LEADING UPHOLSTERY FABRIC FIRM SWITCHES TO SHORETEL

ShoreTel Delivers Savings, Simplicity and Reliability

Challenge:

Quaker Fabric needed to replace its outdated phone system with a VoIP solution that would help it cut costs and improve reliability and employee productivity.

Solution:

ShoreTel provided Quaker Fabric with a complete VoIP telephone system, including switches, phones and software, for its 11 facilities in Fall River, Massachusetts and its sales office in Chicago. Partial solutions are in place at three other domestic locations and in Mexico.

Benefits:

The VoIP solution allows Quaker Fabric customers to call one main telephone number, employees enjoy four-digit dialing to reach co-workers at different locations, and calls can easily be transferred anywhere within the organization. Clients no longer need to hang up and dial another number to reach the right person, employees enjoy rich features that enhance their productivity, and the ability to manage the solution in-house reduces maintenance costs significantly.

Quaker Fabric began operations in 1945 as a small, family-owned fabric mill. Today, it is one of the largest producers of Jacquard upholstery fabric in the world and one of the undisputed leaders in the $2+ billion U.S. upholstery fabric industry. The company also produces specialty yarns, which it uses in its fabrics and sells to other fabric manufacturers. Quaker Fabric, with approximately 1,900 employees, counts among its customers virtually all of the largest furniture manufacturers in the United States, and it also sells in more than 40 other countries. In a typical year, over 500 furniture manufacturers around the globe buy over 40 million yards of fabric from Quaker.

OUT WITH THE OLD

In 2004, Quaker Fabric had an outdated NEC telephone system that was becoming a detriment to the company, with its reliability and performance shortfalls. At the time, the company was in the midst of converting its network to MPLS (Multi Protocol Label Switching). Rather than upgrading the NEC system, which would have cost just as much as a new solution, the company decided to complete the network conversion quickly and implement a Voice over IP (VoIP) solution across its 17 locations (15 in the U.S., and one each in Mexico and Brazil (coming soon)).

Because Quaker Fabric was using Cisco network equipment already, the company considered its VoIP solutions, as well as VoIP-ready solutions from NEC. Someone in the company had also heard of ShoreTel and its award-winning systems, so the choice came down to Cisco and ShoreTel. After checking references across the country and looking at each solution closely, especially for feature richness and ease of implementation, configuration and administration, Quaker Fabric chose ShoreTel.

IN WITH THE NEW

ShoreTel, with the help of its local partner, provided Quaker Fabric with 37 ShoreGear switches, ranging from ShoreGear-T1 to the ShoreGear-40/8, ShoreGear-60/12, and ShoreGear-120/24 switches. Also deployed were over 600 telephones, including ShoreTel IP and analog handsets. Quaker Fabric is capitalizing on ShoreTel's Call Manager, Voice Mail, and ShoreWare Director, which makes configuration changes fast and easy.

The deployment was challenging due to the age of the technical infrastructure in Quaker's aging buildings. However, once the infrastructure issues were straightened out, the ShoreTel deployment, which took about three weeks, went smoothly and employees were enjoying the new phones with very little training.

HUGE SAVINGS—TIME & MONEY

ShoreTel has helped reduce Quaker Fabric's total cost of ownership (TCO) with the IP telephony solution's ease of implementation, administration, and management. ShoreWare Director, ShoreTel's browser-based management interface, allows a network administrator to launch a web browser and gain access to the system from anywhere on the network. Through ShoreWare Director, everything can be managed, including the PBX, voice mail, automated attendant and desktop applications. Adding a new user takes just a few seconds, starting with the click of a button. When a new user is entered, the centralized database and every voice switch are notified and updated, the new user's mailbox is immediately created, and the automated attendant dial-by-name-and-number feature and online directories are updated.

"With the ShoreTel system, we've definitely improved productivity and saved money already," said Norman Sturdevant, Quaker Fabric's CIO. "We didn't have to hire another network engineer or rely on the vendor to make changes. We continue to get a lot more done with fewer people. Very few projects allow you to say that." In addition to management savings, the savings in toll charges are huge. "Using 4-digit dialing to all of our facilities, especially Mexico, saves us a ton in long distance charges," said Sturdevant. "Across all of our locations, we estimate a cost savings of $10,000 or more in the first year alone."

