

RetroSpecs Focuses on Global Marketplace with Cisco Unified Communications

Specialty eyewear firm relies on Cisco solution to deliver customer service inside the office or across continents.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
RETROSPECS AND COMPANY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Industry: Retail Location: Los Angeles, CA
CHALLENGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enable dependable global communications for small, specialized retail business with limited IT staff
RESULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reliable voice over IP (VoIP) communications solution reduces monthly communications charges and improves customer service and responsiveness
SOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cisco Unified Communications 300 Series provides rich phone features and high-quality voice communications in single, all-in-one network device

Challenge

In today's increasingly global marketplace, even a small business can extend its reach to customers worldwide. Headquartered in West Hollywood, California, RetroSpecs and Company specializes in rare, collectible eyewear manufactured between 1880 and 1980. The company acquires and restores the frames, documents them, and sells them to specialty stores throughout the world.

RetroSpecs is a small business, with employees working at its restoration facilities, distribution facilities, and two retail stores. To keep the organization running smoothly, the company depends on its communications system to keep in touch with clients and business partners across continents and time zones.

"International communication is critical for our business," says Jay Owens, owner of RetroSpecs and Company. "We sell in almost

every major city in the world, and we want to communicate quickly and cost-effectively with our customers there. Making phone communication more affordable is a powerful motivator for us to utilize new technology."

When RetroSpecs began experiencing performance issues with its phone system, the company knew that poor communication could put its business at risk.

"It was very common to have our whole phone system crash two or three times a day," says Corissa Babbitt, customer service and office manager at RetroSpecs. "You don't know how many calls you are missing, or how many people are trying to reach you. Someone might be trying to leave a message, but they can't. It was extremely frustrating for us and our customers."

To deliver the responsive service that its customers and business partners expect, RetroSpecs needed a reliable communications system that would help callers quickly reach the department they wanted. The solution would have to be flexible and customizable to meet its specific business needs, yet simple to install and use.

Results

RetroSpecs replaced its previous phone system with a solution based on the Cisco® Small Business Unified Communications 300 Series (UC300), Model UC320W. Part of the Cisco Small Business product family, the UC300 delivers business-class voice communications and networking in a single all-in-one solution. Its built-in call-processing and automated attendant features enable RetroSpecs to deliver superior customer service by helping callers quickly reach the person they need.

“We were paying almost \$800 a month for our phone lines, equipment, voicemail, and international toll charges. We make a lot of international phone calls, and using the Internet for long distance calls lets us reduce our monthly charges to below \$200. In less than one year, the cost savings enabled us to pay for our new communications system, and the cost savings after that are just fantastic.”

– Jay Owens, Owner, RetroSpecs and Company

“The automated attendant feature has really saved us money and time,” says Owens. “It lets us route incoming calls to the right people automatically.”

Connecting callers to the most appropriate employee has been especially helpful for serving RetroSpecs’ global customer base.

“Now our customers worldwide can reach a person immediately” says Owens. “Callers from Europe or Asia have only a brief window of time each day to call us. Our Cisco solution helps them get their problem solved. Day in and day out, it’s critical to the success of our business.”

The Cisco solution also helps RetroSpecs reduce its communications expenses by using voice over IP (VoIP) technology to avoid long distance toll charges.

Working with service provider, Triad Telecom, RetroSpecs was able to take advantage of the cost savings and efficiencies of Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) trunks. SIP provides a new way of connecting to a service provider for incoming and outgoing calls; it is a connection over the Internet instead of a traditional telephone connection.

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For employees on the go, the Cisco solution offers built-in call forwarding that keeps them in touch with clients and partners even outside the office.

“I’m very rarely in my office sitting at my desk, but if a call comes in at the office, it can be routed directly to my cell phone,” says Owens. “The solution also lets us forward incoming voice messages to employees over email. I’m always on the move, and now I never miss a call or message. That’s powerful.”

Individual employees at RetroSpecs are also pleased with the quality and dependability of the Cisco solution, which helps them be more productive.

“Having a communications system that we can rely on in our office is absolutely huge,” says Babbitt. “Our previous phone system had enormous issues. When you’re talking to someone from another country, poor voice quality makes it much more difficult to communicate or take down an order correctly. In the past, we might spend a half an hour on what should have been a five-minute phone call.”

Solution

At the heart of the RetroSpecs solution is the Cisco Small Business Unified Communications 300 Series. Designed specifically for the needs of small businesses, the Cisco Unified Communications 300 Series brings together voice, data, and wireless communications, including call-handling and messaging features, in one complete solution.

“Cisco does everything, and it’s completely integrated technology, so we know that we’re not going to have dropped calls or problems associated with a piecemeal phone system,” says Owens.

“We wanted a system that would be easy for people with minimal technical knowledge to use,” says IT expert David Herpolsheimer. “Setting up the solution was easy. We just pointed our web browser to an address and followed the online setup instructions. Then we plugged in the new Cisco phones and office PCs. The whole process took just a few hours.”

Day-to-day operation of the solution is easy as well, because the Cisco Unified Communications 300 Series supports remote, browser-based management.

“I can access the system from my house; I don’t need to come in to the office,” says Herpolsheimer. “I can just log in, look at the status, and upload new software, make changes, or reset the system.”

PRODUCT LIST

- Cisco Small Business Unified Communications 300 Series
- Cisco SPA500 Series IP Phones
- Cisco ESW500 Series Switch

To provide high-quality voice communication, RetroSpecs installed a portfolio of various Cisco SPA500 Series IP Phones.

“Our customer service team uses the most advanced phones that provide the most call-handling and display features,” says Owens.

“We use simpler models in other departments that don’t require as many functions.”

The new phones have streamlined communications at RetroSpecs to help employees collaborate and work together more efficiently.

“The Cisco phones keep us connected in the office throughout the day,” says Owens. “We’re able to route calls very quickly to any other extension in the office. And they provide intercom features so people can communicate without having to get up and walk across the building.”

With its powerful, reliable Cisco communications solution, RetroSpecs can continue to offer its unique eyewear to new markets and new customers, whether they are next door or half a world away.

For More Information

To learn more about the Cisco solution, visit <http://www.cisco.com/go/uc300> or contact your authorized Cisco salesperson.



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