SkySwitch Customer Success Story:
Telepath Communications

Problem

A telecommunications company for small-to-midsize businesses that prides itself on reliability and responsiveness was "stuck in a bad relationship" with a supplier providing archaic architecture, low reliability and, worse, poor customer service.

Solution

In 2017 Telepath Communications replaced its sub-par supplier with SkySwitch and migrated customers to the new platform.

Benefits

Customer migration was so easy that many customers only perceived that they received an upgrade, and customers have seen virtually no downtime thanks to SkySwitch's server colocation and cloud-native architecture. Profit is higher without raising prices. SkySwitch's flexible API makes it simple to tailor the system to customer needs and enabled Telepath to develop a new business, the Glance platform for SkySwitch system management and monitoring.

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Promises Made, Promises Kept With SkySwitch

We asked SkySwitch reseller Guy Fawkes, Telepath Communications President and Founder, how telephones should work and his answer is simple: "A good working phone is invisible."

That's what he wants to do for his VoIP clients: make their phones so reliable and simple to use, they never have to think about them. "That's what I get with SkySwitch," Fawkes says.

Telepath began as an IT services company focused on small-to-midsize businesses. About five years ago, Fawkes realized that unified communications was a logical way to grow his business with the residual income that ongoing services deliver.

But after signing with another VoIP provider, Fawkes found himself stuck in a bad relationship with a supplier whose reliability was low, whose service was poor and whose architecture was archaic.

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Fawkes says, "It's the worst feeling in the world to be in the middle between your supplier and your customer. I realized that if I were to be very successful in selling this system, it would be a service nightmare."

Choosing Rock Solid Reliability

Deciding it was time for a change, Fawkes and several of his reseller colleagues put together a group bid and started looking for a new VoIP provider. "We met with SkySwitch," he says, "and within two weeks we all signed."

"We evaluated several wholesale VoIP providers from around the country, and easily settled on SkySwitch. Within two weeks we were all signed up."

"In picking a new vendor," he explains, "we looked at how that company solves problems. We wanted a supplier that made reliability a top priority, so we were shopping on geo-redundancy."

Redundancy is only half of the reliability equation. The other half is a resilient architecture. "SkySwitch's underlying architecture is cloud-native," Fawkes explains, "not a premise-based architecture that's been 'cloudified'."

Telepath got on board with SkySwitch in 2016 and hasn't looked back since. In the last year alone the company has added more than 900 seats. Fawkes also reports that his margins are better with SkySwitch. Moving customers was so easy with SkySwitch that Fawkes was able to maintain regular business and switch customers over after hours.

"If they noticed that something changed, we just said we upgraded their system," says Fawkes. "I was able to log in, reset the phone and verify changes. Everything just worked."

Service problems are also a thing of the past for Telepath.

"When you call SkySwitch, they treat your problem as their problem and always follow up," Fawkes says. "They're always open and transparent about network problems. Working with SkySwitch is a genuine relationship."

Win-Win All-Around

Customers appreciate the reliability and flexibility that Telepath delivers.

"People buy on sizzle — features — but what gets them through the day is the steak," says Fawkes. "The phone is a utility. It has to work reliably. If that's not working, nothing else matters."

And, he adds, the Reach UC mobile app takes that "meat and potatoes" to the mobile phone — something that has been very important to Telepath's clients since the outbreak of Covid-19.

SkySwitch's API has also been valuable for expanding Telepath's business opportunities. "The API is one of the most important features for me," says Fawkes. "It allowed me to keep a promise to a customer and add features that customers need."

For example, a prospect needed the ability to change outbound caller IDs at will. "Then I found out that feature didn't exist in the way I sold it," explains Fawkes. "But I had made a promise to the customer. SkySwitch showed me how to use the API to add the feature, and within a few hours a software engineer had a proof of concept working."

Seeing the need for other functionality opened the opportunity for a new business — the Glance app, a system monitoring toolkit for other VoIP resellers.

"A customer called me saying that one of their phones wasn't ringing," Fawkes recalls. "It turned out that the phone was on Do Not Disturb, but the client didn't realize it. I needed a place where I could see things like this 'at a glance.'"

That was the genesis of Glance, and it goes beyond simply reporting the status of phones. It also monitors phone location using IP addresses. "It tells us that the phone isn't where it should be and then we can check on it. With Glance, we can email clients lists of phones and locations for them to verify. Knowing where a telephone is located is critical in providing emergency services in the event of someone dialing 911.

"We're always looking at features that would help us resolve problems quickly," he continues, "and we do our best to add them in."

The latest version of Glance even has a user interface for customers. "Giving customers this tool makes them more self-reliant and also makes our system stickier," Fawkes says.

Telepath is looking at new opportunities for using the SkySwitch API and adding new features to Glance. But no matter how much Telepath's customer base grows, Fawkes has no doubt that that success will come without headaches