

innovaphone Case Study

Warema opts for a modern IP solution with integrated innovaphone redundancy concept



Warema

Warema is the leading SunLight Manager and has been developing, producing and marketing bespoke sunshade products and technology solutions for over 60 years. The company is now in the second generation. In 2014, the global company generated revenue of 404 million euros with some 3,500 employees.

With more than 70 employees, the company's internal IT department takes care of work in the field of IT services, and through continuous improvement and innovation it makes a significant contribution to improving the competitiveness of the Warema group. It was this department that screened and assessed the VoIP solutions offered on the market, finally deciding on a VoIP system from innovaphone once the contract for the existing, outdated hybrid system had expired.



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Sebastian Scheer

System and network administrator, and project manager Warema

Warema was looking for a unified, global communication solution with applications such as Presence, Office integration, softphones, and more

In addition to the high maintenance costs for the existing PBX, other considerations were taken into account concerning its replacement with a modern IP PBX: a lot of reasons spoke in favour of a modern IP solution with an integrated location concept especially because of the many company sites spread around the world - Warema has 30 production sites and sales offices around the world. In addition to the financial benefits, the focus was on modernising communications with the help of applications such as Presence, Office integration and soft phones.

Once the project leaders had looked into the market-leading softswitch solutions and had tested and evaluated the current market systems, the decision fell in favour of an innovaphone solution. The decision was based on precise specifications. The following expectations were specified for the new system:

- :: Easy administration
- :: UC / CTI solution
- :: Sophisticated branch concept
- :: One number concept
- :: DECT replacement
- :: Better commercial conditions
- :: Flexible scalability as and when needed
- :: Cost reduction through standard hardware, well priced maintenance, as well as reduction in the work effort required in the field of telephony

Several points were crucial for the decision: both the minimal downtimes of the innovaphone solution and the very manageable administration efforts in the day-to-day business as well as in regard to system updates spoke in favour of the innovaphone PBX. The innovaphone PBX can be expanded and extended at any time and presents a bespoke, sensibly sized solution for any branch office - an important argument for a company like Warema with many remote, sometimes smaller sites. Furthermore, one other main issue was the sophisticated redundancy concept that the innovaphone solution provides, which ensures a high degree of availability both at Headquarters as well as at the remote sites. With the innovaphone system, it was also possible to set up a VMware solution and to implement a unified one number concept for phone numbers as well as maintaining the option of switching to a SIP trunk in the near future. Sebastian Scheer, system and network administrator, and project manager, adds: "It wasn't just the business considerations that spoke in favour of innovaphone - the solution proved to be at least as interesting from a cost view point."



The user – Warema

- The family-owned company has been developing and manufacturing bespoke sunshade solutions for over 60 years
- A total of 19 branches in Germany
- Warema employs some 3,500 staff at 30 production centres and sales offices worldwide

The challenge

- Availability of the telephones had to be guaranteed at all times throughout the changeover
- Tight deadline of just 5 months for the technical implementation
- Uniform solution at all company sites and a unified one number concept
- Flexible scalability
- Easy administration

Technical implementation and rollout

The biggest technical challenge that arose during the communications infrastructure changeover at Warema, lay in the specification that telephone availability had to be fully guaranteed at all times during the changeover phase. Timely demands were also quite strict: due to the current lease expiration dates, there was a window of just five months from contract signing until the last port should be changed over on the new system. “As a result, just one day was assigned for exchanging and training at each of the 19 branches, which have an average of 30 ports each”, explains Sebastian Scheer. “Finally, we have completed the installation after 1,650 ports changed platforms, approximately 1,530 IP phones have been set up, and about 220 DECT subscribers got a new mobile phone.”

