



CASE STUDY

Cardiff University

Full IT
Support



Unified
Communications



Cloud



Security &
Compliance



Network &
Infrastructure



REQUIREMENT: SKYPE FOR BUSINESS ENTERPRISE VOICE

With ambitions to modernise communications in the University for staff, students and faculty, Cardiff University undertook a tender exercise and selected Freedom Communications – a GCI company - for a digital transformation to Skype for Business.



THE CLIENT

Cardiff University is a member of the prestigious Russell Group; a collection of 24 leading UK research-intensive Universities. Currently the 8th largest University in the UK in terms of student numbers, Cardiff's more than 31,500 students represent over 100 countries. The University has over 250 buildings within three colleges that oversee its 26 Academic Schools - the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences, the College of Biomedical and Life Sciences, and the College of Physical Sciences and Engineering.

Cardiff University needed to modernise its communications, transitioning from its legacy PBX to a more flexible, efficient and collaborative Unified Communications (UC) solution. Additionally, as part of the University's master redevelopment plan, the building that contained the primary PBX platform was scheduled for demolition. Therefore, the university had strict timeframes to meet in order to ensure continuation of Voice services. Additionally, as a result of this technology, relationships with students were more traditional which meant that Cardiff was spending more than necessary on legacy systems. This was a challenge that the new solution had to solve, and an easily-scalable platform was required that could bring better collaboration to the university. A more resilient Voice service was also needed to resolve issues with the clearing process, enabling Cardiff to better serve incoming enquiries from potential future students at peak times.

SECTOR: Education



TECHNICAL SOLUTION

As a Microsoft Gold Partner and Unified Communications specialist with hundreds of thousands of Skype for Business seats deployed, GCI were the ideal partner for Cardiff University. Taking the requirements and challenges into consideration, GCI designed an on-premise Skype for Business platform, implemented the design in partnership with Cardiff's in-house IT specialists and assisted in the planning for a migration from the legacy PBX to a full Enterprise Voice Skype for Business solution. In collaboration with the university's IT Project team, GCI assisted with the roll out Skype for Business to 5500 full-time equivalent staff at the university, allowing users to communicate securely and stay connected with colleagues from one easy-to-use platform - wherever they chose to work and via any device. With its ability to deliver audio and video conferencing, Enterprise VoIP and mobility services, Skype for Business represented a scalable solution that mirrored the future goals of the University.

The transition to Skype for Business also enabled a migration from Cardiff's traditional ISDN phone line system to a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) system. The transition to SIP further allowed for potential integrations and expansion, future-proofing Cardiff's communications system as well as bringing benefits such as lower call and maintenance costs.

SUCCESS AND COMPANY BENEFITS

Cardiff University's new Skype for Business Solution has paved the way for more collaborative and innovative methods of communication. Not only has it solved challenges with communication between staff, students, external communities and partners that serve the University, but the solution has helped increase levels of user satisfaction. Through the new SIP-based solution, Cardiff can scale services up at busy times to help support a seamless clearing experience by increasing availability.

Thanks to GCI's approach to deployment - which included ensuring that users were trained and confident in using the solution - high adoption rates of Skype for Business were achieved, with users embracing the new client and the improved staff directory, presence information and tagging status changes. Due to the successful deployment and interest generated GCI increased the number of training sessions per day to accommodate for the increase in demand, training over 800 users across a six-month period to ensure all staff were more confident, productive and collaborative.

Robert Dew, Network & Telecommunications Manager at Cardiff University, said: *"Our implementation of Skype for Business has enabled the university to make further advances in the way that our staff communicate. To fully realise the benefits of Unified Communications and move away from our legacy systems, we needed an experienced and trusted partner to help us through this transition and to achieve our goals. GCI were just that - their experience and understanding of the transformation from traditional telephony to Unified Communications has been invaluable."*

For more information regarding our services, please contact us at:

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