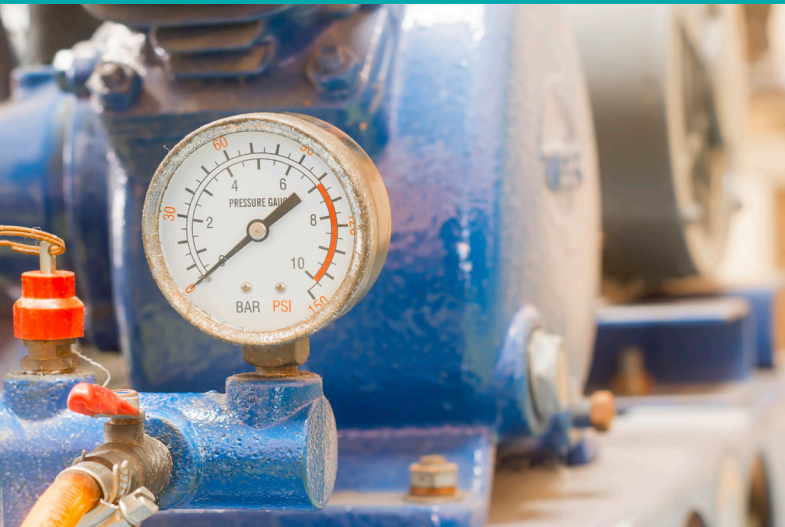


Republic Pneumatics



Industry

- Industrial/Manufacturing

Challenges

- Service-driven industry
- Corporate office relocation
- Mobile & remote sales force
- Prolonged office move
- Antiquated voice infrastructure

Solution

- Communications Platform: NEC UNIVERGE Cloud Services (UCaaS)
- NEC Dealer: Indatus Communications (New Albany, IN)

Results

- Flexible communications platform
- Enhanced staff communications
- Minimal customer disruption
- Improved customer responsiveness
- Fewer capital expenditures

Republic Pneumatics, a premier supplier of pneumatic, liquid and gas conveying systems, is headquartered in Sellersburg, Indiana. The company combines superior product lines, expert engineering and unparalleled customer service as its strategy to become the Midwest's top distributor.

The company partnered with its local NEC dealer, Indatus Communications, to implement NEC UCaaS from NEC UNIVERGE Cloud Services. Republic Pneumatics is leveraging UCaaS to improve staff communications and enhance service to customers.

Challenges

Republic Pneumatics has over 40 years experience in engineered solutions for the industrial and mobile bulk product conveying industry. "On one end of the spectrum, we provide mobile-pneumatic equipment to trucking companies, which is 40% of our business," says Mike Boland, vice president, Republic Pneumatics. "At the other end of the spectrum, we provide equipment to industrial customers, large manufacturing companies as well as automotive suppliers." This includes everything from new systems to repairing and replacing existing equipment.

Timely communication is critical within the pneumatic-equipment industry. "Our customers—whether they are large global corporations or small local businesses—expect us to be able to service their needs on a 24x7 basis," said Boland. "We have to be able to respond to those needs otherwise they are going to find someone else who will."

Responsive customer service has been a key differentiator for the company. "That's actually how we've grown our business," added Boland. "With the internet, a company located anywhere in the world can do business with us here in Indiana if their local provider isn't meeting their needs."

The company experienced rapid growth over the past few years and decided to move its corporate headquarters to a larger office building. Boland wanted to install an all-new voice-communication solution at its new location. "The voice infrastructure at the current facility had reached end of life," said the vice president. "We wanted to upgrade for the business in general but our impending move made the need a lot more paramount."

Boland wanted a solution that would provide advanced features and functionality for employees, including mobile workers. "Whenever I was working in the field, for example, I would have to call into the office, have someone go into my office to retrieve my messages and then call me back to tell me what was going on. It was a chore and it very rarely ever worked."

The solution would also enable the company to maintain communications with employees and customers during the move. "Even though the new location was about 20 minutes away from the old building, we were moving to a new state with a different area code and we didn't want that to interrupt our business," added Boland. "With the speed in which our business moves, being able to communicate within the building, with our outside sales team and with our customers is pretty critical."



Solution

Boland contacted Indatus, a NEC dealer in Louisville. “I told the Indatus team we wanted to upgrade our capabilities but we weren’t sure how to do this during the move,” said the vice president. “We had no idea what was available out there, so we needed guidance figuring out our options.”

