

Strata CIX VoIP Business Communication System

Toshiba Transports San Diego Metro Transit System to a New Level of Communications and Mobility



The San Diego Metro Transit System Team (from left to right, Marcos Carvajal, Victor Ortiz, Christie Kiley, Monty Wake, and Dan Bossert) is pleased with the Toshiba VoIP Systems ROI, which will ultimately save them \$75,000 annually.

The San Diego Metropolitan Transit System (MTS) operates the bus and trolley system for most of San Diego County. Covering more than 100 bus routes and 53 miles of rail, the 120-year-old transit district generates more than 80 million passengers per year.

With more than 400 employees in seven locations throughout San Diego, voice communications is an important part of the transit system's business plan. When it needed to expand its communications capabilities, San Diego MTS turned to Santee, Calif.-based West Coast Cabling Inc., MTS's Authorized Toshiba Dealer for more than 15 years.

Mission: Update and Mobilize MTS's Voice Communications

Roger Ramsey, vice president of West Coast Cabling Inc., recommended a Toshiba Strata CIX IP business communication system to meet the transit system's goals of standardizing on a single platform; improving internal and external communications; reducing phone bills; and expanding call center functionality. The Toshiba system also met the objectives of being able to grow, allowing the addition of more locations, lines and VoIP devices as needed. It also met the goal of being able to migrate from existing Toshiba systems at several of the locations and re-use some of the existing equipment in the new system.

Dan Bossert, IT manager for San Diego MTS, said, "Working closely with West Coast Cabling, we designed a system that not only meets our goals, it exceeds them. Together, we designed a single platform system that covers our nine buildings, providing voice solutions to all 400 employees."

Solution: Toshiba Strata CIX Unites MTS on a Single Platform

Installed by West Coast Cabling Inc., San Diego MTS's new Toshiba system includes three Strata CIX IP business communication systems: two Strata CIX670 systems and one Strata CIX100 system. The three systems are connected with Strata Net networking to work together as one, plus there are other remote sites connected to the system over VoIP. The system includes Toshiba's Strategy ES48 Voice Processing, which provides centralized voice mail for all locations, and it also has Unified Messaging so users can receive voice messages as .wav files via email as well as faxes directly to their desktop.

All together, the system has more than 800 ports in seven locations with 300 DID numbers, which enable direct extension dialing for all the employees regardless of their location. As well, because the system is on a single platform, anyone from any location can page any other facility, yard or building. Employees are using a mix of digital telephones, IP desk telephones, and SoftIPT softphones, and the call center uses Net Phone with Toshiba's ACD call center application.



Roger Ramsey of West Coast Cabling and Dan Bossert of San Diego Metro Transit System designed a Toshiba VoIP system that united the entire organization on a single voice platform.



With Roger Ramsey of West Coast Cabling at his left, Dan Bossert of San Diego Metro Transit System uses his Toshiba SoftIPT softphone to make and receive calls or check voice mail wherever he has Internet access.

Photo Credit: Fred Greaves Photography



Result #1: New Call Center Helps Improve Customer Service

Answering over 3,000 customer service calls and reporting on those calls can be very a big task, but with the use of the Toshiba ACD call center application with TASKE tracking capabilities, San Diego MTS now has extensive call reporting capabilities. The call reports enable managers to better predict and staff the call center to maximize customer service. As well, real-time monitoring allows managers to know exactly how many calls are coming in, how quickly they are being answered and by whom, how many are on hold and for how long. The system accommodates a 20-agent call center with three supervisors in addition to a five-person call center functioning as an IT Help Desk Application. With the ACD advanced system, agents can log into specific call center groups to assist with Spanish speaking customers for better service and support. Using Net Phone and a desktop application, agents can easily handle calls with the simple click of a mouse.

Using TRACER recording capabilities, all calls are now recorded, making it easy to listen to a recording to see how calls were handled. This capability has helped increase the quality of training as well as improve customer service. It has also helped eliminate situations where customers were inappropriately complaining.



Result #2: Speeds up Internal and External Communication

Because the entire system is on a single platform, there is direct extension dialing and paging for all employees. As well, the centralized voice mail allows users to forward voice messages to anyone in the company, and retrieval of messages is easy both on-site and off. Bossert said, "Like most companies, voice mail is an essential part of our customer service, so having the ability to easily access, forward and reply to voice mails has helped us improve communications both internally and externally."

West Coast Cabling Inc. also made some special accommodations to help make the system compatible with San Diego MTS's unique working environment. Ramsey explained, "With a little extra engineering, we were able to create a trigger for telephone calls to feed the signal of the telephone headset into employees' Motorola Radio Console headset. This enables the user to use the same headset for both the radio and the telephone and allows them to answer calls without lifting the receiver."



Result #3: Re-use Existing Equipment, Plan for Future Upgrades

Taking advantage of Toshiba's legendary migration path, San Diego MTS was able to migrate from its older Toshiba Strata DK280 system and re-use some of the existing equipment. "Even more important than re-using equipment is Toshiba's promise to never leave a customer behind, so as we add new locations and people, we can count on Toshiba to help us migrate to new technologies and platforms without having to replace the entire system," Bossert said.

By migrating, San Diego MTS saved more than \$3,000 by re-using existing equipment in the new system.



Result #4: System Pays for Itself by Eliminating Costly Lines

With its savings through eliminating costly telephone lines and equipment, MTS was able to obtain the new Toshiba system with no additional costs. In fact, the new Toshiba system is paying for itself with a return on investment in just five years. After that, MTS will be saving \$75,000 annually.

Bottom Line: ROI in Five Years, Then \$75,000 Annual Savings

With the new Toshiba system, San Diego MTS will see a return on their investment in just five years, after which the system will save them \$75,000 a year over the older system. In addition, Bossert estimates a 30 percent increase in employee productivity and interagency communications.

"Together, Toshiba and West Coast Cabling are helping us realize our goal of having a single platform for all our facilities by networking them together to take advantage of greater cost efficiencies," Bossert said. "This has helped improve communication both internally and externally, and most importantly, we have been able to increase customer service for the thousands of people who call about our San Diego transportation solutions."