

VoIP relieves IT team stress and promotes productivity

Founded in 1919, Seattle-based Keller Rohrback law offices has a distinguished heritage of providing clients a wide range of legal services in areas including complex litigation, banking, corporate and employment law, estate planning and trusts, IP licensing and litigation, medical/dental business law, real estate law, securities, debtor/creditor issues, employment law and more.

The founding fathers of Keller Rohrback instilled a culture receptive to change in its 125 attorneys and legal support staff because of the constantly changing needs of their clients. In fact, Keller Rohrback clearly states that they boldly navigate the ever-changing and challenging world of modern technology and embrace technical innovations.

Keller Rohrback first considered VoIP in 2003, but they wanted a technology that was cutting edge—not bleeding edge—so they put off the decision. Obviously, switching systems is a company-wide endeavor with no room for error. The decision to switch required perfect timing from both technology and internal systems standpoints—and that timing was right in 2006 when they entered into a firm-wide remodel and expansion.

The process

In 1988, the firm moved to the Washington Mutual Tower in Seattle to occupy a portion of the 31st floor and the entire 32nd floor. At that time they installed a then top of the line shared tenant phone system. But as time went by the system aged and costs became extremely high. Keller Rohrback's cost analysis proved VoIP would save them money, and they knew they wanted VoIP because it was, and still is, the preferred technology among their peers.

Since the decision for the technology was already made, all Keller Rohrback had to do was find the telecommunications partner that would guide them and support them through the process. So, Keller Rohrback sent out a formal Request for Proposal to approximately ten companies in the Puget Sound area. All Phase was put on the list because they came highly recommended from two referrals in the legal community—one who had used All Phase before, and one who wished they had. By March, the firm narrowed the search to three companies including All Phase. All were invited in for in-house presentations and demonstrations.

Partner of choice

Keller Rohrback announced All Phase as their telecommunications partner in May. All Phase was selected for a number of reasons including: their preferred partner status with ShoreTel; and their product, process and systems knowledge. In addition, the IT team really appreciated All Phase's business history over the past 20 years, their employee longevity, their responsiveness and how easy they were to work with.

Before All Phase could begin work, Keller Rohrback needed to finalize things with the remodel, so the implementation kick-off started in July. Once All Phase started the project, the installation went as expected and the new system launched firm-wide the third week of September. "All Phase made implementing the switch to VoIP smooth, fairly easy and relatively pain-free," said Renée Griggs, IT/Facilities Manager at Keller Rohrback.



The challenge

Keller Rohrback had a legacy, "shared tenant" system that was nearly 20 years old. More importantly the Keller Rohrback IT team knew the cost of this legacy system was out of control from both an equipment leasing standpoint and a manpower standpoint. The IT team also needed to gain internal control of adds, moves and changes and therefore provide better customer service to their internal business partners.

The solution

Keller Rohrback partnered with All Phase Communications to help them make the switch to VoIP. All Phase quarterbacked the process including the network assessment, system design, project management, and system implementation, as well as system deployment and training. Today, All Phase continues to help them with ongoing system maintenance.

The benefits

When you compare the cost of the legacy system to the newly installed ShoreTel VoIP system, Keller Rohrback is saving two-thirds of the previous cost—which translates yearly into \$84,000 that goes to their bottom line.

Call handling at the front desk is much more efficient and intuitive, therefore boosting customer satisfaction. The IT department has also improved customer service to internal business partners with faster response times and changes.

Caller ID has helped employees increase productivity by helping them limit unimportant disruptions.



The systems

Keller Rohrback chose ShoreTel products for reasons including its 'plug-n-play' implementation, easy-to-use equipment, simplified ongoing maintenance, impressive product design and extensive system engineering. "The ShoreTel system with its web-based interface is very user friendly and intuitive," said Griggs. "It offers a good balance of features and benefits, but it isn't so incredibly complex that you can't use the system."



With the help of All Phase, Keller Rohrback invested in the IP 230 for all its common areas and copy centers, the IP 560g for its users, three ShoreGear T1 voice switches, three ShoreGear 120/24 voice switches, and one ShoreTel 12 port Conference Bridge. For emergencies, the firm has built-in redundancy and power supplies, some analog modems in computers and at fax machines, and "old fashioned" analog phones for analog switches.

No more costly adds, moves or changes

With the old system, it could take 30 minutes to make an add, move or change—not including the 48–96 hours to coordinate a scheduled appointment with the old telecommunications support team. In addition to time, the hard cost billed to the firm for every add, move or change ranged from \$50–\$100, and anytime the firm added equipment, approximately \$25 per month would be added to the lease. "With VoIP, we can make the changes in anywhere from two to five minutes, depending on how far we have to walk to the new location," said Griggs with a smile.

No more costly minutes

Keller Rohrback spends approximately 30,000 minutes a month on the telephone with both incoming and outgoing calls. With the old system, they were charged on a per minute basis. With the new system, they purchase a flat rate "bucket" of minutes, and to date, they have not gone over their monthly minute allotment. For comparison, the bucket of minutes costs one-fifth of what the monthly minute charge used to be.

Customer service improvements

One person handles all incoming calls at the front desk, and at times this was challenging. With the new system, call handling and customer service to firm clients has definitely improved at the front desk, because the new system is a lot less cumbersome than the legacy system and the front desk staff can route calls much faster. "The ShoreTel system is much easier to use, much more intuitive. A new person can quickly step in and handle calls in an emergency situation," said Griggs, referring to her own hands-on experience. On the first day after coming back from a four-month long maternity leave, the front desk had an emergency and Griggs had to step in and manage the calls coming to the front desk. "I was on the front line, but because the system was so intuitive, I was able to quickly and easily navigate it without any re-training."

Productivity improvements

Employees also really like the caller ID function, so they can see who's calling in and decide to answer the phone right then, or choose to send the caller to voicemail—which is a very tangible productivity improvement because it saves employees time and improves work efficiency by minimizing interruptions and distractions. "Employees love being able to identify who is calling and utilizing the 'send to voicemail' button as needed," said Griggs.

By partnering with All Phase, the IT team has not only cut costs, but can now focus on adding value to the business. Simply, the ShoreTel VoIP system allows the firm to spend more time doing what they do best—client service.

"All Phase made implementing the switch to VoIP smooth . . ."

Renée Griggs

IT/Facilities Manager

The savings

When you compare the cost of the legacy system to the new ShoreTel VoIP system, Keller Rohrback is saving two-thirds of the previous cost—which translates yearly into \$84,000 in cash back to the bottom line.

The goals

- Save money
- Gain internal control over their telecommunications system
- Simplify and speed up the process of adds, moves and changes
- Add conferencing
- Unified communications
- Integrate with Outlook®
- Improve frontline customer service
- Improve backend customer service to internal business partners/clients
- Update product design to match the image of the firm

So far, the IT team estimates they've achieved 90–95% of their goals and they plan to hit their remaining goals by the end of 2007. After the launch, a few goals were postponed including the launch of some advanced features like unified messaging, automatic call dialing, call history and call handling. They were delayed to give the IT team time to build a complete understanding of those products so they can effectively support their internal business partners when it does launch.

Contact All Phase to learn more about VoIP for your company, 206-363-3100.

www.allphasecom.com