

NORDSEE

Having been founded in 1896 as the fishing company “Deutsche Dampffischerei-Gesellschaft NORDSEE” in Bremerhaven, NORDSEE now operates more than 417 locations in Europe – 37 of which are in Austria – as well as in Russia and Dubai. NORDSEE’s business philosophy centres on far-sighted business management around the precious commodity of “fish”– and this is also the principle governing the company’s expansion of its telecommunications infrastructure.

NORDSEE Austria in Vienna was characterised by a special setup until 2008 as it was closely linked with a wholesale business for fish products. The Alcatel telecommunications system was tailored to the specific requirements of a wholesale company. After this business was sold in 2008, the NORDSEE location providing all administrative services to the Austrian stores had new requirements. Discussions around buying a new telephone system were postponed time and again, as it was uncertain whether the company headquarters would be moved to an entirely new location in the foreseeable future. When the company finally decided to buy a new system, it carefully weighed up the difference between a conventional system and an IP telephony system.

From an economical point of view, the successor model of the Alcatel system – a Nextire-One telephone system – would have been the cheaper option in the short term. However, longer-term calculations over four years revealed that the innovaphone PBX would actually turn out more economical. Costs were not the most important factor, though. Technological considerations in particular supported IP technology: the innovaphone PBX scored highly especially with regard to the integration of existing as well as new stores. The technology

from Sindelfingen would allow easy integration of existing analogue lines as well as new locations. Moreover, the management in Vienna wanted “a small, compact system facilitating optimum integration with the existing LAN,” as stated by Wolfgang Metzker, Head of FRW and IT at NORDSEE GmbH. Once in-house specialists as well as external IT consultants (the Austrian company ACP) recommended the innovaphone products, the headquarters in Vienna made a decision in favour of the innovaphone PBX.

Virtual environment with the innovaphone PBX as Virtual Appliance (IPVA)

At the NORDSEE headquarters in Vienna, a virtual environment (VMware) was already in place, into which the new telephone system was supposed to be integrated. The innovaphone IPVA, an innovaphone PBX, perfectly suited for this situation, as it can be installed in a VMware environment as a virtual appliance. By implementing IPVA, larger installations were easily realisable – requiring just a small initial investment. The Media Gateway IP1060 (or another innovaphone gateway) is a good choice if it is necessary for the innovaphone PBX as an IPVA to manage ISDN connections. If the number of ISDN lines increases, it is only necessary to activate additional ports or to install more gateways.

Two analogue IP28 adapters serve to integrate 15 fax machines into the new infrastructure via old analogue lines. IP telephones, model IP222, were bought for all subscribers in the company headquarters. These design phones have already been rewarded the renowned “red dot award: product design” and feature a large colour display with optimum resolution and an innovative handset solution. It sets new standards, not only in terms of visual aesthetics, but also with regard to voice quality and energy consumption.

The new system has therefore been very well received by

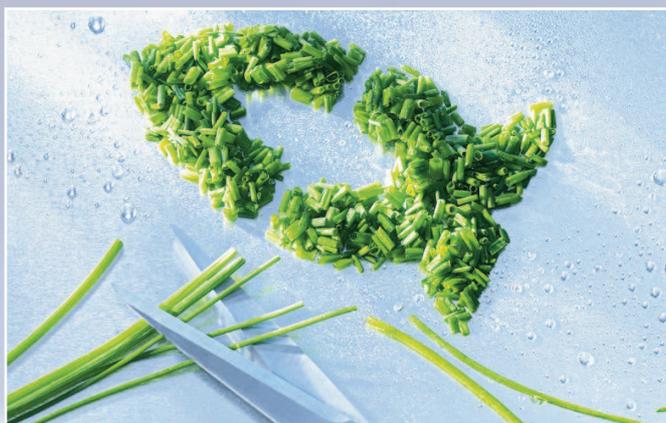


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PURE IP-COMMUNICATIONS



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the staff. "The end devices are perceived as very smart. Although the basic functionalities are different than those of the traditional Alcatel system which had been used for over 15 years, all colleagues were familiar with the new operability after a short transition phase of under two. Incoming calls are, unless answered directly, transferred to the subscribers' mobile phones," Wolfgang Metzker says and adds with a grin: "Colleagues from other countries envy us because of our sophisticated end devices!"

In total, it took about 3 to 4 man-days to install the innovaphone PBX in Vienna, including all hardware components and follow-up work. It will probably still take half a man-day to integrate the reporting solution. "All in all, the new infrastructure was installed very quickly – also thanks to the vigorous support of our partner ACP," Wolfgang Metzker summarised.

The stores will be added successively. At the moment, an IP302 was installed in one test store. This gateway is a combined VoIP gateway to the ISDN (local breakout) with an integrated gatekeeper and two analogue connections for fax machines and other analogue devices. This makes the IP302 an ideal innovaphone PBX system for smaller branches. In the coming year, it is intended that all 37 Austrian stores should gradually be integrated into the voice-over-IP network, following the same procedure. The approach is only to replace old systems once they stop working anyway, or when a store is renovated or face-lifted.

Further planning and final conclusion

On the software-side, there are also considerations of integrating additional tools. As such, there are plans to integrate the innovaphone Reporting application, providing an easy overview of calls in the company. The flexible unified communications client myPBX, which allows computer-based operations of the phone, has already been installed in Vienna, but has not been rolled out yet. The user simply clicks on a link to access myPBX and logs into the telephone system. He can thus operate all telephones registered on his name in the innovaphone PBX, whether desktop phones or mobile devices.

Asked whether any major difficulties arose on the path towards the new innovaphone VoIP solution, Wolfgang Metzker replies: "No, everything went smoothly and according to the scheduled time frame. The biggest challenge was the chaos of old telephone lines: to identify those lines in the telephone room that are to be connected to a fax machine, for instance, sometimes resembled a Sisyphean task."