

Vitec Group Chooses Dialogic® 4000 Media Gateway Survivable Branch Appliance for Worldwide Microsoft Unified Communications Deployment

IT Department Cites Ease of Use and Ability to Self-Deploy in Less Than a Day as Deciding Factors

CASE SUMMARY

Challenge

Because it must be extremely responsive to both internal and external customers, the Vitec Group tasked its IT department with adopting Microsoft Lync Server 2010 to support as many of its worldwide sites as possible. Choosing a gateway to function as a Survivable Branch Appliance (SBA) turned out to be a challenge.

Solution

Wishing to be as self-sufficient as possible, the Vitec IT department chose the Dialogic® 4000 Media Gateway Survivable Branch Appliance for its ease-of-use, range of densities, worldwide presence, and knowledgeable support.



Challenge

The Vitec Group is a dynamic company that delivers premium products and services for imaging, which enable its customers “to seize the opportunity, steal the show, capture the moment,” according to its corporate website. Because it must be extremely responsive to both internal and external customers to accomplish its mission, the Vitec Group tasked its IT department with adopting Unified Communications at as many of its sites as possible.

According to Chris Beveridge, IT Director of the Vitec Group Videocom Division, Vitec first started to deploy the Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 R2 in June 2010, but decided to hold back full deployment until the release of Lync Server 2010, which offered more robust branch office support. Once it became available, the IT department began to deploy the Lync Server in Vitec’s main office at Bury St Edmunds in England, but quickly grew unhappy with the PSTN gateway that it had also started to deploy. “We are very much a ‘hands-on’ IT department,” explains Mr. Beveridge, “and as we worked with the gateway, we found ourselves very frustrated since it seemed like you had to be a gateway engineer or have specialized training to use this box.”

Since the IT department knew it would be buying several units for its sites worldwide, Mr. Beveridge and his staff looked at the market to see if other companies were offering a Survivable Branch Appliance that was less tedious and faster to deploy.

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Solution

When Vitec's IT department heard about the Dialogic® 4000 Media Gateway Survivable Branch Appliance, "the first thing we did was look at the interface," according to Mr. Beveridge. After a few calls to Dialogic to discuss both the product and its price range, Vitec decided to install a DMG4000 SBA in its US Sales and Service Center in New York.

"We received the upgrade kit for Lync, and we haven't looked back," says Mr. Beveridge. "As DMG4000 SBAs are Windows-based, we were able to maneuver around the management interface and diagnose any issues easily—with much more ease than with the gateway we originally used. We immediately felt that we could be very self-sufficient with DMG4000 SBAs, and we wouldn't have to rely on anyone, including Dialogic support. We felt comfortable with the gateway, even though we had never used a Dialogic® product before."

Why Vitec Chose Dialogic® Gateways

According to Mr. Beveridge, Vitec's IT department chose the DMG4000 SBA for several reasons other than ease of use. "First of all, Dialogic had a variety of models that fit our business plan," explains Mr. Beveridge. "We have offices with from 5 to 300 users, and we needed a unit that could work well at all these locations with the same SBA features, regardless of whether the branch office was large or small."

"A second reason is that Dialogic is a global provider with a strong presence in America and Europe, and both of those areas are important to our business," adds Mr. Beveridge. "We also contacted Dialogic support a few times when we were configuring the first unit, and we found the response both prompt and knowledgeable. Although we value the DMG4000 SBA's ease-of-use, we also like to know that we have a good support group that we can depend on."

"The DMG4000 SBA also comes with a web-based wizard that steps you through the configuration process," recalls Mr. Beveridge, "and I would say that any Lync engineer who uses the wizard can implement a DMG4000 SBA without any assistance. Of course, our first installation took awhile because we had to get used to the integration between Lync and the DMG4000 SBA, but we now have deployed three units and we are confident that we can have a fully operational SBA in less than a day. Our plan is to replace the gateway we first put into our main Bury St Edmunds office with a DMG4000 SBA by the end of 2011."

Using Lync and Dialogic® Gateways as a PBX Replacement

Since Vitec began its current modernization project with "very old PBXs," putting a value on ROI was not very meaningful. "The solution we are putting in place," says Mr. Beveridge, "is mainly about adding up-to-date functionality and improving our business communications across multiple time zones."

Vitec had already deployed enterprise voice to its Lync-enabled sites. "Since our company has grown by acquisition," explains Mr. Beveridge, "we are using a wide variety of phone systems that are from 3 to 20 years old. We decided that the best strategy was to slowly replace all our phone systems with Lync servers and Dialogic gateways. We are deploying Polycom CX600 as the main handset right now, but we have also deployed Polycom CX500, CX300, and CX100 units, Jabra headsets, SNOM PA1, and a range of Polycom-compatible headsets. Our current design is an Enterprise Pool based in the UK with DMG4000 SBAs in our international sites."

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“We spent a long time looking at a traditional IP-PBX by a leading manufacturer,” continues Mr. Beveridge, “and since we knew we would want to install Lync on top of the IP-PBX, we did careful calculations, and the Microsoft solution worked out to be a lower cost for us in both the initial hardware purchase and in any consultancy dollars we would need to spend to put the solution in place.”

Vitec's IT department is confident that it has made the right decision. “Both our OCS and Lync deployments were relatively seamless,” says Mr. Beveridge. “We spent a lot of time on training our end users, and we feel this strategy paid dividends when we switched from the traditional PBX to a UC environment. We have done both parallel and cutover moves, and so far we prefer parallel, with a short time before we go live. Although we did experience issues, as we got used to the technology, each deployment was simpler and faster.”

Results

So far, Vitec has deployed a DMG4000 SBA in New York and in Connecticut in the USA and a unit in Munich, Germany. During the next few months, the IT department plans to deploy two more units in the UK, another in Germany, one in Paris, three more in the USA, and one each in Costa Rica and Japan.

How have employees responded to UC so far? “Very favorably,” reports Mr. Beveridge, “with IM and presence as the most popular features. We have received a lot of positive feedback because our people now know where and when their colleagues are available and rather than spending time writing and sending emails, they are communicating in real-time via IM or picking up the phone. Better communications helps every organization, and we are very happy with the reliability we have experienced. Touch wood, we haven't had a single outage so far.”

About Vitec

Vitec is an international Group principally serving customers in the broadcast, photographic, and military, aerospace, and government (MAG) markets. Listed on the London Stock Exchange with 2010 revenue of £310 million, Vitec is based on strong, well-known, premium brands on which its customers worldwide rely.

For more information, visit www.vitecgroup.com.

About Dialogic Inc.

Dialogic develops products and technologies that enable reliable, seamless, and efficient communications across countless devices on any network. Dialogic streamlines the delivery of high-demand mobile, VoIP, and traditional services. Dialogic also focuses on any-to-any connectivity and IP-enabling its traditional media products to smooth the move from TDM to an all-IP environment.

For more information, visit www.dialogic.com.



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