

SUBARU CASE STUDY

ThinkTel's SIP trunking for Microsoft Lync enables Subaru to benefit from enhanced collaboration at a lower cost.



Subaru distributes vehicles to dealerships across the country and supplies them with automotive parts, services and warranty coverage. In 2011, Subaru Canada recorded its second best annual sales figures thanks to their commitment to providing quality products and services, as well as their long term customer loyalty.

As a growing car manufacturer with roughly 86 Canadian dealers in operation and thousands of dealership personnel, Subaru Canada was exceeding the capacity of their old Private Branch Exchange (PBX) phone system and wanted a solution that would scale better and allow everyone to communicate and collaborate more efficiently.

They looked at a number of options to upgrade the system and realized that the ideal solution was already being used within the company since 2007 for their conferencing and collaboration requirements: Microsoft® Lync™. As a result, they started transitioning users over to Microsoft Lync to meet their voice objectives and by July 2012, Subaru Canada had completely retired all of the traditional PBX's and Primary Rate Interfaces (PRI) throughout their Canadian offices. Today, all phone calls are placed using Lync and Voice over IP (VOIP).

In order to achieve an Enterprise-Grade solution, Subaru Canada chose to partner with a Session Initiation Protocol (SIP) Provider. Subaru partnered with ThinkTel to deliver a resilient SIP connection for Lync Server 2010 to the Public Switched Telephone Network (PSTN) for customers and dealers. ThinkTel was selected because we are one of the longest operating and most experienced providers of SIP-based telecommunications services in Canada and the only Canadian company independently qualified by Microsoft's standards to deliver SIP trunking directly to Microsoft Lync.

George Hamin, Director eBusiness & Information Systems at Subaru Canada said:

“ThinkTel was the only company considered because we wanted a SIP Provider who was certified for Enterprise-Grade SIP trunking to Lync. We felt that other SIP Providers presented a risk that we weren't ready to take.”

“ThinkTel's cost-effective SIP trunking solution for Lync along with Capacity on Demand really completed our Lync implementation and ultimately allowed us to part company with our PBX and traditional PRI connectivity to the PSTN.”

George Hamin
Director eBusiness & Information Systems
Subaru Canada, Inc.

“Our expertise lies in delivering highly reliable and adaptable voice, video and data services, including Enterprise-Grade SIP trunking. SIP trunking for Lync is the next logical step for businesses interested in replacing their legacy equipment. Combining the functionality of Microsoft Lync with the cost-savings of ThinkTel's SIP Trunking solution is the best way to reduce your telecom expenses and maximize your ROI.”

Dave Damer
President & CEO
Thinktel

SIP trunking for Lync is important because it allows Subaru Canada to eliminate potential points of failure by establishing a direct SIP connection with their mediation server, without relying on an additional gateway. ThinkTel's SIP trunking solution also offers the following benefits.

- Enables Lync's PSTN dialing and in-house multimedia conferencing capabilities.
- Offers a streamlined SIP trunk network configuration with aggregate capacity across multiple sites.
- Reduces costs associated with Capacity on Demand and in-network calling features. In addition, clients no longer have to pay Move, Add, Change and Delete (MACD) charges.
- Provides dynamic and flexible software, enabling organizations to manage users and changes to their network without having to request permission; saving time and money.
- Includes an advanced management portal with real-time Direct Inbound Dial (DID) provisioning and reporting capabilities.

George Hamin added:

“ We have a great relationship with ThinkTel; they are the bridge to Subaru Canada's outside world. On top of the great service we receive, we are pleased with their Capacity on Demand's burst channels, which allows us to simply purchase additional channels on a per day basis if we go over our monthly commitment. This means that we do not have to over-commit and can avoid paying for VOIP resources that we do not use. The monthly contracts also demonstrate ThinkTel's commitment to delivering the best service possible throughout the length of our partnership. ”

Communication plays a tremendous role in Subaru Canada's success. The ability to communicate not only internally with their own people across the country but also with their dealers located from one coast to the other. Lync has been fundamental in improving the way that they can connect and has allowed them to reduce travel costs significantly.

ThinkTel's SIP Trunking solution permitted Subaru Canada to realize the full potential of Microsoft Lync, which offers enterprise telephony solution and intuitive, real-time communication capabilities available from numerous devices, including PCs, laptops, and mobile phones. Now dealers, field staff, and internal resources are more productive and can stay connected, aligning their efforts to always focus on the customer, while reducing operational costs.

George Hamin added:

“ We're using all features of Microsoft Lync. The important thing for our users is that they are provided with a single tool so they don't have to go to different applications to perform different functions. When you look at all the features and functionality of Lync; instant messaging, presence, audio and video conferencing, as well as desktop sharing, it's hard to pin that one feature that the organization will make the most use of. My recommendation is to pick one, try it out and see if the other features make sense for you and you'll find that in very short order you'll be using the entire Lync stack because it really is a transformational business tool. ”

Lync Server 2010 has everything Subaru Canada needed to retire their traditional PBX solution; it works with Microsoft Exchange Server for true unified communications and provides presence awareness throughout Microsoft Office applications, including their Microsoft SharePoint Server dealer and employee portals. Other benefits include:

- Enhanced Collaboration and Customer Service: Subaru Canada staff is working more efficiently. Staff can use the Lync client to see which colleague is available and fire up an Instant Message (IM) session, or an audio or video conference to get immediate answers to their questions.
- Smooth and easy learning curve: Lync provides Microsoft Office users with familiar tools and interfaces.
- Reduced operational costs: Deploying Lync in a virtualized environment allowed Subaru Canada to significantly reduce operation costs. It also helped them achieve ROI in one year by using Lync's native conferencing and collaboration tool to reduce long-distance charges as well as avoid third-party expenses for Web and voice conferencing. With the Lync client, every employee gets their own conference bridge and it's free.

George Hamin concluded:

“ The great thing about Lync is that I'll never have to buy a phone system ever again. Lync Server 2010 has literally transformed the way we do business; this is our communications platform for the future. ”



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