

Midlothian Innovation Centre support growth and supplement services with Multi Tenant IP PBX

about new park

New Park own, develop and manage business technology parks, innovation centres and associated business incubators across Scotland. At each of their six sites they offer office space, laboratories and workshops to organisations across a spectrum of industries, from the scientific to the creative. This results in an eclectic mix of businesses, and New Park have seen financial advisors, marketers, renewable energy pioneers and biotechnologists working side by side.

Central to everything that New Park offer is the ethos that they should provide more than just a serviced office; more than just the bricks and mortar. By going a few steps further to understand the challenges their tenants face, New Park are able to take an active role in promoting their tenants growth – and working closely with Scottish Enterprise and local councils, they use their network of tenants to forge partnerships of mutual benefit, which has encouraged frequent communication between tenants and across the sites.



the problem

Midlothian Innovation Centre (MIC), one of New Park's primary sites, has experienced extreme growth in the uptake of their services. In the last five years, the centre has seen occupancy raise from 30 businesses to over 70 organisations of varying size – amounting to approximately 250 individuals on site.

"It was this growth that prompted us to look for a better solution", commented New Park's Managing Director, Kevin Scott. "The existing system had reached capacity and was already struggling to meet the needs of existing tenants. When we were faced with connecting a brand new building to the system, as



Network ROI

well as several new tenants, we knew it was time to reconsider our options."

For John Dimmock, IT Manager, the problems with the old system stretched beyond the issue of capacity. "The inflexibility of the system was a big issue. We had tenants joining us with different expectations of functionality, different handset preferences and certainly different budgets, and we had no effective way of facilitating their individual requirements. The old system offered limited functionality, offering little more than voicemail and the ability to transfer calls – which was a cumbersome process at best."

In addition to this, New Park staff struggled with the billing arrangements. "Our billing platform was a bolt on solution, generating reports on a monthly basis and allowing us to bill individual tenants for their usage, but it was simply unwieldy and unhelpful," explained Kevin.

New Park needed a new solution. However, upon approaching the existing vendor John found that the options were limited. "Obviously, we didn't want to spend more than we had to. However, it seemed that the only way forward with the existing vendor would have been to rip out the old system and replace it with a new one, at full cost. Not only would we have caused disruption to the 70 businesses on site but we would have incurred needless expense."

the solution

New Park turned to convergence experts Network ROI for advice. "Kevin and his team were very keen to avoid finding themselves in the same situation several years down the line," commented Sean Elliot, Managing Director at Network ROI. "They wanted a future-proof solution, where the system would not only be able to handle the current, natural growth at MIC, but be able to facilitate their ambitious plans for the site in the years to come."

Drawing upon their experience with a variety of vendor solutions, Network ROI recommended a VoIPCortex Multi Tenant IP PBX from ipcortex.

“The VoIPCortex Multi Tenant IP PBX offers complete divisioning of its comprehensive feature set, where billing and behavioural preferences can be accessed and configured on a per extension, per tenant or system wide basis.” explained Sean. “In addition, it’s compatible with any open SIP handset, allowing New Park to better meet the individual requirements of each tenant”.

New Park opted for the VoIPCortex Multi Tenant IP PBX with Quad PRI ISDN interface, with a range of handsets from vendors Snom, Linksys and Aastra.

John commented, “Network ROI completed the installation over a weekend without any disruption to service. The new system interoperates perfectly with the old, sharing ISDN channels to make and receive external calls. We don’t currently use VoIP trunks but plan to in the future – the site is well serviced by Internet connectivity and it’s relatively inexpensive to implement with the ipcortex system.

“The initial thinking was to put new tenants for the new building onto the new system, along with reception – but several companies wanted to move over because of the additional functionality and flexibility of the ipcortex PBX. One of our existing tenants wanted to do a month’s trial of the new system - but after the first day they had decided that they didn’t want to go back. In the end we decided to offer the system as an option to everyone,” explained John.

“Management of the system is shared between myself and the Network ROI team. After installation they provided me with a day’s training which has been enough to see me through general management tasks such as adding users or changing their preferences – it’s a very intuitive management interface.”

the value

“The ipcortex solution was perfect for New Park. Interoperable with the existing system but scalable enough to facilitate future plans and replace it in future, the VoIPCortex Multi Tenant was the best fit at the best price – costing far less than the alternative solutions from the previous vendor,” said Sean.

Kevin was pleased that the system not only met their immediate requirements, but that it provided a range of functionality based benefits that would consolidate the New Park offering. “Our telephone system facility suddenly became far more accessible to the business user. Yes, we needed more capacity, but we were able to use the opportunity to make sure that we were moving forward in terms of functionality too. Our tenants now have access to a range of new features, and in addition we’ve

been able to enhance our services – for example with a central reception answering facility.”

“The flexibility of the ipcortex system was a huge draw,” John commented. “The majority of our tenants are small businesses who can really benefit from facilities such as remote working, or unified messaging. Plus, with the range of handset choice available they can choose handsets to better suit their own requirements – so they can source the best handset for each application.”

“In terms of features, hunt groups have proven popular, and one tenant in particular is very happy with the streamlined call transfer process – as is the receptionist, who can now offer a much slicker service. Overall though, functionality is key as a way to enhance our services – it’s very helpful to have access to such a wide range of features as standard in order to meet the expectations of both new and existing tenants.”

“Of course, aside from the benefits to the tenants the system has made my life much easier too. The individual multi company feature and configuration divisioning is free from complication, and the integrated billing platform is helpful. In addition, I can now add or edit a user without rebooting the system – so I can do it during normal working hours, unnoticed with no disruption. I also have the flexibility to let users try a behavioural pattern before committing to it – for example when setting ringing time, as no-one really has a concept of how long that should be until they’re sat at their desk listening to it! It really is those little things, the everyday tasks where the ipcortex PBX keeps making a difference.

about Network ROI

“In choosing a system, we had to also choose a supplier we could trust – and we found that absolutely in Network ROI. From the initial demonstration of the system and handsets to implementation and ongoing system maintenance they’ve been very helpful and always deliver a grade A service with a personal touch.

Based in Edinburgh, Network ROI is a one-stop shop for small to medium-size businesses. They began trading in 2003, focussing purely on providing IT infrastructure and networking products and services, but added VoIP to their portfolio in 2007.

Impressed with the New Park offering, Network ROI relocated to Midlothian Innovation Centre nine months after the installation.

For further information about Network ROI, please visit www.networkroi.co.uk

Find our more about New Park’s business centres at www.newpark.co.uk