

Mitel Teleworker Solution helps aid agency cut costs, save children's lives

CUSTOMER NEEDS

- Reliable and efficient telecommunications for relief workers and field offices around the world
- Savings on long distance costs
- Quick deployment in emergency situations
- Solutions that are easy to use in taxing circumstances
- Easy integration with existing infrastructure

SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP)
- Mitel Teleworker Solution
- Mitel IP Phones

RESULTS

- Installation as simple as plugging the phones into the Internet
- Dramatic cost savings freeing up resources for helping more children
- Phones work well in difficult conditions and recover quickly when external circumstances cause communication glitches
- Ease of integration with existing systems exceeded expectations



In the days, weeks and months following the Indian Ocean tsunami, the Pakistan earthquake, and the American hurricanes, tens of thousands of children were left homeless and badly in need of life-saving aid. Save the Children answered the call, rushing to the scene with food, blankets and other critical supplies.

They also carried Mitel® teleworker phones – industry-leading Internet telephones that enabled them to keep in minute-to-minute contact with each other and the Westport, Conn. head office without incurring long-distance phone charges and making sure that donations go where they are most needed.

“The more cost-effective solutions we employ, the more children we can help,” says Ed Granger-Happ, Save the Children’s chief technology officer, adding that he has found the Mitel Teleworker Solution to be reliable and resilient, simple to use and easy to deploy.

The path towards realizing these benefits began with the installation of the Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP) at the agency’s head office. Rui Lopes, Save the Children’s director of networks, operations and support, was surprised at how well the Mitel IP solution integrated with existing analog phone systems. “It worked out dramatically well,” he says.

The agency then began deploying Mitel IP phones connected to the teleworker gateway in its field offices around the world. This meant the phones could go to any office, anywhere in the world. During the year following the December 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami, the IP phones were placed in 25 offices, including those closest to a massive earthquake in Pakistan and Hurricane Katrina that struck the Louisiana coast in 2005.



it's about **YOU**

Customer Experience

→ Save the Children

ABOUT SAVE THE CHILDREN

Type: International relief agency

Serving: More than 10 million children in more than 40 countries

Locations: Westport, CT, Washington, DC and field offices around the world

Employees: 6,000

Website: www.savethechildren.org

“The more cost-effective solutions we employ, the more children we can help.”

– Ed Granger-Happ
Save the Children’s
chief technology officer

When disasters of such magnitude occur, communications with the field offices increase about 100-fold, according to Granger-Happ. In these situations, phenomenal savings can be achieved by using the teleworker phones to call over the Internet instead of paying international long distance rates, he says. He cited the example of one Save the Children vice-president, whose average home phone bill was U.S.\$10,000 per month because of international calls to field offices outside of normal business hours. However, as soon as he began using the teleworker phone, those costs dropped to almost zero.

The speed and ease of deploying the phones is a huge advantage for an organization that must be able to respond quickly to crisis situations and which may not have technical expertise available in remote locations. “We’ve had great feedback with regard to the quality of the phone, how well it works and how easy it is to install,” says Lopes. “We literally send the phone out, tell them to plug it into an Internet connection and it works.”

One feature of the phone system that Save the Children employees love, according to Lopes, is four-digit dialing that allows people in field offices around the world to use their teleworker phones in much the same way they would if they were on an extension in the Connecticut corporate office.

Lopes is particularly impressed with how well the Mitel technology works in the most difficult environments. Save the Children is often called upon to operate in remote underdeveloped areas where “the infrastructure, bandwidth and resources are just horrible,” he says. “And for the teleworker phones to work in these environments is a testament to the technology.”

Also of key importance to Save the Children is the Mitel phones’ ability to recover quickly in the event of a break in the Internet connection or other communications disruptions that aren’t uncommon in remote locations. As soon as a connection is restored, says Granger-Happ, the phone will “come back up, reset itself, re-home with the server and we’re back in business. The teleworker phone really shines in that regard.”

For Granger-Happ, the teleworker phones point the way to the future. “New technology adoption is a critical concern that we have, particularly when we’re dealing with many different cultures and far-flung operations,” he says. “I think voice-over IP phones are the killer application for our field office network because everybody knows how to use a telephone. The more that the VoIP telephone emulates the simplicity of a regular digital phone, the more quickly people will adopt the new Internet-based technologies.”

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