

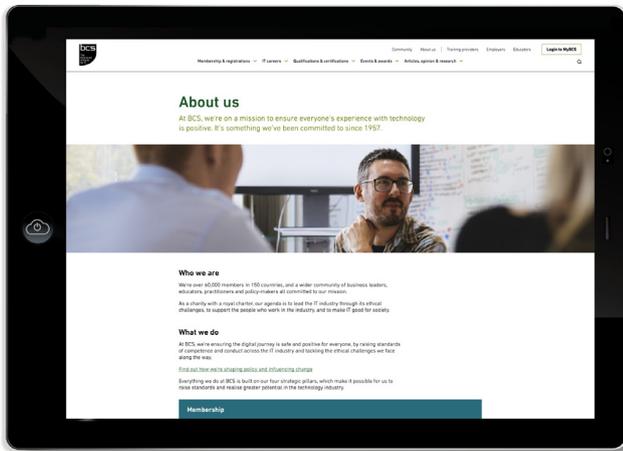
BCS improves telephony with Teams Voice from Claranet

BCS

BCS, The Chartered Institute for IT, is the UK's professional body for computing. Membership also now includes 60,000 people across 150 countries.

BCS provides training, qualifications, and accreditations for IT and computing professionals, as well as working with industry, education, and government to guide policies and raise the profile of the IT profession.

www.bcs.org



The challenge

As a membership organisation, a vital pillar of BCS is the contact centre that enables members to get in touch for support and guidance. BCS' existing telephony infrastructure was due for an upgrade. Despite a move to a VoIP solution a few years prior, they were seeking a better solution for hybrid working.

Simon McCarthy, Technology Solutions Analyst at BCS, explains:

"Users were reporting issues such as not being able to hear each other, and this didn't improve when we had to go remote during the pandemic. The system required people to log into a VPN, then type in three lines of server addresses to log in. That resulted in an increase of support tickets, stacking the workload on the IT support team."

During the pandemic, BCS moved offices and the team resolved to use this as an opportunity to update their infrastructure and telephony.



The solution

From the outset, BCS were keen to build a solution based on Microsoft Teams: "BCS' strategy is to move as much of the telephony infrastructure as possible to the cloud in order to properly facilitate hybrid working. Teams had great uptake with our staff, and of course it fits with that objective."

BCS looked at a range of options, including working directly with Microsoft. However, Claranet's Hosted Voice was also on their radar - and upon speaking to the technology provider they discovered Teams Voice.

"Claranet were so open and direct when I dealt with them, and Teams Voice was the type of product we were looking for," comments Simon.

Teams Voice embeds Claranet’s Hosted Voice platform, built in conjunction with BT Wholesale, into Microsoft Teams. It enables users to make and receive phone calls via Teams whether at the office, at home, or on the move, and means they can be reached anywhere through a single number.

Teams Voice is fully integrated with both the desktop and mobile Teams apps, and is easy for IT teams to configure themselves. Call flows and user features can be edited instantly, and Claranet’s specialists are always on hand for guidance with setting up and managing Teams Voice.

With the decision to adopt Teams Voice made, BCS’s IT team sat down with Claranet to scope the phone network and understand the possibilities. Claranet helped BCS to plan out every phone number in the organisation, and with that the roll-out began. Weekly calls with the Claranet team kept things on track, even when unexpected events cropped up.

“We had a bit of a heart-stopping moment when the contract with our previous provider started to get close to its end date,” Simon explains. “It meant we had to port all our numbers quicker than planned and Claranet were straight on it to help us achieve this. This is a great example of how dedicated the Claranet team is.”

Claranet set up some temporary phone numbers before BCS’ existing service ceased, which enabled their call centre to trial the use of the new system ahead of time. This, coupled with the organisation’s familiarity with Teams, meant training users on the new system was simple. In fact, the support from Claranet meant that go-live was incredibly smooth as well.

“We had hardly any user issues on switch-on day, largely because the call centre had already been using the system for two weeks through the temporary numbers.”

The results

The switchover to Teams Voice has improved the reliability and quality of BCS’ telephony services. The IT team has had a much improved level of support tickets since Teams Voice went live - freeing them up to focus on other projects.

“The whole team has been getting great feedback and praise around Teams Voice,” says Simon, “which makes a positive difference to our working environment. We have Claranet to thank for that.”

Callers into BCS have also commented on the improved service of the new phone system after the switchover. BCS worked with Claranet to improve both the auto-attendant and tweaked various factors like comfort messages, with the result that caller tolerance has more than doubled.

“One simple thing we did was letting callers know their position in the queue, rather than telling them how long they had to wait. And we can continue to make tweaks to improve things thanks to Teams Voice.”

Because Teams Voice is cloud-based, BCS are confident that the telephony will remain ahead of the curve in the future. As new features become available, BCS will benefit from them with no need for additional hardware or excessive reconfiguring. And now that Claranet has proven itself on this project, BCS look forward to working with Claranet in the future.

“Their combination of competence, openness, and commitment to our business make them an ideal partner for BCS.”

Feedback from the frontline

“A much more slick system and very easy to use.”

“A seamless transition. Now I’m not missing calls when I’m at home.”

“A brilliantly run and managed project. Importantly, a fantastic go-live with no business disruption. Awesome job team!”

“We have been getting fantastic praise around Teams Voice. It has made a real improvement to our performance and working environment.”

Simon McCarthy
Technology Solutions Analyst at **BCS**

For more information about Claranet’s services, and the benefits these deliver, go to: www.claranet.co.uk



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