The Indatus team recommended NEC’s Unified Communications as a Service (UCaaS), one of the latest additions to the NEC UNIVERGE Cloud Services portfolio. UCaaS combines enterprise-grade voice, data and video applications that are delivered and managed from the NEC public cloud. Private and hybrid cloud models are also available. We decided to go with NEC’s UCaaS,” said Boland. “And it turned out to be a really good fit for us.”

NEC UCaaS addressed each of Republic Pneumatics’ unique challenges. “The company’s new office is located in a part of Indiana that had not yet been wired for Multi-Protocol Label Switching (MPLS), which is the best networking option for an enterprise-grade, IP-based solution,” said Phil Hawkins, President, Indatus. “With UCaaS, MPLS takes place in the cloud and managed by NEC for optimal security and reliability. The solution also provides the advanced technology Mike wanted in the new office and the flexibility he needed throughout the move from the old location.”

A cloud-based solution also offers unique benefits from a cost perspective. Because UCaaS applications are delivered from the NEC Cloud, Republic Pneumatics foregoes the upfront capital expenses associated with premise-based software licenses, servers and datacenter equipment. This also eliminates the cost of ongoing management. Because UCaaS is a service, the company has transitioned its communications infrastructure from a capital-expenditure to an operational-expenditure model. The company chooses the applications that are best for their employees and pay a single, monthly rate for it all.

Republic Pneumatics implemented UCaaS prior to its move to the new office. “We used the solution at the old facility for about eight weeks to get users acclimated to the new system,” said Boland. The solution provided the company the flexibility to install UCaaS in the new office building before moving employees. “When we started moving people over to the Sellersburg office, all we had to do was move a phone over,” he added. “Because the phone in the new office registered back to the old location, employees were able to work out of both locations at the same time.”

This was especially helpful when the company encountered an unexpected delay during the move. “All of our office employees were in the new location when we ran into a logistical problem with the building, which prevented us from moving everyone else,” said Boland. “So basically, our shop and half of our employees were still in Louisville while all our office personnel were in Sellersburg.”

The company operated between the old and new offices for four a weeks. “We originally estimated the move would take about two weeks,” he added. “But it actually took about six weeks.” Throughout the transition, the UCaaS solution enabled employees at the new building to easily communicate with those still in the old building.

“For example, I was over in Louisville and I was able to transfer a call to Sellersburg just like they were sitting right next door was a huge process,” said Boland. “That was really a nice thing to be able to do.”

More importantly, employees were able to stay connected with customers throughout the move. “Our customers did not see any of the hiccups we were experiencing internally—the process was completely seamless to them,” said Boland. “Unless they got the notification in the mail or email – when they called in, they never realized that we had moved.”

UCaaS also simplified the process once the rest of the employees were ready to move to the new locations. “We just picked up the phones off their desk, disconnected the router and installed them at the new location,” he said. “There was very minimal downtime.”

Republic Pneumatics is enabling better collaboration with the UCaaS solution’s rich set of features. Employees now have access to applications like presence, instant messaging, voice and video conferencing and more.

Additional features like unified messaging and MS Office Outlook integration simplify communication for mobile workers. “So let’s say one of our sales people was out meeting with a customer and gets a voice message from another customer,” said Boland. “Now, the message will pop up in their email and they can access and listen to it directly from their smart phone. This is a dramatic improvement from our old process.”

Results

The UCaaS solution provides all the flexibility that Republic Pneumatics wanted in a new communications solution. That was the most attractive aspect of a cloud solution for us,” said Boland. “We knew the move would take several weeks and it actually took a longer than we’d initially planned. I can’t imagine how we would have communicated via normal phone lines during the six weeks we were split between two buildings. It would have been a logistical nightmare.”

Boland is especially pleased that the move was seamless to customers. “We encountered a number of internal issues during the move, so it was definitely not a smooth transition for employees,” said Boland. “But in the midst of all that was going on behind the scenes, our customers saw business as usual. You can’t ask for anything more than that.”

With the office move now complete, Republic Pneumatic s is leveraging the UCaaS solution to be more agile and responsive in its fast-paced, service-driven industry. Better service to customers. The new solution has definitely improved our ability to provide faster, more responsive customer service,” added Boland. “I don’t think there’s any question about that.”

The vice president credits Indatus for a successful office move and cloud implementation. I have confidence in NEC technology and cloud computing but our partnership with Indatus is what kept us sane throughout the transition to cloud. Any company will experience hiccups during an office move, but we had the added challenge of moving from one state to another. Indatus was the one who backed us up. If we had a problem, they were here immediately to help us work through it,” he concluded.

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