The scenario with the innovaphone solution that was set up for Warema is as complex as it is sophisticated: an IPVA (innovaphone virtual appliance) on a VMware high availability cluster that is divided into two computer centres works as the master PBX at headquarters in Marktheidenfeld. Two IP1060 VoIP gateways take care of the connection to the local trunk line and are set up redundantly to ensure reliability. An IP3010 at a remote Warema site in Marktheidenfeld has its own connection to the local trunk line and ensures further reliability. This site takes over the IPVA functionalities in case of complete failure. An innovaphone IP800 VoIP gateway is in place at each of the 19 company sites in Germany and Europe and runs as a slave PBX. It handles VoIP communication via an MPLS line while at the same time providing the connection to the local trunk line. A further Warema site in Limbach-Oberfrohna is equipped with an IP3010, which is also set up as a slave. innovaphone IP28 IP adapters are used for connecting analogue devices such as fax machines, door intercoms, barrier controls or bells. Occasionally, decentralized IP21 are also used. Warema decided in favour of the innovaphone IP222 design phones that set new standards both technically and optically. The IP110 and IP111 IP phones are used as wall phones in the production halls. The fax server is connected via XCAPi from TE-SYSTEMSMS.

Depending on the respective department and workplace, the requirements of the new communications solution were extremely varied: in Warema’s tendering and sales departments, headsets are often used for telephoning, mainly cordless EHS (electronic hook switch and wireless listening headset). UC functionality, Presence and Outlook integration were required at almost all company offices. The switchboard work stations require headsets and Presence information for the availability of all the cordless phones on the entire premises. Software phones are used at some office workstations as well as at employee home office workstations. Finally, call centre functionality was required for the technical helpline.

Since the installation of the new infrastructure solution, Warema utilizes almost the entire scope of the innovaphone unified communications solution myPBX. myPBX allows all conceivable telephone devices to be controlled directly –



Production of individual sunshade solutions

The solution

- IPVA at Marktheidenfeld headquarters, two IP1060 - redundant operation; one IP800 per branch in Germany as slave PBX and one IP3010 in Limbach, set up as at the other sites
- Unified Communications Client myPBX
- innovaphone IP phones: IP222, IP110 and IP111 design phones



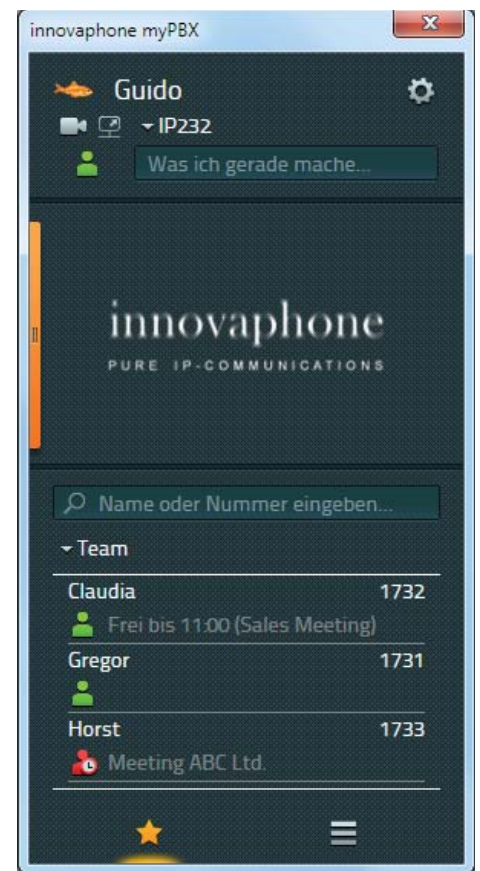
innovaphone IP phone IP222

regardless of whether it is a desk phone, mobile phone or Software phone. The myPBX unified communications client combines various UC elements in its clear user interface: traditional IP telephony, audio conferences, company directories, connection protocols, Presence information, Instant Messaging, Collaboration sessions, Video telephony or conferences. Thomas Barthold, head of IT at Warema, explains: "We have replaced our old CTI solution with the innovaphone UC client, which covers almost all of the functions of the old solution. The numerous new, innovative and intuitive highlights are really convincing." The staff can quickly and easily access various contact details via the LDAP server ESTOS MetaDirectory - such as telephone directory, LDAP directory, as well as various contacts from Exchange folders.