ENHANCED CUSTOMER SERVICE

ShoreGear voice switches allow Quaker Fabric to break down communication barriers because it easily spans multiple locations. Employees use four-digit extension dialing to reach anyone in the organization and easily and seamlessly transfer, conference, pickup, park and intercom between sites. The new ShoreTel system also integrated easily with Microsoft Outlook on Quaker Fabric employee desktops, providing unified messaging, directory dialing, contact screen pop, and calendar integration, which enhances their productivity and streamlines business.

Quaker Fabric is also capitalizing on ShoreTel Call Manager, a powerful, all-purpose tool that allows employees to manage their voice communications quickly and easily right from their desktop. With ShoreTel Personal Call Manager, Quaker Fabric users can quickly browse contacts and make calls from local directories or from Microsoft Outlook. All of these features translate to better customer service.

Receptionists enjoy an even higher level of functionality with ShoreTel. ShoreWare Operator provides administrative assistants and receptionists with critical information necessary for exceptional customer service. For example, when the phone rings, a call-routing log displays the caller's experience within the system to the Quaker Fabric receptionist. Before transferring a call, the call-transfer screen displays information about exactly who is available to receive the call, as well as who is already busy on the phone. With this much detailed information, receptionists connect callers faster than ever, providing them the highest level of professional service. Furthermore, dynamic, online directories eliminate paper directories – which are usually out of date and not available online. With

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![ShoreTel logo]

the complete company at their fingertips, along with knowledge about who is available and where a caller has already been, the receptionist can transfer each call, using a simple drag-and-drop tool, to the most appropriate person, ensuring callers reach a live person rather than voice mail whenever possible.

"Our administrative assistants love the system, and we intend to look at some other features, like Contact Center, as future enhancements," said Sturdevant. "I think it's fair to say the rest of our users see tremendous benefits in the added features also, especially when compared to what we had before."
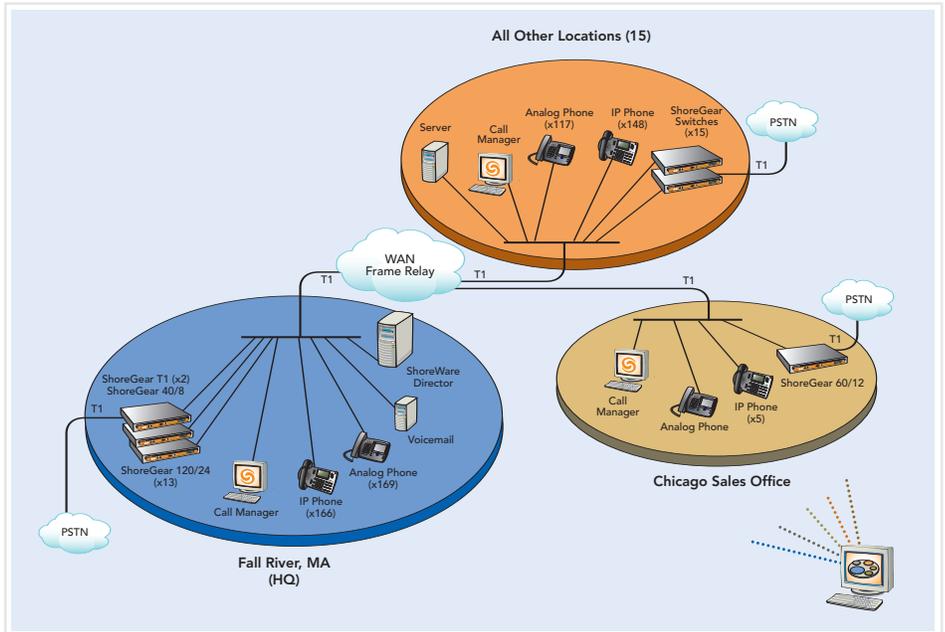
Quaker deployed ShoreTel to 17 locations with 606 phones.

LOOKING FORWARD TO FUTURE CAPABILITIES

Quaker Fabric is very pleased with its decision to choose the ShoreTel system and is already reaping the cost and time savings benefits. The company looks forward to future enhancements and additional features that ShoreTel has planned in upcoming product announcements. "We believe we're the first of ShoreTel's large customers to implement on an MPLS network, and we're happy with how the system has delivered on its promises," said Sturdevant. "ShoreTel's local reseller did a great job helping us implement the system and ShoreTel professionals are also involved and proactive with their ideas. With the savings in administration and long distance charges and the ease of use for our employees, we're more than pleased with ShoreTel."

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