



Case study: Addis Housewares; manufacturing/retail

Addis Household Products PLC, is one of the UK's most established manufacturers of households products. Formed in 1780 by William Addis, the company claims the invention of the first ever commercially available toothbrush amongst a number of other major innovations introduced over the last 200 years.

In this document:

- The challenges
- The solution
- The results
- The future

Introduction

Addis Household Products PLC, is one of the UK's most established manufacturers of household products. Formed in 1780 by William Addis, the company claims the invention of the first ever commercially available toothbrush amongst a number of other major innovations introduced over the last 200 years.

In 1999 the Company was acquired by EMSA a German based operation and it now employs 90 people at its headquarters in Bridgend, Wales.

The challenges

Throughout its long history Addis has, until 2006 manufactured all of its products in-house, however the diversity of the company's range had made this process uneconomic and the company therefore decided to change its strategy, keeping the design and distribution of its products in-house, and outsourcing the production to specialist manufacturers. Its manufacturing premises in Swansea therefore, became superfluous and the Company decided to move its headquarters to a new 'brownfield' facility in Bridgend.

As the new facility had no technology infrastructure whatsoever, it gave the company the opportunity to implement a new solution that could be integrated into the European wide corporate infrastructure of its parent. Systems Manager at Addis, Kevin Doe, comments on the new opportunity, "Our IT platform is based on Citrix and therefore provided a high degree of functionality and integration across the organisation, however our old telephone system was a rigid, location dependent, PBX that was completely isolated from any other system we use. Looking forward we wanted our voice application to be an integral part of our overall communications process, which would include, integration with our contact management software, our email and in the near future our European-wide SAP system."

Doe recognised that a voice solution based on IP technology would enable them to increase their productivity and achieve cost savings and improved customer service. The company also highlighted other key features required of the new solution, these included:

- Unified fax and voicemail messages delivered to the unified email inbox
- Ability for customer to administrate the system themselves, therefore easy to use and configure
- Ability to integrate with Outlook
- Have additional features, such as call recording and routing

The solution

Doe comments on the selection decision, "Having identified that IP was the way forward we then looked at the offerings from all the principle manufacturers; initially our key consideration was ease of integration with our back office systems Outlook, Citrix and SAP. Whilst all of the systems we considered offered this facility to varying degrees, only the 'pure' IP system from Swyx offered a completely seamless solution. We were also conscious that apart from implementing the right technology, we needed the expertise and advice to support our business through our relocation and into the future. We were very impressed by the knowledge that local Swyx reseller Atia Solutions demonstrated on IP telephony, and their understanding of our business needs. The solution they outlined presented a very compelling business case which allowed the company to phase in its integration over a period of time adopting new features as they were required."

The results

The Swyx solution has been installed for a number of months now and Addis is now beginning to realise some of the benefits. According to the Doe, the Swyx solution allows Addis to administrate the system easily themselves and it also permits virtual movement of the staff whether they are in the group headquarters in Germany, on the move or at the new office in Bridgend; the user simply logs onto any workstation or laptop and calls will be re-directed to that location.

The Integration of Swyx with the Addis Citrix solution has provided the following benefits:

- Able to Manage incoming calls efficiently so that they are handled or re-routed in the most appropriate manner – improving customer service, by personally greeting clients
- Adoption of a centralised communications strategy led to improved customer service through better availability of both staff and information
- Enable seamless remote working and voice mail access from any location
- Additional functionality over old system, for example call recording and desk-top conferencing has vastly improved both internal and external communications
- Enable users to see and share each other's desk-top for quick resolution or collaboration on problems and issues
- A 'future proof' platform that will enable Addis to seamlessly integrate with its parent company at a time of its choosing

The future

Kevin concludes "It is still early days for us but I've been thoroughly impressed so far. The support that we receive is excellent, Swyx is not just a new telephony system, it is a key component of a business and communications strategy that will allow us to maintain our long-term competitive advantage and improve our overall business efficiency."

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Addis Housewares.

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