LAIKA

OVERVIEW

LAIKA is an animation company specializing in feature films, commercials, branded entertainment, broadcast series, interactive content, broadcast graphics and short films. Travis Knight serves as President and CEO of the company, which is owned by Nike co-founder and Chairman Philip H. Knight. LAIKA is located in Portland, Oregon. The company has a 30-year animation history presenting the artistry of award-winning filmmakers, designers and animators. In addition to numerous international honors, LAIKA has won two Academy Awards, 11 Emmy Awards, 11 Clio Awards, three London International Advertising and Design Awards, five Mobius Advertising Awards and two Cannes Lion International Advertising Festival awards. LAIKA's entertainment division produces animated feature films. LAIKA/house produces animated commercials, branded content, interactive media and short films for companies around the globe.

Asterisk provides adaptable and customizable platform for animation company

CHALLENGE & SOLUTION

With a growing business, LAIKA recognized the need for an adaptable and customizable communications platform. After opening a remote office, LAIKA's IT staff quickly recognized the limits of their existing traditional phone system. Mahlon Smith, LAIKA's Manager of Information Systems, needed a platform for connecting the two offices, as well as the potential to easily expand further. LAIKA needed to serve a rapidly changing user base based on production schedules. The ability to deploy phones and related communications services were crucial to the day-to-day functions of the company.

In addition, the creative minds of LAIKA's staff would not settle for a traditional PBX. The ideas of custom integration, intuitive applications and scalability were at the forefront of the requirement list. Mahlon and the LAIKA team selected Asterisk along with Digium hardware to propel their communications platform into the future.

IMPLEMENTATION

LAIKA's Information Systems team, led by Mahlon, capitalized on Asterisk's broad feature set and foundation for custom integration and customization.

Managing hundreds of constantly changing users can be a difficult task, even for modern PBX and Unified Communications systems. To solve this problem, LAIKA smartly integrated Asterisk with their existing

OpenLDAP user management system. Now, as new users are provisioned with IT credentials, phone extensions, voicemail, and other custom attributes are generated automatically as well. LAIKA instantly recognized the potential of this type of integration. "We have phone preference toggles as LDAP attributes, for things like 'I don't want to participate in the site-wide Polycom intercom' or 'I want voicemail delivered to my email,'" states Smith.

The innovation and imagination did not cease at user automation, however. LAIKA used Asterisk's flexibility to develop ground-breaking applications to make the end-user experience even richer. Through a Firefox plugin, LAIKA was able to provide "click-to-call" functionality to enrich its employees' web experience. "You can just click, and your phone auto- dials," explains Smith. "It's an amazing productivity booster and a great show-off feature to users that might not understand the immediate benefit of VOIP integration."

LAIKA connects to the public telephone network through a digital PRI interface. Needing an ultra-reliable connection to the telephone network, LAIKA exclusively uses Digium hardware.

RESULTS

LAIKA's unique implementation of Asterisk demonstrates the pure flexibility and potential for integration. In a highly-creative environment of directors, producers, animators, and other artistic staff, a traditional platform would be unacceptable. Now, with Asterisk, endless possibilities are evident. From time-saving automatic provisioning of users and phones, to productivity-enhancing applications, LAIKA relies on Asterisk's stability, scalability, and innovation for all of its communications needs.

Digium's vision is a world based upon open communications.

Our mission is to transform the way businesses acquire and operate their communications systems through the application of open source software.

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Digium Headquarters
445 Jan Davis Drive NW
Huntsville, AL 35806 - USA
Phone: +1 256-428-6000
Fax: +1 256-864-0464
www.digium.com