



Northern and Shell – Phase 3 SIP and hosted IP roll out

Founded in 1974, Northern and Shell Media Group has become a major force in British and worldwide news outlets, with a UK audience of more than 1.7 million. Titles include The Daily Express, Daily Star and celebrity magazines OK! New! and Star. The company operates in all major areas of publishing, with diverse interests in new media, print, distribution, investment and property.

As Synergy were discussing the new wide area network (WAN) requirements with Northern and Shell, the opportunity to design a SIP and Hosted IP deployment strategy for all UK sites was presented.

The challenge

1. Complete migration with no 'big bang' risk to the business
2. Incorporate all UK sites
3. Limit/avoid downtime for the business
4. Deliver a disaster recovery process into the business

The Synergy solution

Previously working with Northern and Shell to secure significant cost savings, the opportunity to introduce a tried-and-tested roadmap into the business, offering SIP/ Hosted IP as part of an overall business continuity/disaster recovery strategy, is where Synergy add real value.

Synergy presented Northern & Shell, group head of IT, with a detailed SIP roadmap strategy, incorporating all sites. The strategy was formed using a mix of PBX SIP licenses, SIP gateways and hosted handsets to bring each site 'on-net' depending on what infrastructure was in situ and what equipment assets the client was advised to sweat.

The way Synergy design their deployment strategy allowed Northern and Shell to feel confident at each stage of the process. The final stage of a SIP trial was deployed to allow the client to trust the service with no "big-bang" risk to the business. The migration to SIP was carried out seamlessly. Two separate number ports from Verizon were scheduled resulting in the successful and seamless migration of over 1,300 DDI numbers without any downtime.

The migration to SIP also allowed Northern and Shell to retain their long standing DDI ranges. This ensured business continuity from a client's perspective and injected valued, flexible, disaster recovery processes into the business in the event of an outage.

The added benefit of working with Synergy on Ethernet data connectivity and SIP is the use of private secure IP connections to their SIP provider – ensuring no calls "bump" over the public internet – and the registration to two IP "exchanges" added another layer of resilience. Should one IP exchange go down, the second will automatically be assigned to allow the business to continue functioning as normal.

Conclusion

To enable the client to have end-to-end managed solutions, the support of the client's legacy Mitel 3300 Mx estate was novated to Synergy, with a unique offering of free support of the Mitel estate covered by the savings achieved by moving to SIP from Verizon direct access ISDN30 circuits; eliminating the large annual support invoice. A monthly report is sent to the group Head of IT, to allow the business to see clearly how much these savings have contributed to the annual support fee.

The best gauge of a successful deployment is that Northern and Shell have regularly recommended Synergy to other businesses who are looking at migrating to SIP. Referrals are an important part of Synergys' growth and form over 80 percent of new business.