



YO! Sushi is one of the world's fastest growing restaurant chains. Established 10 years ago by entrepreneur Simon Woodroffe, YO! Sushi specialise in delivering high quality, Japanese style 'Sushi' food to its customers via its now famous conveyor belt system. In the UK, the company has around 35 restaurants and has aggressive plans to roll-out a further 15 outlets within the next 12 months. In addition to its 'eat-in' business the company also offers a home delivery service to diners who live within a specific range of their restaurants.

The business Challenge – Doubling the size of its business, reducing the overheads, and overcoming the limitations of an unmanageable ageing telephony system.

All of the UK based restaurants, with the exception of Gatwick Airport, are owned and operated by YO! Sushi from its headquarters in London. The manager of each establishment has responsibility for sourcing fresh ingredients locally, but all other functions such as administration, payroll and pricing are conducted centrally. As the number of restaurants increased it became apparent that the company needed to implement a technology solution that could embrace all their operational activities, such as credit card processing, Electronic Point of Sale (EPOS), telephony and data into a single IP based network.

This would provide a number of benefits, including the ability to manage the whole of the IT network as a single entity, a massive reduction in BT line costs, the ability to converge

their entire workforce onto a single telephony network, and reduce the mobile phone costs of regional managers and other employees who needed to travel between outlets. The key technical challenge however was their incumbent traditional circuit-switched telephony system which was designed to work autonomously and therefore could not be integrated into a single managed solution.

IT Manager at YO! Sushi, Billy Waters explains the problem, "At the time we had 20 outlets, located mostly around the London area and each one had a key system installed which was linked back to our head office via BT exchange lines.



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For example a typical restaurant would have two lines for the telephony, one for the fax, 2 for the credit card processing plus an ADSL line. Furthermore, as the key systems became older they became more and more support-intensive, every time there was a problem or we needed to reconfigure an extension it required a site visit from a third-party maintainer. The on-going costs of the line rental and telephony maintenance was becoming a significant overhead to the business and as we had plans to double the number of outlets within two years this was an appropriate time to review our overall telecommunications strategy."



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He continues, "We had successfully rolled out an IP network to all our restaurants to encompass our EPoS and credit card services and we wanted to leverage this investment to accommodate our telephony traffic as well. Our telecommunications partner GP Network Solutions Ltd understood exactly what we were trying to achieve and introduced us to Swyx, a unified communications solution that was based purely on IP and could be integrated directly into our servers located at head office."

The Solution- A software based unified telephony solution

Although impressed with the Swyx solution, YO! Sushi decided to also review other IP telephony offerings on the market, including Avaya's IP office. Waters explains the selection decision, "There are a number of excellent IP based products on the market, however what we liked about the Swyx solution was that it is based on software licenses rather than hardware, therefore in an expanding operation such as ours, rolling out new users would be very straight-

forward and could be handled centrally without third-party support. Furthermore, it was very easy to use, and other options such as teleconferencing, auto attendant, and its script editing features were included within the basic price making it not only a compelling technical proposition, but also very good value for money."

Another benefit of the Swyx solution provided was its ability to be configured as an inbound call centre to centrally handle all of YO! Sushi's telephone home delivery orders. Waters explains, "In the past customers who wanted to order meals for home delivery had to call their nearest restaurant, place an order and either collect or wait for their meal to be delivered. This worked well, however at busy times the restaurant staff would spend too much time on the phone servicing our off restaurant clients. To solve this we had originally used an outsourced call centre, but the costs of this operation were very high and we had to invest a lot of time ensuring that the third-party agents were fully up to speed on menu changes and as our food is unusual, they were able to describe to callers exactly what food they were ordering."

The company used the SwyxWare solution to bring this operation back in-house. The flexibility of the system allowed YO! Sushi to integrate their inbound calls with their customer database and maps package, routing the calls using a non-geographical number to their call centre based in London.

The Results – An easy to manage telephony infrastructure, that has reduced the operating costs, improved staff availability and provided a platform for future developments.

According to Waters the implementation of the Swyx solution has achieved all the criteria set out by the company and has potential to deliver further cost and operational benefits in the future. Waters comments on what the company has achieved so far, "The implementation of the Swyx solution has been a great success, we have dramatically reduced our telecommunications costs, improved our overall efficiency and we have had the added bonus of saving yet more money and protecting our brand values by bringing our call centre operation in-house."

Waters adds, "We have had a very busy year ahead and our plan to roll-out another 15 restaurants within the next 12 months is very aggressive, therefore our technology instal-

lations has to meet a tight schedule. Using a unified communications solution based on IT will simplify the process allowing us to plan each new site ahead of time, allocate numbers and provide communications on day one, without the need for third-party carrier intervention."

According to Waters these are the key benefits the new system has delivered:

- Significantly reduced the overall telecommunications costs as the company no longer need to pay for multiple line rental and all the calls between head office and the restaurants are now free.
- Improved the accessibility of staff as they have access to the corporate PBX system regardless of their location
- Negated the need to outsource its 'take-away' business by implemented its own call centre, thus saving money and improving its customers relations.
- Significantly reduced the monthly maintenance charges as all moves and changes can be carried out remotely from head office
- The conferencing facility has allowed regional managers to hold 'virtual meetings' with restaurant managers without the need to travel or subscribe to a third party service.
- During busy periods the voicemail facility has allowed restaurant managers to manage their calls and prioritise their workload
- Allowed the company to plan its roll-out of new restaurants ahead of time, allocating numbers and resources, without relying on third-party telecommunications carriers.

Billy Waters concludes, We expect the system to pay for itself within two years, furthermore we believe that we have only scratched the surface on what we think the telephony system can do for us in the future. For example, we are looking now at how we can implement the SwyxMobile which allows Swyx's softphone capability to reduce our mobile costs and improve the availability of our staff."

Partner - GP Network Solutions Ltd

