



## Switch Communications prepares Wesleyan Assurance for a secure future with a new integrated communications solution.

### Challenges

- Enable sales force to work effectively from home and remotely
- Reduced waiting times and improve customer service level
- Provide resilient network to protect business in the event of unforeseen circumstances

### Solution

- Switch Communications VPN to home workers with guaranteed data connectivity rate and QoS
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniTouch 150 seat IP Contact Centre with Interactive Voice Response IVR
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniPCX Enterprise Communication server with mirrored DR back-up server for resilience
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniSwitch 9800 / 9850 data infrastructure switches
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniVista 2500 Data Network Management application
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniVista 4760 Communications Performance Management application
- Alcatel-Lucent Unified Communications applications including email and voice mail integration, conferencing and collaboration tools
- Alcatel-Lucent Voice Mail and IP Touch Phone sets
- BT Wholesale partner for connection and billing management
- Professional consultancy, design, implementation, and integration services

### Results

- Increased productivity of sales force
- Improved customer service visibility, measurement and management
- Professional project management and on-line support
- Single vendor communications solution – single point of contact for support

Wesleyan Assurance Society is a mutual organisation, founded in 1841 with over 1000 staff including over 400 home workers. The company provides tailored financial advice and products to meet the needs of clients in the medical, dental, teaching and legal markets through its distribution channels Wesleyan Medical Sickness, Wesleyan for Teachers and Wesleyan for Lawyers.

Wesleyan is extremely pleased with its decision to select Switch Communications to design and implement a new unified voice and data communications solution including a 150 seat IP Contact Centre and to provide a unique VPN WAN to incorporate home and remote workers into the overall solution.

### The Challenges

Over the last few years the existing communications solution started to show signs of aging, making it increasingly difficult to support the growing number of remote and home working personnel that make up the majority of Wesleyan's direct sales force.

Andy Greenway, Network Team Leader, at Wesleyan explains, "We're committed to providing flexible home and remote working capabilities for our employees. Unlike many of our competitors, we rely on our own direct sales force, rather than brokers or third parties.

Our sales team spend large amounts of time on the road so it's more practical for them to work either side of their appointments from home rather than coming into the office. However, slow Internet connectivity, combined with an inability to connect remotely into our internal phone or IT network hampered their ability to work to their full potential.

Once the decision had been taken to source a new communications network, the company carried out an audit of its entire IT infrastructure. The results of this audit recommended an upgrade that would provide a framework to radically change telephony operations and improve disaster recovery capabilities.

Wesleyan's IT audit identified that the company's 150-seat call centre also needed upgrading. Andy Greenway notes the prime objective was to reduce queuing times and improve quality of service when customers were connected with an advisor. Our existing system was limited in the tools we could use to measure and manage their customers' experience.

### Consultative approach

Following a competitive tender process, Switch Communications were selected from a shortlist of three suppliers because, "The company proved beyond any doubt that it could act as a single point of contact for all communications system and IT updates," clarifies Andy Greenway.

Switch Communications proposal involved a radical redesign of Wesleyan's existing communications infrastructure providing a new data network, a new 150 seat IP Contact Centre and replacing the company's multiple ISDX-based telephony systems with a fully integrated IP telephony solution for over 1000 users. Switch Communications also proposed to extend the communications solution to over 400 Home Workers via Switch's VPN WAN meeting the challenge of incorporating Home Workers into the solution and giving them the communications facilities provided to office based users.

### New Data Network

The solution included the design and implementation of the entire LAN components over which the IP telephony solution was deployed including Alcatel-Lucent Core and Edge switches with PoE (Power for IP phones), dynamic VLAN and built-in IDS/IPS (intrusion detection/prevention) which provides a secure infrastructure to run all Wesleyan mission critical applications.

### New IP Communication Servers

The new IP telephony application resides on an Alcatel-Lucent Communication server that provides communications not only to the Wesleyan office based users but also all the remote home workers. Remote and office based workers have access to the same features and facilities and are integrated into a common dialling plan so for the first time, are included on the internal phone directory and can be reached directly by dialling 4 digit extension numbers. Calls can be taken, held and transferred regardless of location.



