



innovaphone


PURE IP-COMMUNICATIONS



Case study

Stuttgart-based financial institution opts for an innovaphone PBX VoIP telephone system

The head office in Stuttgart and 35 branches have been equipped with an innovaphone solution. The flexibility, high availability and simple installation of the innovaphone PBX convinced those responsible.



**Stuttgarter
Volksbank**



innovaphone PBX VoIP telephone system optimizes business processes at the Stuttgarter Volksbank

Stuttgarter Volksbank has a firm footing in the region, with its reputation as the bank for private and commercial medium sized businesses. With more than 26,000 shareholders, it enables its customers to take an interest in “their Volksbank”. Tradition and technical progress are not incompatible: this financial institution provides everything that a modern universal bank should provide, including online banking. The bank also counts on state-of-the-art technology for its telephone system. Stuttgarter Volksbank has replaced its communication infrastructure with an IP PBX from innovaphone, the IP manufacturer based in Sindelfingen, thus setting the foundation for a trendsetting more powerful communication infrastructure.

The user

- Largest German cooperative bank in the federal state of Baden-Württemberg, one of Germany's 5 largest cooperative banks
- More than 26,000 stakeholders
- Merger with the VR Bank Stuttgart eG took place in 2006 to become Stuttgarter Volksbank AG

Problem: chaos with various manufacturers

The necessity to invest in a new uniform and efficient communication infrastructure became visible at the time of its merger with the VR Bank on January 1 2006: the local branches used a vast number of decentralised telephone systems from different manufacturers, posing a grave problem for administrators. Any technical problems in the smaller branches meant that technicians and engineers had to invest a lot of time to physically go to the location and deal with the situation, a vast amount of wasted manpower and time. Bank head offices and branches were merged bringing the necessity to change and consolidate the telecommunication structures. A multitude of different



Headquarter Volksbank Stuttgart

service agreements with various PBX manufacturers also rendered it necessary to look for a standard modern PBX to replace the service intensive old systems. Initially, tenders were placed with renowned large PBX manufacturers. This led to a pre-selection under consideration of requirements and expected costs. Two companies were then chosen for testing. Once the extensive tests were completed, the innovaphone IP telephony system was selected. Tobias Haussmann, data processing manager at Stuttgarter Volksbank, commented on the crucial factors in the decision, “Our decision in favour of innovaphone was based on the excellent voice quality, low training expenditure and installation expense, simplicity of handling and of course, last but not least, the costs involved”.

The challenge

- To unite existing communication infrastructure with decentralised PBX and a number of manufacturers
- To reduce the time and manpower involved on smaller branches
- To consolidate the PBX infrastructure



Project scope and scenario

The project was managed by the company Controlware GmbH in Dietzenbach, a long-term network partner with Stuttgarter Volksbank. The advantages of the new solution were obvious to project manager Holger Zoeller, "The cable network can be used optimally with the innovaphone PBX. Relocation management is much more comfortable than a conventional solution – keyword: simple cabling, which has a positive effect on costs."

Overall about 1000 subscribers are connected to the new innovaphone PBX. The hardware environment is very sturdy as the system works on the autarkic VoIP gateway hardware, the system also provides excellent fail-safety as it has no moving parts such as hard disks or fans. Furthermore, the risk of failure can be reduced by using redundant PBX systems: The Volksbank head office has an IP2000 as its master system; a second IP2000 has been configured as the standby system and has been set up in a co-location rack at Versatel, network provider. Should the master system fail, an automatic failover ensures the second system immediately takes over all PBX functions almost without loss. The master system and the standby system have been interconnected with 4 IP6000 media gateways, which set up the breakout to the ISDN network – each using 2 multiplex connectors (2 S2M). 35 branches have been equipped with smaller IP800 and IP302 gateways. Ten IP adapters IP28 (each for 8 analogue connections) have been integrated in the IP environment at head office to enable the connection of analogue fax machines.



from left: Benjamin Starmann (innovaphone AG), Patrick Pretsch, Jörg Schrubbe, Tobias Haussmann (Stuttgarter Volksbank)

The branch office fax machines are connected over IP302 gateways and also over IP24 and IP22 adapters. More than 900 IP230 and 10 IP240 terminals have been delivered to Stuttgart. The network system had been renewed two years previously and provided sufficient and secured bandwidth for appropriate voice data Quality of Service (QoS).

The solution

- IP2000 as the Master system in head office
- A second IP2000 configured as a standby system at Versatel, the network provider
- Four IP6000 media gateways
- 35 branches equipped with small IP800 gateways and IP302 telephones
- Fax connections made available via installed IP302 telephones

Implementation time frame and labour input

Implementation from contract signing over project initiation to closure took 8 months. Once the responsible technicians had visited the innovaphone training centre to undertake the innovaphone Basic and Advanced training courses, it was easy for them to install the new system solution at individual branch offices themselves. Joerg Schrubbe, network administrator at Stuttgarter Volksbank and project manager commented, "The innovaphone solution has great advantages: the implementation and management of a telephone system are simple, which enables an easy smooth migration, still providing all the general features of a modern PBX. It was also convincing from an economic view point."

Location concept, numbering plan, organisational structures and special features such as hotline groups and manager-assistant functions are amazingly easy to setup.

Software Applications

The innovaphone PBX provides several interfaces for integrating software solutions in the appropriate business areas. Stuttgarter Volksbank should soon have integrated CTI and UMS solutions. The standardized TAPI interface enables software solutions to be implemented easily





across locations. F-Call AG, a service centre within the Volksbank and Raiffeisenbank groups is connected to the Stuttgarter Volksbank communication infrastructure. F-Call provides telephone services such as bank internal telephone switchboards and integrated customer service centre solutions. Calls between the institutes are free of charge thanks to an additional primary multiplex connection from the Fiducia T-VPN framework contract.

Voice quality and staff satisfaction

Tobias Haussmann underlined, “voice quality was the main criterion for staff to accept a solution. In this case, voice quality was excellent from the beginning, thus colleagues were positive.” However, Volksbank also stresses the fact that they had previously done their homework on this point. Before installing Voice-over-IP, they had performed a VoIP readiness test and all connections – even those to smaller branches, had been optimised. Furthermore, a cost check was carried out in collaboration with Controlware GmbH and Versatel to ensure costs would be covered as much as possible.

Further targets

The factor “flexibility” was at the top of the financial institution’s list of requirements. Joerg Schrubbe said, “Flexibility to extend the solution at any time was a basic requirement on the new solution.” Rebuilding and opening new locations are common occurrences within a dynamic financial institution – such as currently is the case in two locations in

the vicinity of Stuttgart, Feuerbach and Weilimdorf. The innovaphone system certainly allows for such expansions. The existing solution can be extended at will as soon as the relevant data cables are available – the keyword here is “scalability”. Joerg Schrubbe is convinced by the solution. He confirmed, “The innovaphone PBX is technically the most mature system currently on the market, and from an administration view point, there is simply nothing better out there at the moment”.

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