

FURTHER EDUCATION SUCCESS STORY

Solar deliver knowledge and expertise

...enabling the deployment of new services, improving the usability of the system and significantly reducing complexity and cost.

Trafford College was formed in September 2007 following the merger of North and South Trafford Colleges. There are approximately 9,500 students across four locations in the Greater Manchester area. The mission of the college is to prepare learners of all ages for a successful and rewarding working career. It is proud of its engagement with businesses through a variety of innovative initiatives that support its learning activities.

It became clear that the current mix of legacy analogue and digital telephones systems could no longer meet the requirements of its multi-site environment. As a result the college migrated to a ShoreTel based Unified Communications solution. The ShoreTel system enabled the college to create an infrastructure that used the LAN (Local Area Network) for its voice and data traffic, enabling the deployment of new services, improving the usability of the system and significantly reducing complexity and cost.

The ShoreTel Unified Communications solution brought a number of benefits to the college including the ability for college personnel to hot-desk at different location across the various campuses. By simply logging into any telephone within a campus an individual could be easily contacted through their personnel telephone extension number, irrespective of their physical location.

'Our staff must be able to work effectively across the various college locations' Ms. Bolton, the college's Head of Telecoms said. 'But it was impossible for users to hot-desk at the different sites because it was too difficult and time consuming to constantly add and remove someone from the different phone systems. Having to manage the different moves, additions and changes to the phone systems became very cumbersome and exhaustive for the support team.'

An experienced and competent partner

Trafford College identified the need for an experienced and competent partner to support their ShoreTel infrastructure which by then comprised over 400 telephones and 10 ShoreGear voice switches. They needed a partner that was experienced in the delivery of complex, multi-site Unified Communications solutions, with a depth and breadth of knowledge that included visibility of new product features, integration skills, technical support expertise and the ability to deliver a range of complementary products and services that would benefit the college.

Solar Communications were selected as the Unified Communications expert partner of choice. It was clear to the college that Solar's 23 years of experience, in excess of 1,000 satisfied business customers and award winning ShoreTel expertise was what was required by the college as it moved forward.

CHALLENGE:

- Legacy systems didn't meet the requirements of a complex multi-site environment.

BENEFITS:

- Improved productivity and reduced cost.

SOLUTION:

- A ShoreTel Unified Communications solution with easy to use, intuitive features and functions and unrivalled technical support from Solar Communications.



Working with Solar's specialist migration team the college was able to move its services with no unplanned interruption to service.

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As a ShoreTel 'Gold Partner' Solar were well placed to support the college's ShoreTel infrastructure having also been awarded the ShoreTel 'Outstanding Customer Service' and 'European Partner of the Year' awards as a result of their commitment to high levels of customer satisfaction.

Solar Communications worked closely with the college to gain a detailed understanding of their voice and data network infrastructure and the services and systems which it supported. Working closely in partnership the college could be confident that Solar's Support and Engineering Team would be there to support, advise and assist them whenever required. Subsequently, Solar have worked with them on an advisory basis to ensure that key features of the system are being fully utilized, providing maximum benefit to the whole college community.

Improving systems whilst cost saving

Having achieved savings within the campus it was apparent that fixed line connections and external calls were a significant expense. After analysis of calling patterns and confirmation of bandwidth requirements Solar worked with the college to migrate the various services over to Solar's billing and support platforms. Working with Solar's specialist migration team the college was able to move its services with no unplanned interruption to service. Since moving to Solar cost savings have been achieved whilst system reliability and availability has been improved.

Solar Communications offer a broad portfolio of complementary products and services that include fixed line to mobile convergence (FMC) solutions, high-speed LAN infrastructure, HD Video conferencing, fixed line and Internet access solutions with built-in resilience and redundancy at dramatically reduced cost.

Trafford College can therefore be confident that by working with Solar Communications they can continue to meet the needs of their customers today and for the future.

ABOUT SOLAR COMMUNICATIONS LTD

Established in 1988, Solar Communications is an award winning trusted communications partner for SME and enterprise businesses throughout the UK and Europe. With offices in Chippenham and London, Solar Communications has been "ShoreTel European Partner of the Year" for the past four years and is first and only European Partner to join the "ShoreTel Circle of Excellence." Solar's

knowledge and experience allows bespoke solutions tailored to business requirements that enable customers to improve productivity, reduce costs and increase profitability. Solar has a reputation for excellent customer support consistently scoring over 97% Customer satisfaction through independent analysis. For more information, visit solar.co.uk

ShoreTel European Partner of the Year 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2011

Outstanding Customer Service Award 2009, 2010 and 2011

ShoreTel Circle of Excellence 2010 and 2011



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