

Recycling Pioneer Scraps Aging Voice Systems for Anytime, Anywhere Communication



Quebec-based paper products company Cascades was green decades before it was cool to be so.

In the late 1950s, three brothers recognized an opportunity to reuse and recycle materials. Today, Cascades produces everything from consumer paper products to cardboard boxes to specialized packaging for the food industry, and employs 11,000 people across 100 North American locations.

In recent years, Cascades embarked on an initiative to update its operations. Every business unit would move to more efficient processes and technologies, and from independent units to a more unified company.

"We had to adapt to the market and our clients' needs," said Dany Briard, IT Manager, Infrastructure, part of the Infrastructure, Operations & Security team. "And to do that, we needed to bring our people closer together."

Briard and the rest of the infrastructure team knew that none of this would be possible without unified communications. Specifically, they had to upgrade and consolidate the many disparate voice systems collected through acquisitions—some of which were older than their youngest employees.

The need for change hit home for Briard when, on vacation, he happened to see one of the company's phone systems—as an example of vintage technology at a museum.

"I sent a message to my CIO with a picture, saying, 'I think it's time for a change!'" he said.



Challenges

- Consolidate 100 locations onto a single unified communications system
- Empower employees to collaborate and communicate better with each other and customers
- Maintain the personal touch the company is known for

Goal: A Seamless User Experience

Cascades began with an audit of its current voice landline infrastructure—with eye-opening findings. External auditors uncovered numerous opportunities to improve efficiency and reduce cost—adding up to millions. Purchasing versus leasing voice systems would save money, while SIP trunking would dramatically reduce the number of lines needed.

The company evaluated half a dozen solutions and brought representatives from each to Cascades facilities to understand their unique needs. Ultimately, Cascades chose Avaya for its mix of capabilities, reliability, ease of use and integration with the company's Microsoft Office365 Collaboration Suite.

“Avaya stepped up with an integrated solution that addressed what Cascades was looking for,” Briard said. “Avaya was the only one that could integrate well with Office365 to provide a seamless experience for our users.”

A Flawless Rollout—Mission Accomplished

Avaya knows how to make large deployments a success. Our engineers teamed with those from business partner Connex, and Cascades embarked on a phased rollout across 80 business units. First they worked out the kinks at their campus location in Kingsey Falls, Quebec, which includes the headquarters offices, manufacturing and services facilities. Then they continued the upgrade across locations at an impressive clip of one new business unit each week.

Cascades trained everyone on Avaya solutions remotely via video training sessions. Then when it was time to cut over at each site, they did so during lunch—with no downtime.

Throughout the upgrade, Connex and Avaya engineers were there to ensure it progressed smoothly.

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Value Created

- Seamless integration with Microsoft Office365
- Modern unified communications anytime, anywhere
- A near-invisible transition for 100 locations

“The Cascades upper management committee was very clear about the companywide upgrade not disrupting operations,” Briard said. “It was very important that the overall experience be, as much as possible, seamless with the new collaboration tools. We can say, ‘mission accomplished.’”

Anytime, Anywhere Communication

Today, “Cascaders” have fully embraced new capabilities that allow them to communicate and collaborate more easily. Whether in the office, traveling or at home, they can log into our system to make calls using a traditional phone, softphone or mobile device.

At the same time, Cascaders are reachable on all their devices, if they choose, via a single five-digit extension. That effectively makes every call local and eliminates long-distance charges for intra-company calls.

With a focus on customer service, Cascades has always required live answers on calls. But for receptionists busy with other tasks, answering could previously consume the day.

Now, the company has moved to SIP trunking, making it cost-effective to assign an extension to every employee and opening up direct calling right to Cascaders. Receptionists can now focus their time on other tasks instead of on answering and routing calls. Meanwhile, customers and suppliers reach the intended employees directly.

Localizing Caller ID across 100 Sites

Localized calling was critical for day-to-day business activities and in the case of emergencies. Avaya had the technology to make it happen.

“If someone in a mill orders pizza for lunch, it needs to be handled as a local call, not a long distance call from Montreal,” Briard said. “And we had to ensure that when employees in Kingman, Arizona called 911, it would appear correctly as Kingman, Arizona and not Quebec.”

To address these concerns, Connex and Avaya configured the system for accurate caller ID at every site.

Empowered to Elevate Service

Avaya succeeded in helping Cascades consolidate unified communications across all locations with Avaya IX™ Workplace.

“Cascades now has a fully centralized solution in a managed service mode, which eases system upgrades and maintenance,” Briard said. “This setup allows Cascades to focus on value-added tasks to support its internal customers.”

“We have worked hard and accomplished a lot in enhancing our collaboration, and we are now in a position to be more focused on our internal customers—to help our employees meet their needs and goals.”

– **Dany Briard**, IT Manager, Infrastructure, part of the Infrastructure, Operations & Security team

Solutions

- Avaya Aura®
- Avaya IX™ Messaging
- Avaya IX™ Workplace
- Avaya IP Office™

As a result, Cascades eliminated costly leases, cut long-distance expenses, and began leveraging the Avaya platform for conferencing rather than paying for pricey third-party conferencing services.

In total, the company realized substantial savings with the move to Avaya. And within five years, the upgrade will have paid for itself.

Beyond that, Cascades empowers its people to be more productive and collaborative, which elevates employee and customer satisfaction.

“We have worked hard and accomplished a lot in enhancing our collaboration, and we are now more in a position to be more customer-centric and to help our customers meet their needs and goals,” Briard said.

About Cascades

Founded in 1964, Cascades offers sustainable, innovative and value-added packaging, hygiene and recovery solutions. The company employs 11,000 women and men across a network of over 90 production units located in North America and Europe. Driven by its participative management, half a century of experience in recycling, and continuous research and development efforts, Cascades continues to provide innovative products that customers have come to rely on, while contributing to the well-being of people, communities and the entire planet. For more information, visit cascades.com.

About Avaya

Businesses are built on the experiences they provide and every day millions of those experiences are built by Avaya (NYSE:AVYA). For over one hundred years, we’ve enabled organizations around the globe to win—by creating intelligent communications experiences for customers and employees. Avaya builds open, converged and innovative solutions to enhance and simplify communications and collaboration—in the cloud, on premise, or a hybrid of both. To grow your business, we’re committed to innovation, partnership, and a relentless focus on what’s next. We’re the technology company you trust to help you deliver Experiences that Matter. Visit us at www.avaya.com.