

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

ABOUT SWANKE HAYDEN CONNELL ARCHITECTS (SHCA)

Type: Award-winning Architects

Location: Offices in London, New York, Miami, Washington DC, Paris, Istanbul and Moscow

Configuration: Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP) networking global offices incorporating the Mitel Teleworker Solution, Mitel Unified Communicator Advanced and Mitel Messaging Server

Website: www.shca.com

CUSTOMER NEEDS

- Unite communications of global offices
- Facilitate remote and home working
- Reduce IT management time of systems

"We are constantly facing the challenge of communicating with our colleagues spread out across the globe and spanning four time zones with up to an eight hour difference. Clearly we need systems and applications that allow us the flexibility to be able to interact with those colleagues from wherever we are located – home, office or client premises, at a time that suits us all. The Mitel Teleworker application plays a fundamental part in our achieving that goal."

– Julian Seward, Principal,
Swanke Hayden Connell Architects

Swanke Hayden Connell takes the lead with Mitel IP Communications Solution

Swanke Hayden Connell Architects (SHCA) is an international, award-winning design practice that has been at the forefront of quality design for a century. With principal offices in New York and London the company has in the last 20 years added further offices in Miami, Washington DC, Sheffield, Paris, Istanbul and Moscow. In a highly competitive market SHCA must ensure that their IT and communications systems deliver competitive advantage and as their operations became more and more dispersed across the world this need was becoming increasingly significant.

The initial installation of a Mitel® 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP) in the London office of SHCA was intended to provide a Gateway for new applications such as the Mitel Teleworker. This application was trailed by James Ball, SHCA's Director of IT and Systems and Associate Principal, who, having found the Teleworker improved productivity and communication with his HQ whilst working remotely, expanded the application to remote users throughout the network. Including staff that needed fast voice and data access from remote locations ranging from home offices to client sites at any point around the globe.

Voice over IP

Following the installation of the Mitel 3300 ICP as a Gateway for remote workers SHCA decided to implement further key applications that the platform supported such as VoIP. At this point the 3300 ICP took over as the principal communications system for SHCA from the Avaya Definity and users were provided with new Mitel IP handsets. By installing the same IP handsets on the local area network in the Sheffield office the 18 staff located there are able to talk to colleagues in London at no cost to the company as they are on the same network and share a common inter-company dialling plan.



SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP)
- Mitel Teleworker Solution
- Mitel Messaging Server
- Mitel Unified Communicator® (UC) Advanced
- Mitel Multimedia Contact Center (6150)
- Mitel Contact Center Intelligent Queue (6160)
- Mitel IP Phones

RESULTS

- Single global network to unify communications between global offices
- Toll free internal calls between offices
- Simplified management of the network plus cost savings
- Employees can “hot desk” in from anywhere accessing their personal profiles
- Enabled remote and home working

Many users are making calls via the Mitel Unified Communicator® (UC) Advanced, a multi media application with a soft-phone, presence and availability, secure instant messaging, audio conferencing as well as web and video collaboration that works in association with VoIP technology from the PC or laptop.

James Ball, who is responsible for the central IT functions within the company and is based at the London office said, “Having successfully implemented VoIP between London and Sheffield our thoughts turned to providing the same service to the 25 SHCA staff located in Moscow. The process of deploying VoIP is also quicker than the traditional method of ordering leased lines where typical lead times for installation are between 12 – 16 weeks. By using VoIP we order regular analogue exchange lines for broadband, supply a Cisco router and Mitel IP phones and we are up and running in next to no time.”

Applications in Action

Ball says the practical benefits of using VoIP and Mitel Teleworker and Hotdesking are illustrated by examining how SHCA CEO David Hughes uses the application to advantage.

“David visits our New York office on a monthly basis and whilst in the office the user profile we have created for him, which he has personalised, is recognised by the network when he logs in via the Mitel system. This brings fantastic advantages. Immediately the Mitel system will route calls through to him when callers dial his number – it is just as if David is sitting in his London office. The same applies to when he is in his hotel room using his laptop PC running the Unified Communicator application. He can make and receive calls, access email, hear his voice mail messages and download client files just as though he is in the office. I cannot stress enough just how important it is to have access to the latest, current project files when away from your usual place of work – it can mean the difference between winning or losing business.”

Ball continues, “Space is at a premium in many of our offices – real estate is expensive, and our ability with the Mitel system to ‘hot desk’ in any of our locations and retain full access to communications via our user profile settings provides the degree of flexibility we need to carry out our business professionally. From a basic cost of operations perspective there are benefits too. Prior to using the Mitel system we were constantly ordering additions, moves and changes to our communications configurations and over a period the cost for this was not inconsiderable. By using the Mitel IP-based 3300 ICP, their IP phones, Teleworker and hot desking applications, we have eliminated the vast majority of the these ongoing costs forever.”

The UK as a 'Time Hub'

Julian Seward, SHCA Principal, looks upon the London office as being a 'time-hub' within the Group, "We are constantly facing the challenge of communicating with our colleagues spread out across the globe and spanning four time zones with up to an eight hour difference. Clearly we need systems and applications that allow us the flexibility to be able to interact with those colleagues from wherever we are located – home, office or client premises, at a time that suits us all. The Mitel Teleworker application plays a fundamental part in our achieving that goal."

Even More Features

The Mitel Messaging Server allows users to pick up the phone and just ask for the person they want to be connected to in plain, simple English, for example, 'Ian Smith mobile'.

Julian Seward, "People did not realise just how useful this feature would be until it was installed. Now, from a Mitel IP phone located anywhere on our network, including staff visiting clients sites, we can call anyone we want just by saying their name. If you consider just how many people use their mobile phone to make calls because they have an easy to use phone directory the ease of use and cost savings the Mitel Messaging Server provides us, as an alternative, is tremendous."

It is fully integrated with Microsoft Exchange, which means new contacts added are immediately available and there is no need for organisations to construct and maintain a global address book. Its integration with calendars adds significantly to the overall productivity.

James Ball adds a further dimension to the benefits of the Messaging Server when he says, "A lot of our business is consultative by nature and traditionally our staff were very isolated whilst on site. The Unified Communicator has provided has made our staff feel much more 'connected' and from a quality assurance point of view – keeping our client drawings up to date, implementing this application is the best thing we ever did."

Ball concludes, "The perception our clients now have of SHCA is that we are using technology to effective use and that we are a leader in our field. We have become aware that since we began using these applications that our competitors have been seeking to emulate our moves."

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