THE SYMBIAN FOUNDATION

CASE STUDY   **ASTERISK**

OVERVIEW

The Symbian Foundation is an independent, non-profit organization whose mission is to enable an open ecosystem that collaborates to create the most complete and richest user experiences for mobile devices. With offices in California, London, Tokyo, Helsinki, and China, it maintains the code for an open source software platform based on Symbian OS and software assets contributed by Nokia®, NTT DOCOMO®, and Sony Ericsson®.

When it came to implementing a communication system for its new London HQ, Symbian wanted to ensure the solution would encourage its own aim of promoting collaboration, contributions and active participation.

The Symbian Foundation estimates substantial savings using its Asterisk® PBX solution together with the Skype for Asterisk® software module

CHALLENGE

In an environment in which the preferred method of communicating is on mobiles, Skype and instant messaging tools, one consideration for Symbian was whether a PBX and telephone system was even necessary to the organization. "Skype is a tool widely used at Symbian — for some employees, it's their main form of communication" observes McDonald, Head of IT for The Symbian Foundation.

There was also another challenge of balance, as Ian explained. "As a non-profit development organization, Symbian needed a solution that would allow us flexible, easy and unrestricted collaboration, while ensuring we could control costs."

DECISION AND DESIGN

The reason Symbian decided to go with an Asterisk-based solution was not only one of cost-effectivity but because Asterisk could be customized to suit its own organization's way of working.
For Symbian, it also helped that Asterisk was an open source platform adhering to its own principles of open development.

Symbian then selected Foehn Ltd, Digium's Premier Solutions Partner in the UK to design the solution because of the company's ability to handle large-scale Asterisk deployments.

As Symbian relied heavily on Skype, Foehn designed a solution making use of the Skype for Asterisk module. This would allow Symbian to receive Skype calls into their PBX and handle them with Asterisk features such as call routing, conferencing, phone menus and voicemail.

SOLUTION

It took six weeks from design to deployment of Symbian's Unified Communications solution. Customer script was written into Asterisk and the Skype for Asterisk module, a Digium TE220 card and a server were used.

The end-result is that callers can contact Symbian employees via Skype, mobile phone, fixed line or Google® Talk. These lines of communication feed into the Asterisk PBX which then redirects it to the individual via their own preferred device. If they are not available, the voicemail is sent to their email account.

If the call comes to reception it can simply be transferred through a one click on an intuitive interface, letting Asterisk do the hard work of finding how the recipient would like to take to the call.

RESULTS

The Symbian Foundation estimates savings of approximately £10,000 per month using its Asterisk PBX solution together with the Skype for Asterisk software module.

"We can now be much more cost effective by using Skype. A Symbian employee based in Japan can call via Skype to speak to our legal counsel in London on her desk phone. It doesn't matter how long they are talking for—since the call is delivered over Skype, it's essentially free." said McDonald.

James Passingham, Technical Director at Foehn Ltd said: "Symbian now has a system that lets its employees communicate how they want, and for how long they want without the problem of escalating costs for the company. Foehn simply could not have designed such an effective system using any technology other than Asterisk."

PARTNER

Digium's Partner for this was Foehn Ltd. Founded in 2000, Foehn Ltd is a UK-based IT professional services company specializing IP technology.

Foehn's advocacy for Digium Asterisk is based on a philosophy of deploying only technologies with proven extensibility, agility and effectiveness for its clients. Successfully deploying large-scale Asterisk solutions, Foehn has integration references in call centers, financial services, higher education, online media and charity industry verticals across the UK. Foehn is a Digium Premier Solutions Partners and authorised reseller.

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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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