



Multi-channel retailer realises new business agility

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Richard Reeve
IT Director
Findel

BT Voice platform helps Findel fast track M&A integration projects and more quickly achieve profitable growth

Client

Findel is a multi-channel retailer serving the business-to-business and business-to-consumer marketplaces through three operating divisions: home shopping, education, and healthcare. With turnover in excess of £650 million, it is the UK's fourth largest direct mail order company and delivers nearly nine million parcels every year.

Express Gifts and Findel Direct – the twin arms of the company's home shopping division – are at the heart of this dynamic and fast moving business. The former offers a range of established products – including leisurewear, electrical, household, textile, bedding, furniture, and nursery goods – with flexible payment options. The latter has been built through rapid acquisition of brands such as Letterbox, Kitbag, Confetti, I Want One of Those, and The Cotswold Company, providing niche products that can be cross-marketed to other customers.

Challenge

The foundation for the success of Findel is an agile networked IT services environment. Findel has some 2,000 users spread across 12 sites as well as two 250-seat contact centres in Accrington and Manchester. Making this virtual organisation operate seamlessly as a whole depends heavily on intelligent call routing and interoperability between legacy and IP-based technologies in a multi-vendor environment.

Richard Reeve, IT Director for Findel, explains: “Our challenge is to provide the business with a platform for growth. This means being able to quickly integrate newly acquired companies, their contact centres, retail outlets, and people – or alternatively to relocate such operations altogether. Lead times for integration projects can be very aggressive, in some cases four weeks from start to finish.”

BT Voice differentiators

- Ubiquitous availability and integration capabilities of the BT Voice platform
- Proactive account management means Findel benefits from improved offers without having to ask
- BT engineering resources and fast-fix capabilities help manage business risk
- Value added services help Findel to simplify and improve management of its voice estate

Case study

Findel

“As the company has grown, we have inherited a mix of different suppliers’ equipment. Our BT Voice network is the glue that holds everything together and allows us to rapidly adapt. For example, following one acquisition we were able to quickly integrate an Avaya Automatic Call Distribution system with ease.”

Trevor Teasdale
Communications Manager
Findel

Solution

The architecture that provides Findel with its highly valued business agility is a BT Voice platform – comprising 600 ISDN30 lines – while BT FrameStream forms a dedicated network for data services. Meanwhile BTnet Premium provides uncontended fast internet service.

Trevor Teasdale, Communications Manager for Findel, takes up the story: “As the company has grown, we have inherited a mix of different suppliers’ equipment. Our BT Voice network is the glue that holds everything together and allows us to rapidly adapt. For example, following one acquisition we were able to quickly integrate an Avaya Automatic Call Distribution system with ease. While we look to standardise wherever possible, that flexibility is a huge advantage to us.”

Value

As well as improving IT agility, BT helps Findel to ensure business growth is as profitable as possible. Richard Reeve says: “BT advises us on ways to maximise revenue from our inbound services. Even when we do not ask, they will regularly bring improved offers to us to make our IT budgets stretch and save us money.”

The company also benefits from competitive reduced call rates and line rental charges by using BT calls and lines packages having committed to an agreed spend threshold. Findel also takes advantage of other value added services. BT OneBill provides one easy-to-understand consolidated bill every quarter

while BT Billing Analyst – which comes with customer training and ongoing support – can be used to identify possible fraudulent activity from suspicious call patterns.

Trevor Teasdale concludes: “BT OneBill and BT Billing Analyst have really improved visibility of spend and usage across the business. We receive a report each day, which we can run against our own call logger to highlight potential misuse. We have also been able to make additional savings by terminating under-utilised lines and rental agreements for legacy kit that we no longer need.”

The next phase in the relationship between Findel and BT will see voice and data traffic converged onto a BT MPLS network. This will provide improved access to applications, systems, and information, as well as offering the company new ways of collaborating as its business model grows and changes.

Core BT Services

- BT Voice services (inbound and outbound)
- BTnet
- BT FrameStream
- BT MPLS
- BT OneBill with BT Billing Analyst

Offices worldwide

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