



PHENOMENAL NETWORKS HELPS WHCC UTILIZE IP COMMUNICATIONS TO CONTINUE GROWTH



**Chris Hanline (L) and Mike Hanline
at the new WHCC offices**

White House Custom Colour (WHCC), a Minnesota based company, is one of the leading photo processors in the USA. Focusing on serving the small, professional studio market segment, the company has enjoyed nearly twenty times growth in the past six years.

Their current customer base is predominantly in North America but they are attracting an increasing number of customers from Europe and even extending out to Australia. "We have built a good reputation for quality and service at the right price," said Mike Hanline, co-CEO of WHCC. "Over half of our new business comes from referrals which has enabled our continued growth".

This growth (they have already been featured twice on the Inc. 5000 list of growing private companies) started when the company made the key decision to "go digital" for their processing. "This enabled us to cut many expensive steps from the process and so provide our customers with much lower pricing without compromising the quality," commented Mike Hanline. "We were the first in our market niche and have seen several competitors fail while we have grown."

The Challenges and Goals

Growth is a wonderful thing but comes with its own challenges. After going to digital processing in 2000, the company first expanded into an 11,000 sq. ft. facility in 2004 and in July, 2007 is in another new facility of over 47,000 sq. ft. Employee count has almost doubled in the last two years. The business is also cyclical, peaking in the main wedding and holiday periods. This means that the workforce varies causing other challenges.

WHCC not only uses technology to provide great product service but also to provide the infrastructure to efficiently manage the company and resources. "Most of our business is done by telephone and through the Internet," said Chris Hanline, CTO for WHCC, "so we need effective telephone systems supported by computerized databases to keep our customers happy and our costs in line. We are continually striving to provide faster and easier ways for customers to send us digital files and interact with our production team. Orders are usually processed same day and shipped free so the system has to be effective."

When they were planning the latest facility, Mike, Chris and the management team looked at both the expansion of operating technology and the IT infrastructure to support the business growth. Their existing network was primarily based on Cisco equipment but the communications was through an Avaya system. "The Avaya was working well but it was just a phone system, commented Chris Hanline. "We needed redundancy and the ability to expand and do a lot more with the system." "Our Cisco representative invited us to see their IP Communications demonstration and frankly we were immediately sold on the whole concept of using a complete Cisco system to provide us with both the functionality and the growth path for the future." Chris and Mike agreed.

“ WE ONLY HAD A WEEK TO INSTALL AND CUT-OVER TO THE NEW SYSTEM. THE PHENOMENAL TEAM PRE-CONFIGURED THE SYSTEMS AT THEIR OFFICES AND SO WE WERE ABLE TO MEET THE TIMEFRAME — WE LITERALLY ONLY TOOK ONE HOUR TO SUCESSFULLY SWITCH THE WHOLE COMPANY OVER ”

..... Chris Hanline, White House Custom Colour

THE IMPLEMENTATION

Once the decision was made to go to the Cisco IP Communications solution the next step was to bring in Phenomenal Networks. As one of the premier resellers for Cisco, the Phenomenal team worked with Chris Hanline to specify and design the full network solution.

The system design catered for both the near term and future needs and integrated several functions to provide seamless communications capabilities.

“The building contractors were running late so the original two-week slot for installation shrunk to just a week as we had to cut over on our original planned date,” said Mike Hanline. “Phenomenal were a great help by doing all the configuration and main testing at their own office,” commented Chris. “So our engineering teams were able to work together and get everything in place during that week. On the Friday we switched off the old system and within an hour we were up and running on the new system with no real break in business on Monday morning . A couple of small issues with the use of the new phone features were quickly dealt with by the Phenomenal guys and by the following Monday everything was running perfectly.”

THE RESULT

“Our staff and the Phenomenal folks did a great job getting us up and running so quickly,” said Chris Hanline.

“There are several areas that we particularly like,” said Mike Hanline. “The ability to get all our e-mail, voice and other messages in one mail box using the Unified Communications option is really effective.”

