ascert works as a highly distributed company, with offices and personnel in the US, the UK, South Africa and Australia. Since the company's foundation in 1992, each of these locations offices had developed its own independent telecommunications solutions, and these were neither integrated nor easy to manage.

Managing Partner Andrew Mould says: "If I wanted to speak to one of my colleagues I would have to make a regular international phone call. Obviously there were significant costs associated with that. We also used messaging services and Skype and desktop conferencing products, but this gave no cohesive central view of things. Sometimes it was hard to know how best to contact someone: should I use method A, B or C?"

In the US office the company used a hybrid PBX and IP telecoms system, which necessitated maintenance of both the telecoms box and a Windows server, although it did provide many advanced features. These were missing in the UK, however, which depended solely on a BT FeatureLine system.

"For the UK teams, they were either in the office or they weren't answering calls," Andrew says. "That is obviously far from ideal."

Solution

Ascert took the decision to transfer as many of its business services as possible into the cloud. "We no longer wanted any boxes in-house," Andrew says. "You always end up having to manage them. We became experts on this and we have done things with our phone systems that people said weren't possible to do. We are technicians so we are able to do these things. But it's not our core business function.

"We also envisaged moving offices in the UK, and we needed a system that would be easy to transfer to a new location." Ascert chose VoIPstudio (then branded as VoIPDito) because it offered a robust, mature and fully functional solution.

"Some of the other offerings we looked at simply didn't seem ready for prime time," Andrew says. "I liked the formula VoIPstudio have worked out. They had a data centre that was going to be half way between our UK and California offices which would help us with any latency issues on the internet. And their user interface is very good.

The company themselves were also very good to work with." Ascert now has greater control over its incoming lines and can easily allocate them to different screens or locations. Or calls can be routed through Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems.

Calls can also be forwarded to mobiles using the follow-me feature, improving the availability of Ascert's teams of experts, which is a major advantage to a company which helps its clients to test and maintain mission critical systems.

Benefits

The company now has a unified communications solution which has removed the need for in-house servers and multiple PBX boxes in different offices around the world. The company's entire telecoms solution is now managed and controlled through a simple web portal.

"It has made the whole management easier," Andrew says. "It also doesn't have to be someone in the US office that manages it. If there are issues at other times of day, then people in the UK can go in and take care of it."

The need to handle multiple bills and contracts has also been removed. Now one bill is paid automatically each month from the company credit card. "We don't even look at it," Andrew says. "We see the headline figure but don't bother beyond that - especially since it is around a third of the cost of what we were paying before. "Another great advantage of having the phone system behind you which handles things on a worldwide basis, is that it allows you to project the image of a world-class organization by the way you handle support issues so effectively."

Managed through a simple web portal...

More effective management of inbound support calls...

Simplified billing saved time and improved control...