The innovaphone PBX's high-performance Linux Application Platform allows you to take advantage of Linux applications in parallel. The Linux Application Platform Exchange Calendar Connector provides Outlook integration and Presence information as are required at nearly all Warema work stations. The reporting module that provides the call list entries in myPBX and is used to analyse hotline groups also runs on the Linux Application Platform. A solution from the company Abraham is used to analyze and optimize telephone reachability at Warema, and this solution can be perfectly integrated in the innovaphone PBX. The three operators use innovaphone Operator. "This extremely sophisticated software uses headsets and runs on the switchboard employees' PCs", explains Thomas Barthold. Warema's technical hotline uses the call centre functionality of the innovaphone PBX, which enables a professional call centre to be set up with just a few adjustments to the innovaphone PBX. Wait queues with announcements and call diversions, as well as clear call monitoring are used to manage the number of incoming calls. In busy times, the dynamic log-in for other agents provides temporary, short-term support on the hotline.

Mobile radio replaced the old DECT system that had ensured widespread availability on the company premises at several Warema sites. "One main criterion for this decision was the mobility functionality of the innovaphone UC solution", comments Sebastian Scheer. Both the mobile solution and the connection of home workplaces was implemented using the the innovaphone PBX's mobile „one-number concept". Thanks to the latter, employees are free to use either a soft phone and headset or their own landline phone. The office number is always transmitted, and staff can use the innovaphone UC client to set how when and where they can be reached.

The rollout at Warema went according to plan and was completed within the stipulated time frame: "It took exactly five months from the delivery of the first components to connecting the last phone", Sebastian Scheer remembers and adds: "In the first phase of installation we were supported by the innovaphone partner IBIS from Bindlach (district of Bayreuth). In cooperation with our own IT department, they oversaw the installation of the central PBX components such as servers and gateways at the main site and ensured everything ran smoothly.



innovaphone Unified Communications client myPBX



Large louvre blind system by Warema

Our in-house IT department then rolled out the telephones and IP28 at headquarters and installed the innovaphone PBXs, the IP28 analogue adapters, as well as the devices in the branches.”

When asked whether there were any incidents or problems during the installation process, Sebastian Scheer responds: “There was a point during rollout where the IPVA suddenly sporadically rebooted. This unexplainable behavior increased - but innovaphone immediately reacted. Within a very short time, innovaphone had analysed the error and fixed it with a firmware that was imported overnight. That put an end to it.”

Conclusion and further considerations

If you compare Warema’s spec. catalogue with what has been experienced with the new innovaphone solution, all major items have been fulfilled: the new UC solution is very well accepted by the staff, the administrative efforts and maintenance efforts have fallen considerably, the entire installation was carried out within the prescribed period and there was no interruption to telephone traffic. Elmar Kossack, Manager Systemtechnik at Warema, takes stock: “Maintenance and administration of the innovaphone PBX are far easier than with the previous model. Administrative routine activities such as, for example, setting up new user objects can easily be taken over by the in-house IT department. Errors can be found and fixed faster thanks to the various troubleshooting and analysis possibilities. Overall, we now only need minimal work by external service providers - which also contributes to a large extent to reducing costs.”

The economic aspect that was a crucial fact from the beginning in choosing the innovaphone system bears more fruit. Sebastian Scheer comments: “We transferred to a so-called “depot maintenance” which also contributes to these low maintenance costs. We have the critical gateways preconfigured in the warehouse and they can be set up within a very short time, if necessary.” All-in-all, Sebastian Scheer is extremely satisfied: “We are very pleased with the new innovaphone solution and also very pleased with the implementation by the project partner IBIS and the manufacturer innovaphone. With regard to IBIS, there was nothing they couldn’t implement, they took all of our questions and demands seriously and found a solution as quickly as possible. Errors have been and are being treated with the necessary priority. At no point in time did we have concerns that the project objective could be at risk.” Due to the positive experience, the company will continue to observe any future innovations from the manufacturer, innovaphone, to test new products and implement them, if needed.

Benefits for the customer

- Communication solution that is scalable and can be extended at any time
- Maximum availability
- Administration and maintenance costs have been significantly reduced
- Cut running costs



Production of Venetian blinds at Warema



innovaphone Unified Communications

At a glance



Customer:

Warema

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