The sign of great service

AGI is all about keeping up their clients' brand image. From large sporting and event venues to food service, healthcare facilities and automotive dealerships, AGI takes pride in providing creative solutions for their clients, including signs, lighting, interior/exterior architectural design, and 'immersive and engaging experiences' that combine physical and digital elements to tell the customer's story.' Delivering those services requires flawless communication and integration between locations. When the network operations team became overloaded, it was time for a new design that could keep up with growing demand.

Industry

Architectural branding/signage

Customer

AGI.net

Headquarters Virginia Beach, VA

800+ employees, 7 locations

650 unassigned inbound customer calls/day

Large scale signage projects

Focus markets: automotive, financial, food service, healthcare

Challenges

Multiple vendors/equipment at locations

Poor connectivity between offices

High costs

Dependent on outside consultants

Solutions

Mitel UCaaS

MPLS

Results

Increased productivity

Increased worker flexibility (teleworker function)

Lower costs

Higher network speeds

Improved customer service

Design review

A company's service is a reflection of who they are, and a strong IT network and communications strategy is key to delivering an excellent customer experience. Ensuring that the network was ready for anticipated changes in demand was the responsibility of AGI's IT organization, whose scope includes network security, the WAN infrastructure, server setup and backup, disaster recovery, email and any network infrastructure issues. This organization also maintains the network that keeps the company's mission-critical enterprise resource planning (ERP) software up and running. The ERP handles all the scheduling, clocking of hourly staff, project management and vendor CRM. Equally important is the company's voice network which connects customers to the business via the operations center where more than 650 unassigned calls each day are manually routed to the correct department or person. AGI was using an older premises-based PBX system with boxes in every office, which had become difficult and costly to maintain.

Adding to the complexity of the team's responsibilities was the variety of vendors providing different services. According to Zachary Clark, network operations manager for AGI, "We had different providers for phone, Internet and firewalls at every location, and we didn't know who to call if an issue developed. When the vendors pointed fingers at each other, AGI would have to go offline for testing. It was a nightmare trying to figure out who was responsible." When the company decided to add a California office with existing technology—piling more demands on an inefficient network and communications system—AGI knew it was time to explore different options.

> "We had different providers for phone, Internet and firewalls at every location, and we didn't know who to call if an issue developed. When the vendors pointed fingers at each other, AGI would have to go offline for testing. It was a nightmare trying to figure out who was responsible"

A new plan

Top on the list of criteria was a cost-effective solution that could connect all their offices and increase efficiency. They considered other vendors, but most could not provide a nationwide solution and/or were prohibitively expensive. Based on a strong recommendation from one of their consultants, AGI contacted Windstream Enterprise and learned how cloud-based Mitel Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS) over Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) to all locations could solve many of their most pressing network and communications problems.

Implementing a cloud-based Mitel UCaaS solution provided multiple benefits to AGI. It eliminated the PBXs in each location, reducing IT time spent going from location to location when a problem occurred. Four-digit dialing meant employees could connect directly with colleagues in other offices without first calling a receptionist to transfer the call. Similarly, self-service options gave employees the freedom to make changes to their phones instead of calling the help desk. In addition, Mitel UCaaS supports teleworkers making it easy for customers or colleagues to connect with them regardless of location. With this feature, employees can take their phone and laptop home in the event of a disaster, plug in and continue to serve customers even if the physical office is out of service.

Unified solution and savings

Since implementing Mitel UCaaS over MPLS, AGI has noticed that connectivity and file transfer between offices is much smoother, faster and facilitates greater team collaboration. Network backups are now 6-8 hours vs. days. Complaints about the speed of the ERP are almost non-existent. According to Clark, "Our enterprise resource planning system is about 30% faster because of the increased speed and connectivity between sites. At the same time, with Mitel UCaaS, we've eliminated about $1,000 per year, per office in phone system costs because we no longer need to maintain an in-house PBX, and we don't have to cover long distance charges between offices."

> "Our enterprise resource planning system is about 30% faster because of the increased speed and connectivity between sites. At the same time, with Mitel UCaaS, we've eliminated about $1,000 per year, per office in phone system costs because we no longer need to maintain an in-house PBX, and we don't have to cover long distance charges between offices"

With less trouble-shooting required, and fewer network and phone issues to stand in their way, AGI's IT team is now free to pursue more strategic needs of the business. The firm can continue to focus on what they do best: 'bringing their customers' ideas to life, and transforming their vision into unique, immersive brand experiences.'

AGI

WINDSTREAM
ENTERPRISE
CONNECT. TRANSFORM. ELEVATE.