

CPL INDUSTRIES SAYS OUT WITH THE OLD AND IN WITH BROOKS DEACON AND OPAL TELECOM

BROOKS DEACON PROVIDES CPL INDUSTRIES WITH OVER
£76,000 IN COST SAVINGS WITH OPAL TELECOM AND A
FUTURE PROOFED TELEPHONY NETWORK FOR NEW
STREAMLINED BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

CHALLENGE

CPL Industries, UK-based manufacturer of solid fuel and its distribution, and independent national distributor of petroleum products, is tasked with a hugely complex manufacture and distribution process across its 80 depots around the UK on a daily basis. The company found its job was being made less efficient by an under-managed, antiquated telecoms infrastructure that was getting out of control.

ANSWER

CPL Industries took Opal business partner, Brooks Deacon's, advice and transferred its telecoms lines and calls to Opal Telecom. The business now knows what it has throughout its vast empire, where its infrastructure is, how much it costs, and can upgrade its communications to VOIP whenever it chooses.

BENEFIT

As well as massive efficiencies in network performance and future proofing capability for VOIP, CPL Industries has also made a cost saving of over £76,000 projected over an 18 month period, when compared to its previous spend over the same period with BT.

CPL INDUSTRIES IS RESPONSIBLE FOR PUTTING 300,000 TONNES OF SOLID FUEL ONTO UK HOUSEHOLD AND INDUSTRIAL FIRES, 1,300 MILLION LITRES OF PETROLEUM PRODUCTS INTO HOMES, FACTORIES AND VEHICLES, AND JUST UNDER FIVE MILLION BAGS OF CHARCOAL ONTO THE NATION'S BARBECUES.

The company is faced with creating and distributing a vast quantity of products to end users throughout the UK, and maintaining a local and national presence. As such, it is challenged with a major logistical opera of

supply chain communications that must be based on a tightly woven infrastructure if the company is to operate efficiently.

OUT WITH OLD AND IN WITH THE EFFICIENT

CPL Industries is divided into three companies: CPL Petroleum, which has 40 sites; CPL Distribution that also has 40 sites; and CPL Products, with one site. CPL had been using BT as its fixed telecoms supplier for many years, as many established businesses do.

The directors at Brooks Deacon had already worked with CPL Industries when they were members of other companies. As such, they had previous experience of the company's fixed telecoms provision, and had seen a number of issues that as Brooks Deacon, they thought they could help reduce.

Brooks Deacon approached CPL Industries and proposed to carry out a proper review of the business' telecommunications infrastructure, across all of its divisions. Brooks Deacon found telco infrastructure littered randomly all over the company, the result of many years of change, moves and acquisitions.

Rachel Brooks, a company director at Brooks Deacon, speaks about her business' assessment of the CPL telephony estate: "It was messy and untidy. There were telephone lines and systems that had been in there for years, so CPL was being charged for equipment and services that weren't in use and wasn't aware of. For instance, one site with two people working there had 10 phone lines."

Although one person at CPL Industries had been given responsibility for managing telecoms, the job was too vast and complex for them to control. As a consequence, no one really knew what was where, if it was needed, used or up to date, so CPL Industries found itself paying for a lot of antiquated infrastructure it did not need.

CPL Industries accepted that its fixed telecoms infrastructure needed help. James Tate, head of group finance at CPL Industries, explains: "We had got to the stage where basically our telecommunications wasn't being managed very well. Someone that was supposed to be looking at it had let it get away from them, and if you're not looking at it, it's not being managed."

OPAL IS THE ANSWER TO STREAMLINED COMMUNICATIONS

Brooks Deacon found that CPL Industries was paying too much for its telecommunications infrastructure, as it had lines it did not need. Through its assessment, it predicted that CPL could save £66,000 over an 18 month

period against what it was at the time spending for the same period with BT.

So Brooks Deacon began to move CPL Industries' voice calls to Opal Telecom. Tate comments: "We started working with Opal on the voice side of things, to transfer lines across. We were happy with the service it gave us, and the price."

Brooks Deacon has been helpful and supportive, adds Tate. "Brooks Deacon is always willing to get involved with our business, to get our business as efficient as we need it to be. There are always difficulties in transferring lines, but Brooks Deacon has been very good at finding out why lines couldn't transfer and then making them transfer, by taking off services or cleaning up lines so BT products can move to Opal."

CUTTING THE FAT

Once Brooks Deacon recorded exactly what CPL had on its telephony infrastructure, and made suggestions as to what it did not need, CPL made its decision on what should go and Brooks Deacon got to work. The first stage involved cutting out the fat from the business, rationalising the immediate resources.

After that, Brooks Deacon transferred all lines that were required by the business, and that were eligible, to Opal Telecom. The result is the majority of lines are now on Opal's network, and the remainder that are still with BT are on a list to be transferred as soon as they are able. (The CPL Petroleum business is not been able to transfer from BT to Opal due to its remote call forwarding product to help its acquisitive strategy work efficiently, which is currently tied to BT through a contract.)

Following stage two, the final stage is concentrated on cutting BT out of the CPL loop entirely, as and when it is possible to transfer the last lines to Opal.

BROOKS DEACON HITS HOME WITH SMART PROVISIONING

CPL Petroleum originally had different 08 numbers for each depot; Brooks Deacon has transferred those to Opal, and has also provided one single 0845 number for the business. This allows customers to ring in and be transferred automatically to either their geographically closest depot or if all lines there are busy, to a centralised call centre, creating a bigger brand image for the company, Brooks states.

CPL Petroleum needed new hardware at several sites, so rather than do spot repairs on those individual units, Brooks Deacon looked at the whole business and what was best to move it forward efficiently. With VOIP as a

focus point for future communications, the company has implemented IP-enabled switches from Inter-Tel – now part of the Mitel Group – so that when CPL Petroleum is ready it can begin making savings and improving the flow of its voice and data communications with VOIP.

Brooks comments: “We looked at it as a whole project to connect the sites using VOIP. This is the start of the process. All the sites at CPL Petroleum had done their own thing previously, until we looked at its telecoms as an entire solution.”

Inter-Tel technology was chosen as it has a strong history in call centre applications, through Swan Solutions, now Callview. Call centre capability was a major factor in the companies requirements for a new solution, along with the ability to go IP when required.

Additionally, CPL Petroleum took 10 Blackberry PDAs for its managing director, employees regularly on the road, and other key executives.

Brooks Deacon transferred CPL Distribution’s 08 numbers to Opal, and in addition now manages the service for the company creating a single point of contact, and has added extra analysis to each call.

MASSIVE COST SAVINGS THROUGH OPAL

Cost savings for CPL Industries have been significantly more than Brooks Deacon’s initial prediction. Over an 18 month period against what the company had been paying BT, it had saved around £76,000 on calls and line rental. With BT, the company had been paying in the region of £245,000 over 18 months, which went down to £170,000 for the same period with Opal.

The result for each CPL business has been more efficient, streamlined communications that are future proofed and set to move the company as a whole forward cost effectively.

Now that CPL Industries has a strong, up to date infrastructure for its telecommunications, the next step with the help of Brooks Deacon is a voice over IP solution from Opal Telecom.

This will enable CPL Industries to reduce call billing on communications within the company’s many depots and offices, and make the company even more efficient than it has recently become thanks to its new fixed line infrastructure. “Hopefully there are still a few more savings to come,” comments Tate.