

Tom Tom: Unified Communications

From fragmented communications to all the benefits of UC

Tom Tom's UC story is actually the story of two companies: Tom Tom itself and Tele Atlas. Both companies had previously migrated to VoIP: Tele Atlas in 2006 and Tom Tom in 2008. But when the two companies merged soon after, they needed to find a way to communicate and to exchange data securely and reliably. With no simple, 'out-of-the-box' solution possible, Ronny Bovijn explains the steps Tom Tom took to ensure that the company got "all the real advantages of Unified Communications" – even across many different countries.



Ronny Bovijn, Senior Director Global IT, presented this Case Story at the BELTUG X-Change on Unified Communications, 22 April 2010.

CHALLENGES

Combining secure data exchanges with easier communications

When Tele Atlas migrated to VoIP in 2006, the benefits were clear. "The goal was to get rid of the PBXs and move to a more standard communications system", explains Ronny. At the same time, the new applications supported the business in several ways: forwarded voicemail helped mobile staff keep in touch and office staff better answer clients' questions, while the Microsoft Live Communication Server LCS platform facilitated communication and made information available globally. When Tom Tom migrated to VoIP in 2008, its primary goal was to cut costs. While it started to introduce an Microsoft Live Communication Server LCS platform on a limited scale, it had other priorities. And no wonder! Soon afterwards, Tom Tom and Tele Atlas merged.

The communications challenges were obvious immediately: how to ensure secure data exchanges, connect the network and integrate the communications platforms and mail. "We need 1 environment for the entire organisation", says Ronny. "The same rules, policies, retention...Overall, a more 'corporate' approach". But that was not a simple goal.

“We needed one environment for the entire organisation. The same rules, policies, retention...A more ‘corporate’ approach. But that’s not always such a simple goal to achieve”.

Ronny Bovijn, Senior Director Global IT, Tom Tom



Tom Tom is the world’s leading provider of location and navigation solutions that focus on car navigation. Products include portable navigation devices (PNDs), line fitted in-dash navigation solutions, fleet management solutions and location and navigation content. Its four customer facing business units include: Consumer, Automotive, Work (fleet management) and Licensing. Tom Tom was established in 1991, and shifted its focus from applications for mobile devices to car navigation in 2001. In July 2007 it acquired Tele Atlas, one of the two largest digital mapping companies in the world, which was founded in 1984.

SOLUTIONS

Phased roll-out and total control of technology

Faced with different platforms, mail systems and domains, the merged company opted for 1 domain. “We went for a phased roll-out approach”, explains Ronny. “In our ‘Exchange 2010’ program, we are upgrading our Microsoft LCS platform, and rolling out a new version of call managers, with new features. That will be very useful in our ‘all-hands meetings’ which help our global staff keep informed of what’s going on in the company. We can also share slides, for example, which means presentations and reports can be reviewed and approved by the relevant people in an hour instead of days! Our productivity is up, the technology is under control and our costs are down”.

LESSONS LEARNT

No out-of-box or cloud solution for complex security issues

For Ronny, security was the big issue. “When you have voice and data together, you’d better have a secure network! In our case, we need to protect our data and still remain compliant with regulations on transfer, storage, etc.” He explains that the company considered a cloud solution, but: “It’s fine if you need something fast, but not for the long-term. If you shoot the pieces in the cloud, how do you connect to the existing platform? Is it secure, what’s the bandwidth, where does it connect? It becomes very complex. And suppliers don’t give a lot of details on security. For us, it was easier to use our own system”.