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# The Big Move to IP

## Case Studies from the Convergence Migration File

By Larry Meyer

*Each company's migration to IP will be a little different depending on their lines of business, goals, current infrastructure, budget and other factors. Among some more common scenarios, however, are moving from TDM to IP, consolidating multilocation systems into a single IP network and adding mobility features.*

The following case studies illustrate each of these and how the solutions provider — in each case, a Toshiba America Information Systems Partner — assessed, recommended and managed the transition.

### CASE FILE #1: AJAX PAVING'S SEAMLESS MIGRATION TO IP

The force behind the highways that connect Michigan's cities, Troy, Mich.-based Ajax Paving Industries Inc. turned to CTS/Unitel, an Authorized Toshiba Dealer based in Bloomfield Hills, Mich., when it needed a new business communications system to connect 18 sites using IP telephony.

CTS/Unitel recommended two Toshiba Strata CTX670 business communications systems, one at its headquarters and a second one at another large site. For 16 remote sites, CTS/Unitel recommended IP telephones connected to the Strata CTX670 systems via frame relay. The frame relay network connects these locations together, and there are no local CO lines at the remote sites. Calls to and from the remote IP telephones are routed through the CTX670 at the corporate office, eliminating the need for individual telephone systems at the various sites. The second CTX670 also serves as a redundant system.

Creating a centralized business communications system and utilizing pure IP telephony for the remote sites eliminated the need for individual telephone systems at each location. It also allowed the elimination of multiple CO lines at each remote location, a great cost savings every month for Ajax Paving, according to DeWayne Gordon, sales representative at CTS/Unitel.

In addition, using IP telephony allowed Ajax Paving to take advantage of its existing high-speed frame relay network, benefiting from sharing the cost for both voice and data communications. The frame relay backbone connects all the sites and is able to handle a greater number of calls with more reliability than did individual systems at the 18 sites, according to Gordon. Having a centralized voice mail system also has allowed Ajax Paving to eliminate answering machines at remote sites, and all employees now have their own voice mailboxes.



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Prior to the installation of the Toshiba Strata CTX670 systems with IP telephones, there was a cost for every call made between the 18 sites. Today, all calls between the sites are free and are dialed as four-digit extensions, just as if everyone was located in the same facility. With more than 70 IP telephones located at the 16 remote sites, eliminating calling costs between locations delivers significant cost savings.

CTS/Unitel also was able to maximize Ajax Paving's investment in its existing equipment when migrating to the new system. In fact, many of the components from Ajax Paving's older Toshiba Strata DK424 and DK280 systems were reused in the new Strata CTX670 systems, including digital telephones and printed circuit boards.

Where new telephones were installed, whether they were digital or IP telephones, Jim Friel, CFO at Ajax Paving, said the familiar design of the Toshiba telephones made it easy for people to begin using their phones right away.

A customer of CTS/Unitel and Toshiba for more than 20 years, Friel was accustomed to counting on Toshiba's well-known reliability. "One of the reasons we decided on Toshiba right away was because its equipment is unbeatably reliable," Friel said. "With Toshiba, there's no worry. It just works."

By implementing the Toshiba IP platform, Ajax Paving was able to reduce its telecom costs by more than \$4,000 per month, for an annual savings of nearly \$50,000.

According to Gordon, this was accomplished by reducing CO lines at remote locations and using the feature set of Toshiba to route all the long-distance calls through the network and out a single T1. This allows Ajax Paving to get a competitive rate on long-distance calling, reduce the overhead costs of having multiple receptionist positions, and enhance customer service by being able to route calls directly to the appropriate site.

Friel summed it up by saying, "Our Toshiba IP telephony systems helped us save nearly \$50,000 annually and greatly contributed to increased internal productivity with centralized voice mail, auto attendant and direct extension calling. You could say it's helped us pave the way to continued success."



## CASE FILE #2: NIAGARA WATER'S MULTILLOCATION IP SYSTEM

One of the leading bottled drinking water companies in Southern California, Irvine-based Niagara Bottling LLC turned to Authorized Toshiba Dealer smplsolutions Inc. of Lake Forest, Calif., for a reliable, technically advanced telephone system that would allow the company to have a single telephone system that would handle their three locations. The main system would be at their headquarters with IP telephones at two remote sites, all seamlessly networked together.

By networking its headquarters and call center agents in Irvine and its bottling plant and main offices in Ontario, Calif., Niagara was allowing for future growth, while saving on equipment costs. In addition, Niagara's management was able to maximize its original investment in its existing Toshiba Strata DK280 telephone system by migrating to a Toshiba Strata CTX670 system.

