

## Brown Brothers

### Highlights

#### ■ Challenge

To implement a new Internet Protocol (IP) based telephone system to replace an aging PABX network which was not meeting their growing needs. At the same time, deploy a new Wide Area Network (WAN) to each of the company's four sales offices

#### ■ Solution

IBM replaced and installed core Cisco routing and switching equipment as well as implementing a Cisco IP Telephony solution; based on an IBM @server xSeries server, together with Unified Messaging Software by Performance Solutions Australia

#### ■ Why IBM?

The ability to supply a proven, cost-effective solution, which provided Brown Brothers with the increased functionality they required. Also, IBM's ability to minimise risk through strong project planning and methodology together with deployment expertise

#### ■ Key Business Results

- Ability to measure and monitor call centre activity
- Improved customer service via more effective call management and integration with existing applications
- Improved productivity as all employees are part of a unified system
- Cost savings as the Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) network is used for both internal communication between state offices as well as long distance calls to customers and suppliers
- Future cost savings from the reduced IT management of a single integrated network

#### ■ Business Partners

Cisco Systems and Performance Solutions Australia



Founded in 1889, and still a family business, Brown Brothers is Australia's largest producer of varietal wines. Based in King Valley, Victoria; Brown Brothers employs 250 people and exports throughout Australia, New Zealand, Japan and the UK.

Brown Brothers is continually striving for a faster response to new opportunities and changing customer demands. However, the organisations' existing technology was not meeting their growing business requirements. Their core/edge switches could not support the required QoS and their existing PABX was out dated for such a growing organisation. In addition, Telstra was not going to support the existing Brown Brothers Macrolink as of June 30, 2002; therefore Brown Brothers would have to either purchase a convertor or upgrade their existing PABX.

According to John Brown Chief Information Officer, "a few things came together at same time. The PABX was not compatible with Telstra's new communications standard, and was at the end of its service life. We had the need for additional telephone functionality at Milawa (head office). We also needed to roll out a wide area network (WAN) to each of our four sales offices. With these elements combined, the conclusion was, from a CapEX point of view, we selected a VoIP network to gain the required new functionality and flexibility."

#### The Business Challenge and why IBM?

John A Brown joined Brown Brothers in 1994. In 1997 he became CIO, and took the decision to invest in the organisations' IT infrastructure.

"Our first steps were to build a network and then work our way up from there. We were fortunate in that we were starting basically from a green fields site. It was important to have flexibility built into systems because five years ago, we didn't know what direction we were going to take. "At the same time we made the strategic decision to work with IBM closely across the board, and for hardware almost exclusively."

*"We did evaluate a number of vendors for this recent installation. Part of the decision was about the cost-effectiveness of the solution, and it was also about functionality. IBM was clearly able to demonstrate these to us. It was also about confidence that IBM could deliver a new technology and reduce project risk."*

*John A Brown Chief Information Officer,  
Brown Brothers*

With VoIP, you are pushing voice traffic over a data network – and this puts interesting stretches on a network's capacity. All of Brown Brother's orders come through to their call centre. These are both indirect, (from the UK or one of their wholesalers), or from a major chain like Coles or Liquorland, and also direct from customers. Due to this business imperative Brown Brother's could not afford to have call dropouts or lag-time caused by delayed packets on the network.

*"We are country-based company, and IBM is the only player that provides the level of support required by regional areas."*

*John A Brown Chief Information Officer,  
Brown Brothers*

#### **The IBM Solution:**

IBM replaced core and edge routing and switching technology and replaced Brown Brothers' existing PABX while implementing Unified Messaging Software (PSL Vision) The infrastructure upgrade was completed within agreed milestone dates and immediately provided Brown Brothers with additional functionality to end users.

#### **The Business Benefits:**

All employees were now on a unified network and voice mail system and possessed new voice mail functionality. There is also the ability to measure and monitor call centre activity, promising additional business measurements and improved productivity gains. In addition, there is the ability to continually improve customer service, via effective call management and integration with existing applications.

Feature options have been highly popular with staff; with voice mail not the only function being used. For example, phones have settings to allow for eight different profiles. These profiles tell the phone "how to behave" if the employee is in a meeting or on holidays. Changing these settings is easy. In fact, the system take this one step further by looking into peoples' diaries to confirm their availability.

There was an upgrade to new converged voice and data infrastructure with additional return on investment provided by upgrading WAN/LAN equipment as well.

*"Now with the VoIP network, the running costs of the voice network are the same – but we get the data traffic included but at no extra cost to us. This is what justified the project for us."*

*John A Brown Chief Information Officer,  
Brown Brothers*

The value of a converged IP Based Network is significant. "Looking at expenses alone, before we put in the system, phone and fax costs were significant. For the same cost, we could rent a fixed line and push all our voice traffic over those lines, and have it available for the normal network." John A Brown, CIO Brown Brothers

Carrier savings are a key business benefit. The VoIP network is used for both internal communication between state offices and for external calls as well. If a staff member in Melbourne makes a call to a customer in Sydney, the VoIP network will route the call to NSW, so that it will be cost of a local call.



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