Grupo familia®

Customer: Grupo Familia
Website: www.grupofamilia.com.co
Location: Colombia
Industry: Manufacturing

Customer Profile:
Grupo Familia is a Colombian consumer goods company and pulp and paper manufacturer.

Challenges:
• Ensuring connectivity between Microsoft UC and existing communications platforms
• Reliable interconnectivity with local PSTN
• Survivability at remote branch offices

Solutions:
• **Mediant 1000 SBC/media gateway**
• **Mediant 1000 Survivable Branch Appliance**
• **MediaPack analog gateways**

Benefits:
• Field-proven, reliable platforms, fully certified by Microsoft
• Seamless connectivity thanks to extensive SIP and TDM interoperability
• Ability to integrate analog devices (e.g. fax) into UC environment
• Single hardware platform fulfils multiple roles
• Simplified ordering, training and management

Grupo Familia Case Study

Reliable voice connectivity for a multinational Microsoft Skype for Business deployment

Colombia-based Grupo Familia required a reliable and flexible solution to provide voice connectivity for its new Microsoft unified communications deployment. Using AudioCodes media gateways, it was able to deliver seamless voice internal and external calling with multiple levels of resiliency to help improve its employees' communications experience and increase productivity.

Background

Grupo Familia (www.grupofamilia.com.co) is a Colombian consumer goods company and pulp and paper manufacturer with headquarters in Medellín. With Swedish investment from Svenska Cellulosa Aktiebolaget, Grupo Familia is a leader in the design, innovation, production and distribution of personal care products. The company has seven manufacturing facilities in four countries, and its products are marketed in more than 20 nations around the globe.

Grupo Familia was assisted in this project by Intergrupo (www.intergrupo.com), one of Colombia's leading IT Consulting Service Providers. Intergrupo is an AudioCodes Gold Partner.

Challenges

With its business growing and presence expanding to different countries, Grupo Familia realized that its legacy communications platform was not sufficient for the needs of its employees. What was needed was a state-of-the-art unified communications (UC) platform that would ensure seamless communications between employees in all of its offices. Functionality such as online collaboration, presence monitoring and instant messaging were necessary to help the company boost its productivity and increase efficiency of its internal and external communications.

With the help of local system integrator Intergrupo, Grupo Familia decided to deploy Microsoft Skype for Business (formerly Lync) as its company-wide unified communications solution. Skype for Business/Lync ticked all the boxes as far as functionality and ease of use was concerned. It was very well received by employees in all the company's departments and its positive effects could be felt throughout the organization.

AudioCodes

Grupo Familia deployed Mediant 1000 devices at its head office in Colombia and at remote sites in Colombia and abroad. At all sites, E1 interfaces enabled direct connectivity with the local PSTN operators.

"AudioCodes' Mediant media gateways are fully certified by Microsoft, provide seamless interoperability with the PSTN and other voice systems and are simple to manage and maintain."

Juan Fernando Prado Garcia,
Director of UC Operations at Intergrupo

One area which required particular attention was connecting the new platform to existing communications systems and networks. Despite the move to Microsoft UC, Grupo Familia still needed to maintain in its network a number of legacy devices, such as analog phones, fax machines and a RightFax fax server platform. These all needed to be able to communicate seamlessly with the new platform. In addition, the company needed the UC solution to be able to deliver smooth interconnectivity with the local PSTN for inbound and outbound voice calls.

Another challenge that required a solution was ensuring branch survivability in cases where the connection with Grupo Familia's central servers was lost. Employees at Grupo Familia's remote offices needed to have voice calling available in such circumstances.

Solution

Grupo Familia tested a variety of vendors' solution for their voice connectivity needs. In conjunction with Intergrupo, the company selected AudioCodes as its vendor of choice since AudioCodes' solutions met all of the company's requirements.

"AudioCodes was an obvious choice of vendor for Grupo Familia's Microsoft UC environment," explained Juan Fernando Prado Garcia, Director of UC Operations at Intergrupo. "Its Mediant media gateways are fully certified by Microsoft, provide seamless interoperability with the PSTN and other voice systems and are simple to manage and maintain."

Grupo Familia deployed Mediant 1000 devices at its head office in Colombia and at remote sites in Colombia and abroad. At all sites, E1 interfaces enabled direct connectivity with the local PSTN operators. In addition, at the remote sites the Mediant 1000 was deployed as a Survivable Branch Appliance (SBA) to ensure internal and external communications could continue even if the connection to the central servers was lost. The Mediant 1000 supports dual power supplies which can be replaced in the field, thus adding another level of resiliency to the solution.

Grupo Familia also deployed AudioCodes MediaPack analog gateways where support for legacy analog phones and fax machines was required. Since all of AudioCodes' gateway platforms are based on the same underlying voice processing technology, full interoperability between all elements of the solution could be guaranteed.

Results

After a limited proof of concept met with resounding success, Grupo Familia began to roll out the new UC solution to its other offices in Colombia and abroad. The company now benefits from full unified communications, complete with comprehensive enterprise voice capabilities.

Commenting on the successful deployment of AudioCodes' solution in Grupo Familia's network, Juan Esteban Jaramillo Jiménez, IT Manager at Grupo Familia said, "A major advantage of deploying the AudioCodes Mediant 1000 was that we were able to standardize on a single platform that can be utilized in a variety of scenarios. Having one robust hardware platform that both provides seamless connectivity with the PSTN and can be deployed as an SBA simplifies network management and reduces our training and support requirements."

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