

Case Study

innovaphone AG - PURE IP-TELEPHONY

:: VoIP PBX Installation at TUI Austria ::

TUI Austria

Telephony is still a key technology for TUI Austria even in the modern age of the internet. A potential booking, maybe even an intact customer relationship, could be lost quickly if telephone lines are busy. This was reason enough for Austria's leading tourist group to venture a complete overhaul of its telephone infrastructure - by replacing all its telephone systems across the entire alpine region with IP systems from innovaphone and a call centre from Voxtron. The innovative solution was installed by the experienced system house partner ACP.

TUI currently operated 58 ReiseCenter travel agencies in Austria, as well as the service centres at three large TUI locations in Vienna, Salzburg and Innsbruck. All-in-all, TUI employs 800 members of staff in Austria. TUI Reisecenter is the name of the travel agencies. Dependent on the location, between three and twenty qualified travel agents look after customer requests there. Specialists work in the service centres and know their travel products and destinations inside-out. Travel agents working in the ca. 1,000 affiliated travel agencies can pick up the phone to gain advice from these specialists should they run into questions they are unable to answer or should they need help with booking transactions.

As is often the case with branch enterprises, TUI in Austria had a veritable proliferation of telephone systems. TUI Austria's authorised representative Alexander Majarek, responsible for IT and process organization, remembers, "Our TC infrastructure was as varied as all the vegetables you'd find in a vegetable garden." He continues, "Practically every telephone system, every conceivable manufacturer and model available on the market was at one of our TUI branches." The reason: in contrast to IT, the on-site managers had been responsible for the telephone systems for many years. There was no network available across the locations. Majarek reports, "Reliable failover scenarios were inconceivable".

The IT manager's target was to put a stop to this proliferation with all its drawbacks. Majarek had a clear idea also concerning how cost-effective the new technology should be. According to Majarek, "The year 2008 was a difficult year for the entire industry. Introducing VoIP was linked to the precondition that the investment must be able to pay for itself within three years". It has obviously paid off. Majarek continues, "We can already see that we will reach this target ahead of plan." The starting signal for the project was given in June 2008; looking back we note that the investments will be paid off in financial year 2010, a whole year ahead of plan."

The focus was placed on the maintenance and operating costs for both the PBX and the call centre. The new solution should have flexible scalability, be fail-safe and allow central administration. The choice was made in favour of innovaphone. The Sindelfingen based IP telephony specialist fulfilled all the requirements and provided convincing arguments in favour of the future-oriented technological concept, which promised TUI utmost flexibility and security. Majarek said, "We especially liked the mature redundancy concept and the open architecture of the innovaphone



solution.” The innovaphone PBX, functionally reduced to the essential and developed in-house by innovaphone, is operated on the gateway’s autarkic hardware and guarantees maximum stability. The IT manager sums up the situation, “We had the impression that in the future we would most likely be able to implement our requirements, even our new requirements, with innovaphone. The solution’s value for money was also very convincing.”

The Austrian enterprise switching concept serves as the back-end for the new communication system and powers the telephones. All desks have been equipped with IP240 desktop telephones. Headquarters in Vienna and the second computer centre in Salzburg use redundant routing switches with 10 GB data links. A central Contact Center from Voxtron for ca. 100 employees rounds off the project.

On this basis, a redundant VoIP solution was implemented from innovaphone. According to the size of the branch, various PBX models do their job in each branch. The smaller TUI ReiseCenters have been equipped with an IP302 or IP305, several IP800 and IP6000 systems are being used in the service centers. The entire architecture is redundant. The systems operate in a so-called master-slave configuration, in order to guarantee maximum availability. This is enabled by operating one system as an active system whilst a second system is in stand-by mode.

Majarek knows that the new solution has been well accepted by employees and customers alike. The system has totally paid off for TUI Austria – especially from an economic viewpoint. Majarek enthuses, “We have been able to reduce maintenance and administration costs to just a third of the original cost.”

The reason for this is obvious: VoIP systems from innovaphone need much less maintenance than traditional telephone systems. Moreover, the IT team can carry out the maintenance of the systems.”