David Case, president of smplsolutions, explained, "We replaced two Toshiba telephone switches with one switch at Niagara's Ontario facility. Then we added ACD (automated call distribution) for customer service call-ins at the Ontario system and routed the calls to the Irvine call center agents. By putting in IP telephones at the Irvine office, where call center agents are located, ACD calls are actually done over the Internet."

To make this work without changing any of the telephone numbers that Niagara's customers were accustomed to dialing, Niagara had the phone company direct the Irvine telephone lines to ring at the Ontario facility. As a result, when customers dial the Irvine office telephone number, the call is routed to Ontario and goes into the auto attendant for customer service. Then, it is placed automatically into a queue for the next available customer service representative (CSR) who resides back at the Irvine office. When a CSR becomes available, the call is routed over the Internet back to the Irvine office.

Moving to IP telephones at the Irvine facility enabled the elimination of 80 individual telephone lines and allowed Niagara to consolidate all its telephone bills, resulting in a savings of \$5,000 to \$6,000 per month. "This allowed us to

negotiate a preset amount for our outgoing calls," Andrew Wirtjes, director of Technology & Information at Niagara, said. "We never again have to wonder what our phone bill will be!"

Of Niagara's 300 employees, only about 100 of them are on-site. Many of the others, particularly in sales and tech support, work remotely using IP telephones. Because the IP telephones can be plugged in anywhere at any time, there's no hassle wiring or setting up separate business lines for remote workers. They just plug it in and, it is just like they are at the office, according to Wirtjes.

"Together, Toshiba and smplsolutions met our goal of having a centralized telecommunications system that would work at all three locations and appear completely seamless to callers," Wirtjes said. "It also allowed us to retain our investment in our original Toshiba system and delivers cost savings of nearly \$10,000 every month. You could say that Toshiba helps us manage our flood of calls."

## CASE FILE #3: INTERACTIVE DIGITAL SOLUTIONS GOES MOBILE WITH VOIP

Delivering high-end video conferencing systems to corporate America and the educational marketplace, Noblesville, Ind.,-based Interactive Digital Solutions LLC turned to Taylored Systems, an Authorized Toshiba Dealer also based in Noblesville, when it needed a new IP telephony business communication system to take its team mobile.

Taylored Systems recommended a Toshiba Strata CIX pure IP telephony system with SoftIPT softphones. Bill Taylor, president of Taylored Systems, explained, "Calls are routed from the Strata CIX to the softphone on the user's laptop or PDA, using the same direct dial number or extension. To the caller, it's just as if they are calling the person at their desk. For the users, it means they can be out in the field, at a customer site, at home or virtually anywhere there is wired or wireless Internet access, and they can still make, receive and handle calls just like they would with their desk telephone," he added. "The screen interface of the softphone even looks just like a Toshiba desk telephone, only they use their mouse to click instead of manually pushing the buttons."

George LaMar, director of engineering at Interactive Digital Solutions said, "Toshiba's

Strata CIX with the softphones has freed us up to have complete access to our incoming calls as well as the ability to make calls from our laptops anywhere there's Internet access. This has greatly improved our productivity at work in communicating with our customers and each other."

Virtually all of the features of Toshiba's desktop telephones are available on the SoftIPT softphone, including ability to transfer calls, handle conference calls for up to eight participants and call record features. LaMar's team finds these benefits extremely efficient in dealing with and resolving customer issues. "Our remote workers can be at a client site while, at the same time, holding a conference call with someone at the home office along with our vendors. He can even play or e-mail .WAV file recordings of customer calls so everyone understands the customer's needs. This enables us to put our heads together and accomplish the customer's goals."

According to LaMar, he also plans to expand the IP capabilities of his Strata CIX telephone to integrate with the video conferencing solution they provide to their customers. He said, "Using Toshiba's FeatureFlex, a programming environment that allows us to customize the features and functionality of our Strata CIX, we plan to integrate the systems together so that we can expand the bridging capabilities of our conferencing solution to any participant with Internet access so it can be used with very large groups."

Going with the Toshiba Strata CIX also enabled Interactive Digital Solutions to retain much of its original investment in its Toshiba Strata CTX digital business communication system. LaMar said, "For our internal staff, we were able to keep and reuse our digital desktop telephones, which saved us buying new telephones, plus the softphones are a very affordable solution." He was also able to reuse some of the boards. He added, "Going with the Strata CIX was a natural migration path that has proven to be very cost-effective."

LaMar sums it up, "Having all our communication on a single platform — the laptop — is efficient, highly productive and cost-effective. It lets our team provide an even higher level of service to our customers. You could say that Toshiba has done for us what we do for our customers — remotely communicate more clearly and effectively."



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