Using LDAP, Switch Communications have integrated the telephony application with the Corporate telephone directory enabling "dial by name" functionality – important productivity savings that can be enjoyed by all users including Wesleyan's 400 plus home workers.

### Extending the solution to Remote and Home Workers

As a prime requirement was to enable secure home and remote working, communications are extended over Switch Communications own broadband WAN service to each home worker. The WAN ensures Wesleyan's remote employees fast, reliable and secure access (via a managed firewall) to the company's business applications allowing them to open, modify and save documents from the company's central servers anywhere, anytime. Switch Communications also provide QoS on the WAN, and so remote workers are provided with Alcatel-Lucent IP phones allowing them to be incorporated in the converged network as though they were in the office.

Calls over the WAN are treated as extension to extension calls and of course attract no call charge.

Andy Greenway explains: "Switch Communications' ability to offer its own broadband-based WAN and status as a BT Wholesale partner provided a major advantage when tendering for our business. Other IT installers would have had to find a third party supplier to deliver the kind of connectivity and day-to-day phone line management we required, adding substantial costs and complexity to the project. By contrast, Switch Communications was able to offer a WAN with a guaranteed 99.9% data connectivity rate, and take on day-to-day management of our remote workers' landlines. Switch Communications could also negotiate discounted phone lines for our home workers, bill us

directly for BT services and deal with any potential service disruptions.”

### Unifying the work force

Switch Communications have delivered the Alcatel-Lucent Unified Communications suite of applications that as well as enabling Wesleyan’s to unify email and voice mail messaging, also provides other productivity savings. Users can now manage on what devices they take their calls, view the status of their colleagues before deciding who and how to call them. Users benefit from real-time, unified communications, a consistent user experience and complete control over their communications. They can tailor and manage calls, messages, directories, collaborative work tools and information from any location, using any device. In addition to helping users manage incoming and outgoing calls, the application provides a snapshot of all activity — call backs, new voice mail, missed calls, and faxes — in a single window. The result is simplified, integrated management of all communications, including voice and video calls, instant messages and multimedia collaboration applications.

### Improving customer experience

Switch Communications designed and implemented a new 150 seat Alcatel-Lucent IP Contact Centre complete with advanced call routing, performance measurement and agent management application. A new Interactive Voice Response system provides announcements and controls customer interaction, plasma wall boards provide excellent visual feedback and Switch have integrated the Alcatel-Lucent application with Wesleyan’s Openwave Workforce Management software.

Andy Greenway notes the prime objective was to reduce queuing times and improve quality of service when

customers were connected with an advisor. He explains: “New handsets were really only part of the story – the real benefit for us comes from the much more advanced call centre management software. It allows our managers to carry out regular in-depth analysis of all the important call centre metrics. Andy Greenway continues: “As a result, we have a clearer picture of how our customers use our centre. We can now plan for more efficient shift patterns and look at practical ways of reducing call waiting times.”

### Business Continuity

As a financial company, Wesleyan knows all about planning for a safe and secure future, no matter what might occur in the intervening period. Switch Communications’ broadband WAN provides a secure high-speed link to the company’s disaster recovery centre, enabling the continuous data back-up to a remote location.

A second IP Communications Server is deployed in the secure network, mirroring the data in the primary server and deploys automatically should the primary server be unavailable.

### Prepared for the future

**Andy Greenway concludes: “Switch Communications’ team were extremely flexible and couldn’t have done more to make the project a success, they really went that extra mile. We had a single point of contact for all our voice & data networking, remote working and call centre installations. Over the next couple of years we expect to expand our telephony applications. They’re our preferred supplier and consultants to take us forward with our future needs.”**

### About Switch Communications

Switch Communications are a specialist solutions provider of integrated communications solutions. The company provides consultancy, design, implementation, integration services and service support on a complete range of voice, data and VPN products and applications, using both fixed and mobile technologies. Through multi-media portals, integrated voice and data networking, and web-based applications and services, Switch deliver seamless, centrally managed projects tailored to the specific needs of businesses of all sizes in both the public and private sectors.

Switch Communications is one of the few accredited suppliers of voice, data and VPN products and services to the Public Sector through the government’s Buying Solutions Framework Contract.