

aha Hotels & Lodges South Africa



Customer

- aha Hotels & Lodges, 3 locations South Africa

Industry

- Hospitality

Challenges

- Limited features Reservations call centre
- Different voice & data centres at each location required more management
- No national Low cost routing

Solution

- UNIVERGE® 3C communication server hosted by Gijima
- Business ConneCT Call centre, integrated with NetHelpDesk CRM
- MA4000 Expense Management

Results

- 100% flexible OPEX costs month-to-month
- Centralized hosted voice platform, lowering SIP trunk costs and management resources for aha's 3 main locations
- Increased customer and guest services through integrated BCT/NHD call centre and the visualization of performance
- Reduced costs and increased efficiency by the use of 3C conferencing between branches.

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“Implementing the hosted 3C solution across our different regions and branches has brought us a cost effective centralized solution which is much more easy to manage. At the same time the addition of the integrated reservations call centre and the 3C conferencing facilities have improved our staff’s efficiency and increased our guest services levels.”

Mr. Thesen Pillay, Group IT Manager, aha Hotels & Lodges, South Africa

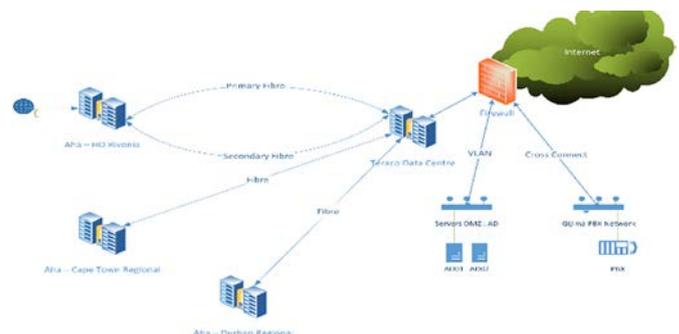
Challenges

aha’s regional centres and branches all made use of separate voice and data platforms with local SIP trunks contracts and no interconnects between sites. This impacted both costs and resources required to maintain the separated infrastructures.

The reservations call centre did not have any call or e-mail tracking and was not interfaced to any CRM data, thus limiting the reporting functionality and performance rates.

Solution

NEC business partner in Southern Africa, Gijima, was invited to advise to aha group. Together with aha’s IT management they devised a new hosted design for aha’s 3 main sites: their headoffices in Rivonia and their 2 regional offices in Durban and Cape Town.



The solution depicted in above diagram was based on NEC’s UNIVERGE 3C solution, hosted by Gijima centrally in their data centre at Teraco Johannesburg.

The solution includes both IP phones and Softphones (SMP or Soft Media Phones), the latter to be used either on pc's or on mobile devices such as smart phones or tablets.

The hosted Business ConneCT suite consisted of operators, advanced agents and supervisors and integrated to NetHelpDesk CRM system. On top of that aha makes use of NEC's Expense Management system MA4000 – also provided hosted from the central data centre.

Results

The hosted solution provided by Gijima is based on a 100% flexible OPEX rate, which means it can scale up and down each month unlimited. This provides aha Hotels & Lodges with an unimaginable flexibility.

On top of that IT management has been centralized for all services and SIP trunks reduced. Besides that, it also gave the staff access to an advanced web conferencing solution which decreased previously required travel cost and increased efficiency of staff.

Last but not least the new hosted Business ConneCT call centre which was integrated with NetHelpDesk CRM system provided many advantages such as call and e-mail tracking of the reservation tickets and detailed reports on agent statistics.

Future

Looking into short and medium term future, some of the aspects on aha's wish-list are:

- Expanding the solution to multiple African regions, the reservations centre to include most hotels and lodges.
- Biometrics used for example to whitelist aha's VIPs or for security/access control, even check-in/check-out
- Enhanced development of CRM applications for Hospitality
- Wireless handsets in the bedrooms
- Asset tracking
- Wifi VIP management
- Game tracking integrated into current hotel systems

aha is currently investigating these solutions and other innovations.

About

aha Hotels & Lodges: Delightful experiences

The combined experience and expertise of over 250 years has positioned aha Hotels & Lodges suitably to offer distinct management and marketing support to hotel owners resulting in expansion of revenue. aha Hotels & Lodges represents and operates a property portfolio of over 40 hotels & lodges with 2,500 rooms in 8 African countries: South Africa, Botswana, Ethiopia, Kenya, Namibia, Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia, Zimbabwe



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