Lync 2013 Customer Solution Case Study

Lync

Advanced Enterprise Communications Anywhere And On Any Device

Overview

Country: Slovenia
Industry: Telecommunications

Client

Iskratel is one of the leading providers of telecommunication equipment and solutions with more than six decades of experience. The company headquarters are located in Kranj and it is present in more than 40 countries and has more than 1,000 employees.

Challenge

Iskratel was looking for a secure telecommunication system that would enable its employees to securely communicate anywhere and by using any device or service.

Solution

The company decided to implement unified communications based on the Microsoft Lync platform and its proprietary SI3000 communication solution.

Benefits

- More responsive operations
- Utilizing existing equipment
- Improved user experience
- Operating cost reduction

"By using Microsoft Lync and Iskratel SI3000 platforms, we were able to keep the existing terminal equipment and upgrade it with new communication features that work anywhere and on any device."

Robert Zlatanov, Head of Product Marketing

Iskratel is one of the leading providers of telecommunications equipment and solutions with more than six decades of experience.

The company was looking for a secure telecommunication system that would enable its employees to securely communicate anywhere and using any device or service. At the same time, users did not have presence information about their coworkers or access to advanced collaboration and sharing features. They decided to implement a unified communications solution and built it on Microsoft Lync and integrated it with their SI3000 proprietary communication platform. This enabled them to keep their existing terminal equipment to substantially reduce the initial investment and offer advanced features to their users, regardless of where they communication and the device they use.

Microsoft

> "Microsoft Exchange and Sharepoint offer a great environment for teams and individuals to collaborate, including a central business directory and personal address books. It turned out that by integrating this environment with Lync further expands on these features."
>
> Anton Kavčič, IT Manager, Iskratel

Situation

Iskratel is one of leading providers of telecommunication equipment and solutions with more than six decades of experience. The company has headquarters in Kranj and maintains presence in over 40 countries and employs more than 1,000 people. In 2012, the company had EUR 91.5 million in revenues, an increase of almost 5 percent year-on-year. Company income from operations was EUR 3.25 million. Iskratel's most important customers are telecommunication service providers and corporations from various industries, such as energy, transportation, public safety and similar.

Iskratel's flagship product is SI3000 cCS, a unified communication platform that integrates advanced IP technology solutions and enables seamless and cost-effective migration from older analogue and digital communication technologies. Key benefits of the SI3000 product family are robust and reliable operations, modular design and flexible architecture.

Business communications in a global corporation like Iskratel are a key element in operational processes. Regardless of where they're located, employees need to quickly contact their coworkers and access business information. The existing Iskratel telecommunication system did not provide the ability to fully integrate the existing telephony service into their business environment to ensure that employees can securely connect regardless of their location or the device they use to communicate. At the same time, users did not have presence information about their coworkers or access to advanced collaboration and sharing features. This convinced them to implement a unified communications solution that integrated a series of technologies into a unified platform.

Solution

Iskratel chose Microsoft Lync platform to implement unified communications. The

platform includes Lync Server 2013 and Lync software clients for PCs, Tablet PCs and smartphones. In addition to Lync, the company also used Microsoft Exchange communication and collaboration platform that would enable them to integrate the communication solution with Microsoft Outlook e-mail clients.

"Microsoft Exchange and Sharepoint offer a great environment for teams and individuals to collaborate, which includes a central business directory and personal address books. It turned out that we could use the Lync server to further extend these features, which is definitely an important benefit for us," said Anton Kavčič, IT Manager, Iskratel.

The company also used its own Iskratel SI3000 platform to implement Microsoft Lync. Iskratel SI3000 is a hybrid telephony platform that provides IP, TDM and analogue voice services and is designed for modern communication solution in private business networks. By using the SI3000 platform, the company was able to keep its existing desktop terminal equipment, which substantially reduced the initial investment.

The main challenge in implementing unified communications was integrating Microsoft Lync and the existing telephony environment. While Lync enables communications within a corporate system, it does not offer a connection to external public networks and users (Public Switched Telephone Network – PSTN).

"One of the most important requirements in the implementation of unified communications was the ability to integrate the solution with our existing environment and telephony system. We wanted to keep a unified phone number and use the Outlook client to provide presence information to our users," said Janez Ori, CTO, Iskratel. "To achieve this, we've developed our own CSTA gateway that expands the presence and availability information to users who use analogue

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>
> Janez Ori, CTO

telephones."

The CSTA gateway offers Remote Call Control functionality to monitor phones that are connected to a PBX or a call server through a Lync client. Users can use a Lync window to manage and monitor calls (hold, transfer or pass calls) regardless of whether the caller is using a Lync client or a traditional phone.

Benefits

Utilizing existing equipment

"One of the key benefits of using Microsoft Lync and SI3000 platform is that we were able to keep our existing terminal equipment and upgrade it with new functionalities," said Robert Zlatanov, Head of Product Marketing, Iskratel. "This way, we successfully connected Lync users to the PSTN environment that they can use to make and receive calls. At the same time, our employees can take advantage of cheaper local calls anywhere they are."

More responsive operations

By implementing unified communications, Iskratel further improved its operational responsiveness. Users can take advantage of many advanced functionalities, such as a unified directory with presence information, e-mail based unified notifications for missed calls on different devices, online collaboration and meetings, audio and video conferencing and opportunities for online training. All of this makes employees easier to reach and improves their responsiveness to the needs and wishes of their customers.

Improved User Experience

Users can now also simply use Lync client on their PC to simply select, make and monitor voice communications on their desktop phones. Iskratel's unified communications solution is based on Lync, and also brings important benefits to mobile users, who often move from one location to another. To support them, the company uses the Lync 2013 Mobile application that supports Windows Phone,

iPhone, iPad, Android and Symbian (Nokia) devices.

"Using single sign-on we greatly simplified remote communications and enabled a seamless user experience on different devices, including PCs, tablets and smartphones. This ensures that users are always available anywhere and on any device," added Mr. Anton Kavčič.

Future in the Cloud

Iskratel is continuing its development of unified communications on the Lync platform as they want to support users of Microsoft's cloud services.

"We want to support Office 365 users and provide them with the same user experience that is available to those who have an on-site Lync server," explained Janez Ori, Chief Technology Officer, Iskratel. "We are developing a plug-in that will easily integrate with clients in the cloud to enable calls to the public network. The solution will be based on open Lync APIs and use all voice services offered by the Iskratel SI3000 call server."

More information:

For more information about Microsoft products and services, call the Microsoft Sales Information Center at (800) 426-9400. In Canada, call the Microsoft Canada Information Centre at (877) 568-2495. Customers in the United States and Canada who are deaf or hard-of-hearing can reach Microsoft text telephone (TTY/TDD) services at (800) 892-5234. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, please contact your local Microsoft subsidiary. To access information using the World Wide Web, go to:
www.microsoft.com.

For more information about Iskratel products and services, call +386 (0)4 207 20 00 or visit the website at:
www.iskratel.com.

Microsoft Lync Server

Microsoft Lync Server ushers in a new connected user experience that transforms every communication into an interaction that is more collaborative, and engaging; and that is accessible from anywhere. For IT, the benefits are equally powerful, with a highly secure and reliable communications system that works with existing tools and systems for easier management, lower cost of ownership, smoother deployment and migration, and greater choice and flexibility.

For more information about Microsoft Lync Server, go to: www.microsoft.com/lync.

Software
- Microsoft Lync Server 2013
- Microsoft Lync 2013
- Microsoft Lync 2013 for Mobile
- Microsoft Exchange Server
- Iskratel CSTA Gateway

Hardware
- Iskratel SI3000 cCS

Microsoft