

Cable & Wireless is partner of choice for top charity's move to a converged voice and data system for its new headquarters.

RSPCA chooses IP to care for more animals, more efficiently

Animal welfare charity the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA) needed a new communications strategy for its new headquarters. Cable & Wireless provided a system which improves communications, will save up to £2 million over the next three to five years, and allows the RSPCA to make the most of its resources.

The charity has an estimated staff of 1,700, with 350 of them at headquarters and 500 mobile inspectors or animal collection officers. It has ten regional headquarters, 13 animal centres and medical centres and 12 animal clinics or hospitals. It also has 189 separately-run branches, which host 40 branch clinics and 47 animal welfare centres.

Each year the charity fields 1.6 million calls on its National Cruelty and Advice Line. Little wonder the operating budget is £71 million and that the RSPCA is keen to ensure the money goes as far as possible – like any other organisation trying to satisfy customer demands while controlling costs.

Saving money and making the most of resources

The RSPCA had been running separate voice and data networks supporting a plethora of handsets, mobile phones, fax machines and messaging solutions, which were costly and complex to support.

This complexity of organisation, demand from customers and pressure on costs will be familiar to most businesses.

It decided that it would evaluate a merged voice and data network for the new headquarters, and chose Cable &

Wireless as its strategic partner. The RSPCA was keen to ensure the solution would cut up-front and continuing costs, as well as allowing it to make the most efficient use of its resources.

Cable & Wireless acted as systems integrator for a pilot project to create a unified communications solution for the charity. Once C&W and the RSPCA were satisfied with the pilot, they could apply the concept to the new headquarters.

The headquarters system replaces the conventional analogue phone network and separate data network with a Cable & Wireless IP-LAN, a switched IP-enabled LAN enhanced with IP telephony and wireless options. The physical infrastructure was provided by Cable & Wireless structured cabling.

The pilot system also incorporates a communication server from TOPCALL, the global unified communications company. The TOPCALL server provides a unified messaging interface for voice, email and fax services.

The network underpins a voice over IP (VoIP) strategy in which Cisco IP phones are linked directly to the building's LAN. A Cisco Call Manager routes calls to the handsets over the network. If calls are missed they are re-routed to the TOPCALL server, which records a voicemail and forwards it to the recipient's mailbox in the RSPCA's GroupWise system. Combining GroupWise and the TOPCALL system has also added facilities for faxing to and from the desktop.

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- **'Wherever we can offer IP over the network we can offer these solutions'**
- **'By building applications into the 'IP cloud' you unshackle the need to have people in a particular location'**
- **'Cable & Wireless have some great people to deliver solutions'**

**Matt Winckless,
RSPCA technical
communications
manager**



CABLE & WIRELESS

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Merged network saves on equipment

The merged voice and data network means the RSPCA has only had to install one set of cabling at headquarters, saving money and meeting the charity's environment-friendly aims. It also saves on equipment, replacing the requirement for new PBX and data networking equipment with a couple of servers. In turn this has cut support costs.

Matt Winckless, technical communications manager for the RSPCA, said: 'Effectively we'll halve the cost of the infrastructure and probably halve the cost of the equipment.' The headquarters communication system will also provide a template for the rest of the RSPCA's sites countrywide.

'We're in a rapid process of trialling and testing the new technologies,' said Winckless, 'and once we have a template for a remote site we will quite quickly swipe that out around the remote sites.'

Network extends reach of key applications

The remote sites will be linked to the headquarters by Cable & Wireless Frame Relay, a data connection service designed to link many sites together, using a Cable & Wireless Managed Router to control the traffic between sites. Using services managed by Cable & Wireless means the RSPCA will not have to worry about the day-to-day running of its WAN.

Access to the RSPCA network will also introduce voice mail, fax to the desktop, Internet access and interactive voice response (IVR) facilities to the remote offices.

'Wherever we can offer IP over the network we can offer these solutions,' said Winckless, 'potentially even on a van over a 3G wireless connection.'

The network will allow the RSPCA to make the most of its people, particularly in its call centres. Using Cable & Wireless contact centre solutions — a set of equipment, services, software and managed service options — the staff will handle customer phone calls, emails and web sessions.

One service will help with managing the charity's heavy volume of phone calls. The RSPCA can now use Cable & Wireless Network IVR to enable callers to route themselves to an appropriate expert. The charity is also trying out Cable & Wireless Network CTI (computer-telephony integration), which allows calls to be routed to any extension — so overflow calls can be routed to desktops anywhere in the organisation. Together these services will help the RSPCA meet its business target of prioritising every message it receives.

'By building applications into the 'IP cloud' you unshackle the need to have bums on seats in a particular location,' said Winckless. 'As long as they have connectivity and quality of service they could be sitting anywhere. They could even be people in other organisations.'

E-commerce saves animals and resources

The RSPCA is using Cable & Wireless Managed Hosting Solutions and content management services to handle a number of e-commerce initiatives. One is a database which tracks where rescued animals are being treated.

Currently a collection officer who has rescued a sick animal has to call around RSPCA sites until they find one that has capacity to treat the animal. Accessing the database over a mobile extension of the network would mean the officer could see immediately which facilities were available, saving time and improving efficiency.

The RSPCA needed its new communications infrastructure to save money and increase efficiency. But how has Cable & Wireless performed as the RSPCA's partner in this project? Winckless said: 'On the ground level they have some great people to deliver solutions and they have some very good products.'

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