

Toshiba VoIP Delivers a Wave of Communications Success for Manhattan Beachwear



L-R: Rick D'Amato of Manhattan Beachwear with Joel Nelson and John Berg of Transcom implemented a Toshiba solution that saves thousands of dollars.



Joel Nelson, at right, explains the Toshiba Strata CIX to Rick D'Amato and Carrie Seifert of Manhattan Beachwear.



Manhattan Beachwear receptionist Lorena Ortega uses her Toshiba telephone with Rick D'Amato close at hand.

Photo Credit: Nick Koon Photography

When he's not "hanging ten" or soaring 30,000 feet above the earth, Manhattan Beachwear CEO Scott Soura can be found roaming the globe visiting his offices, showrooms and manufacturing plants in Indonesia, Vietnam, Mexico, New York and the company's Cypress, Calif. headquarters. A leading manufacturer of women's swimwear, including name brands Kenneth Cole, Hobie and Hot Kiss, Manhattan Beachwear also makes millions of private label swimsuits for top department and discount stores.

In the world of swimsuit fashion, staying current is the key to success, and that's the case with business communications as well. So when it was time to move their California headquarters to a new building, company executives decided to buy a new business communications solution and turned to Authorized Toshiba Dealer Transcom Telecommunications Inc. of Paramount, Calif.

Mission: Use VoIP to Connect Offices Around the World

After more than 12 years with their dependable but outdated Toshiba DK96 business telephone system, Manhattan Beachwear VP of Finance Rick D'Amato decided, "it was time to dive into the 21st century and go VoIP." His goal was to streamline the communications between their various locations worldwide and the company's California headquarters.

Solution: Toshiba Delivers IP Connectivity Around the World

Authorized Toshiba Dealer Transcom, Manhattan Beachwear's Authorized Toshiba Dealer for more than a dozen years, had the perfect solution — Toshiba's Strata CIX IP business communication system. Joel Nelson of Transcom recommended Strata CIX because it delivers a converged platform allowing both IP and digital telephones to be on the same system, whether they are on the network, remote or mobile, even in another country.

Because the company has so many remote locations, including home and mobile users, the Toshiba VoIP solutions allowed all these locations to be connected to the new Strata CIX at the California headquarters and to each other. In fact, using Toshiba IP desk telephones and SoftIPT softphones, which work on laptops or PDAs, Manhattan Beachwear could set up all remote office locations as they wanted and have them all connected over IP to the main system in California.

D'Amato said, "With communications a critical part of our business, it is important for us to be able to be on the same system with shared voice mail, direct exchange dialing and more. Using Toshiba's Strata CIX with VoIP made this a smart and affordable choice for us."

Result #1

Result #1: Connecting the Road Warrior CEO

Keeping women in bikinis has CEO Soura on the road nine months out of every year. He uses Toshiba's SoftIPT VoIP softphone on his laptop to keep him connected from all his locations, from hotel rooms, remote offices, airports, and virtually anywhere there's a broadband Internet connection — including WiFi.

D'Amato said, "Being able to communicate with our CEO via voice mail, conference calls, transfers, etc., is absolutely invaluable to us. It literally is just as if he is sitting in his office."

Result #2

Result #2: Connected Offices, Showrooms and Plants Around the World

With a showroom in New York City and manufacturing plants in Indonesia, Vietnam and Mexico, the long distance bills were racking up fast. Plus not being on the same system made it impossible to have centralized communications.

After placing Toshiba IP telephones in its remote offices, Manhattan Beachwear has everyone on the same business communications system with all the calling features as if they were in the same office. They now can do direct extension calling, transfer calls, forward voice messages, forward calls to other numbers such as cell phones or home phones, direct faxing, or conference calls on the fly. They virtually eliminated using conferencing services, another cost savings.

D'Amato said they were so pleased with the functionality that they also installed IP phones in the offices of key external manufacturing vendors. He said, "By connecting our partners into our system, we're heroes with them because they are better connected, and it also saves them thousands in long distance charges."

Result #3

Result #3: Thousands Saved in Long Distance Costs

Manhattan Beachwear is saving thousands of dollars in long distance charges. In fact, D'Amato says they are saving about \$1,000 per month on international calls at the California headquarters alone. He expects to save at least that much from calls originating from the Asian locations as calls from Indonesia and Vietnam are still very expensive, up to \$3.00 per minute, and they frequently have hour-long conference calls. For the Mexico locations, he says cost savings are about \$400 per month, plus another \$300-400 per month in calls from the New York City showroom.

Altogether, Manhattan Beachwear saves nearly \$3,000 per month in long distance costs. He said, "IP is a great solution for eliminating long distance costs; it truly pays for itself in less than a month."

Result #4

Result #4: The Flexibility of VoIP Plus the Reliability of Digital

Manhattan Beachwear has a converged system that includes both digital and IP telephones. D'Amato said, "Having both digital and IP telephones gives us the best of both worlds: the reliability of digital and the flexibility and cost-effectiveness of VoIP. Having both digital and IP ensures that our telephones are always operational."

Using digital where they did not need IP telephones also helped them manage the traffic on their network. "We are using IP where it makes sense, but for employees who don't need it, they use digital telephones. Being able to add VoIP endpoints as we need them — be it telephones or softphones — allows us to roll out VoIP gradually and adapt our network as appropriate, without any downtime," he explained.

Bottom Line: Toshiba Strata CIX Delivers a Centralized System While Saving Thousands of Dollars

Toshiba's Strata CIX with IP telephony gives Manhattan Beachwear a centralized business communications solution that connects its locations throughout the world, including Asia, Mexico and the United States. VoIP has delivered a new level of efficiency to the company's worldwide communications and helped keep their road warrior CEO in closer contact with all the locations. In moving to VoIP, Manhattan Beachwear saves nearly \$3,000 per month in long distance costs. They also are heroes to valued partners by installing IP telephones as "hot lines" and also saving them thousands in long distance costs.

D'Amato said, "Toshiba and Trancom deliver a superior product at a competitive price with great service and creative solutions. In the Olympics of swimwear manufacturing, they win the gold!"