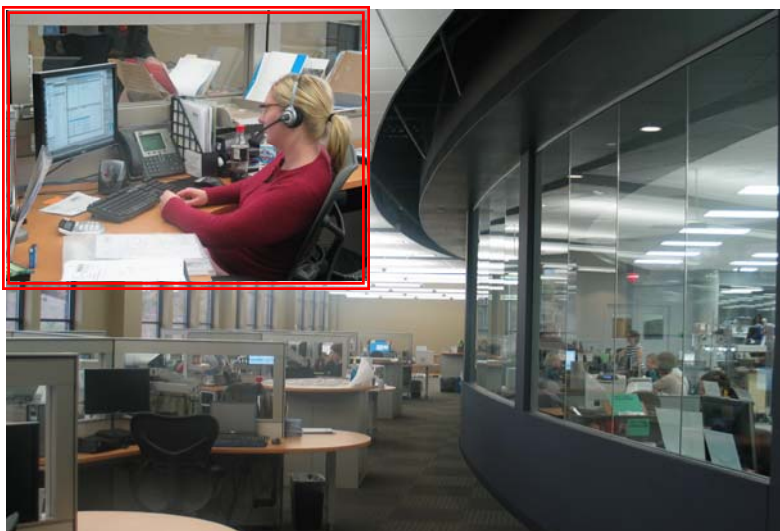
“We also pleased that we can simply add extra phones wherever we want,” remarked Chris. “ The combination of voice and data allows us to put extra phones into our warehouse which is down the road and it is so easy using the IP connections”

Their business model is based on great customer service at the right price. “ We aim at making our services easy to understand and much of business is self service through the web site so this is critical. This is backed-up by the inside sales team. The new system provides the sales reps with all the current customer information as identified by the calling phone number so they can provide optimum service.

We have also used the “skills based routing” capability to ensure that our premium customers are connected to the more experienced sales staff to further improve the customer experience. This not only helps in customer retention but also leads to great referrals—over half our new business comes this way” said Mike Hanline.

So what about saving money by simplifying the “moves and adds”? “Well I used to spend my Saturdays from time to time when we need to shift the old phones,” grinned Chris, “but now when our telemarketing manager needs to move a phone or two she just unplugs them, plugs them in the new location and that’s it. We don’t directly save money but I get my Saturdays back.”

“We are very pleased with the support and efforts we have received from the Phenomenal engineering team said Chris Hanline. “When we call for support the engineers are there at seven in the morning to help us as necessary—a bit early for me sometimes but good for our company.”



PARTNER SUCCESS STORY PHENOMENAL NETWORKS

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THE SYSTEM

At the core of the solution are two Cisco Catalyst 6509 servers connected by multi mode fiber to provide system redundancy. The server hardware is complemented with Cisco's Call Manager software to control the system and provides advance calling features. The servers are fed by 3 PRI lines two for long distance and the other for local calls.

The infrastructure is based on Cisco 2821 routers with multiple 10GB switches. Users are provided with a mixture of 7941, 7961 and 7911 phone sets. WHCC utilizes Cisco's Unified Messaging System to provide the entire enterprise with voice and e-mail integration.

In addition, the system utilizes the Unified Contact Express Center software that provides the base functionality for the telemarketing operation. To further improve accessibility and flexibility, a Cisco 4402 wireless controller drives multiple access points to provide wireless access throughout the facility.

BOTTOM LINE

The bottom line is that WHCC is pleased with the progress and their choice of Cisco and Phenomenal as partners. The system has not only provided for the current needs of this fast growing company but gives them the basis to easily expand both the size and the functionality for the future.

“The combination of growth and the impact of the cyclical changes in staffing meant we needed a flexible and extensible system,” said Chris Hanline. “ We are happy with the new system and the excellent support we get from the Phenomenal engineers”

“We have been in this building for only three months and we are already close to filling the building so we are happy that we can depend on Cisco and Phenomenal to help us with this continued growth,” commented Mike Hanline.





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