



In 2001 the AUT University was forced to address its telecommunication system, with their OS/2 based voicemail system reaching the end of its useful life. The University was seeking a replacement solution that would integrate with their Ericsson MD110 PBX as well as to a new generation Cisco AVVID VoIP platform deployed within the IT department.

Finding a scalable solution

It was at this point that AUT began talking with TeleWare, a UK founded company providing solutions to enhance enterprise-wide communications and support flexible working practices for workers, which had recently opened offices in Auckland and Wellington.

The University was impressed with TeleWare's innovative solutions and open standards-based approach to product development, and selected the TeleWare platform to underpin its VoIP system as well as connect it to the existing PABX.

In 1895 The Auckland Technical School opened in New Zealand with a roll of 30. More than a century – plus several name changes and more than 600,000 students – later, the year 2000 saw Auckland University of Technology (AUT) come into being. Today, AUT has some 1,800 staff and a student population of around 25,000 across two campuses.

TeleWare Case Study



Unparalleled functionality

Above all, the TeleWare platform provided AUT staff with advanced voicemail functionality including Personal Numbering, Unified Messaging and Interactive Voice Response (IVR) which helped increase staff effectiveness and responsiveness to AUT students' needs.

In 2004, the commissioning of new buildings that the now-ageing PABX could not accommodate prompted a new systems review.

AUT's Telephone Systems Manager, Gina Robinson commented, "With the benefit of three years' experience in managing VoIP alongside our traditional network, we felt we were well-placed to push forward with a full VoIP migration.

"We were confident that VoIP offered us a flexible backbone that was easy to provision, would cover our expanding geography as well as our current and future telephony requirements. Beyond that, we were able to establish a business case demonstrating that we could replace all the digital phones with VoIP phones for little more than upgrading the old PABX," she said.

Objectives of the project included:

- Address issue of ageing, full-capacity PABX
- Meet needs of spreading Campus
- Consolidate support and skills required for MACs
- Disaster Recovery Planning

The benefits of an open platform

However, added Ms Robinson, the project involved more than just replacing telephones on people's desks, "At the heart of this project was the integration of other systems such as our email platform, Groupwise.

"This is where the TeleWare system – being open standards and platform independent - came into its own. There are so many horror stories about organisations that buy a telephony system only to find that it won't work with their other applications due to proprietary technology – but we have never faced that issue with TeleWare.

"We knew we weren't buying anything proprietary, and that the platform could be used with any application, using all the standard protocols. We knew we were buying a system that integrates well and wasn't going to be outdated," said Ms Robinson.

Reliable features

For this project AUT decided to upgrade its Teleware platform to Version 10, which had never been deployed in New Zealand and had been deployed globally only once.

Ms Robinson added, "TeleWare's SIP-based Version 10 removed the need for the Aculab voice cards that proved unreliable in the previous version we were using and which had limited the number of voice channels available for use. The new version afforded us more features and although its deployment added a considerable amount of extra testing, it proved to be well worth the effort."

A truly mobile solution

According to Ms Robinson the benefits of the TeleWare platform are centred around the increased functionality and advantages to mobile workers.

"The TeleWare features provide users with flexibility, depending on how they like to work. We have people spread all around the country working from the university or home offices. No matter where they are located they can still have one number and if they are deskbound we integrate the features into the Groupwise email," she said.

Zero downtime

One of the key decisions Ms Robinson was tasked with was deciding the format for the rollover – big bang or migration?

“Because we had experienced managing two separate telephone systems for the past three years we were keen on a big bang approach. This required a lot more planning but allowed us to rationalise our telephone number plan,” commented Ms Robinson.

During the implementation phase, a fully fledged Proof of Concept Lab was established that ran parallel with the existing systems. This test lab was also used to train the contact centre on the new applications.

“Running two systems at the same time had its own issues, but TeleWare’s personal numbering worked well during these changes, allowing users to register their extension to any device and be contactable wherever and whenever.”

On time, on budget

After thorough testing and with many of the initial challenges addressed, AUT’s full VoIP system was able to go live on schedule.

Ms Robinson is pleased with the outcomes, “For an 1,800 staff rollout it was actually pretty painless. There was a lot of work but given the four month time frame (from approval of funds to completion) what we achieved is quite phenomenal.”

Part of the reason the roll out was made easier was to do with the fact that users did not have to relearn the applications, it was the same voicemail, unified messaging etc that they had on the old system, all they were doing was learning to use a new handset

Superior support

She has no doubt that the TeleWare platform has influenced this outcome and is adamant that equally important as the deployment is the follow up support.

*Ms Robinson concludes, “**TeleWare were incredible from the beginning** and their local technical support is fantastic. They know our business and understand where we want to go.”*

www.teleware.com

Headquarters/Registered Office

TeleWare plc

TeleWare House, York Road, Thirsk,
North Yorkshire, YO7 3BX, UK

T: +44 (0) 1845 526830 F: +44 (0) 1845 522165

E: enquiry@teleware.com

Asia Pacific Regional Sales Office

TeleWare NZ Ltd

Level 8, TeRenCo Finance House, 86 Victoria Street,
Wellington, PO Box 1956, New Zealand

T/F: +64 (9) 360 6881



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