

Lync 2013 Customer Solution Case Study



Leading Business School Eyes Productivity Boost with New Unified Communications Solution

Company: London Business School
Website: www.london.edu
Company Size: 720 employees
Country or Region: United Kingdom
Industry: Education
Partner: Outsourcery

Company Profile

London Business School, a leader in business education, is consistently ranked in the global top 10 for its programmes and research and celebrates its fiftieth anniversary this year. As well as its top-ranked MBA, the School offers degree and executive education programmes serving early and later career managers from around the world. Teaching and research faculty come from more than 30 countries and students come from more than 100 countries, making London Business School exceptionally international.

Software and Services

Microsoft Server Product Portfolio

- Microsoft Lync Server 2013
- Microsoft Office 365 Education

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Wayne Buttigieg, Head of Infrastructure and Media Services, London Business School

London Business School is expecting improved staff productivity and better support for those working from home after the rollout of a hybrid unified communications solution based on Enterprise Voice within Microsoft Lync Server and cloud-based email within Microsoft Office 365. The new solution replaces three legacy private branch exchange (PBX) systems and an aging on-premises email system. Significant IT support time savings are expected.

Business Needs

Regularly ranked among the best in the world for its full-time MBA programme, London Business School is a leader in business education. The School has approximately 720 employees, including faculty, administrative, and management staff, with additional contract staff. It awards more than 1,000 degrees a year to students from more than 100 countries. About 10,000 participants attend its Executive Education programmes each year.

The School's datacentre suffered from challenges such as frequent air conditioning breakdowns, ingress of water and hardware reaching the end of its useful life. As part of a new, hosted datacentre solution, the organisation was looking for new email and telephony systems.

“Our email servers were coming to end-of-life, and capacity was a particular

challenge because the existing solution only had sufficient space for 1-gigabyte mailboxes per user. Some users had switched to using nonofficial, personal email accounts because of this limitation. This caused us administrative and compliance issues and was damaging to the reputation of our brand,” says Wayne Buttigieg, Head of Infrastructure and Media Services, a 15-person team that looks after IT infrastructure, networks, and telephony at London Business School.

The organisation's three private branch exchange (PBX) systems, which served 1,300 telephone extensions, were also at end-of-life. About 50 percent of the School's staff move office each year, and administering the phone systems to manage these moves and changes was time-consuming. The PBXs were inflexible and were not supporting changing work patterns, such as staff working from home and those needing the flexibility to hot-desk across

the five buildings at the main central London campus.

Instead of simply choosing like-for-like replacements for email and telephony, the School decided to opt for a unified communications (UC) solution that could provide powerful productivity features and support greater flexibility for staff.

Solution

Buttigieg and his team at London Business School put out a tender for a unified communications solution based on Microsoft offerings. Microsoft had recently introduced Office 365 Education with hosted email and its features, functionality and competitive pricing made it an easy choice to replace the School's email system. Integrating this with a private cloud implementation of Microsoft Lync Server with Enterprise Voice would create a complete unified communications solution, including features such as presence information and easy conference call set-up to enhance productivity and collaboration.

The School received proposals from four suppliers. The chosen supplier was Outsourcery, a Microsoft partner and provider of cloud-based IT and business communications software.

"Nobody else had the same depth of experience as Outsourcery when it came to implementing Office 365 and Lync," says Buttigieg. "It was also the only supplier that committed to taking full ownership for the management and support of the complete solution, including working directly with Microsoft—if required—to address technical issues on any aspect of the solution."

Outsourcery created a hybrid solution, integrating a public cloud version of Microsoft Office 365 with a private cloud version of Microsoft Lync Server with Enterprise Voice hosted in the Outsourcery datacentre. Connectivity to the School is via integration with the United Kingdom's Joint Academic Network (JANET), which provides

Internet connectivity to universities and other education institutions. A failover solution using a survivable branch appliance (SBA) connected to an ISDN line means the School can continue to have voice capabilities and some of the functionality of Lync in the event of a connectivity failure or disaster affecting the hosted service.

An initial proof of concept of the Lync service was delivered by Outsourcery in March 2014, allowing it to work with the School to ensure the features and functionality would support its needs and to highlight any customization requirements. In July, the IT department of 80 staff was migrated to the new UC solution, followed by the Human Resources, Accounts, Marketing and Communications, and Executive Education departments between August and October. The rollout will continue on a per-department basis with full migration of 1,300 telephone extensions and email accounts expected by May 2015.

Benefits

When London Business School has fully migrated to its hybrid unified communications solution using Microsoft Office 365 and Lync Server, the indications are that the following benefits will be achieved:

Improved Productivity

Instead of buying replacement PBXs and email system, the School chose a powerful UC solution that will help make employees more productive.

"Microsoft Lync and Office 365 will enhance productivity, letting staff see presence information, receive voice mail via email, and run conference calls by simply dialling others into an existing call," says Buttigieg.

Jacob Gage, Business Systems and Analytics Manager from the School's Executive Education team, says: "The new unified communications solution is already helping us be more productive. We save time by knowing if somebody is available before

calling and collaborate much more easily using facilities such as the easy conference call set-up and document sharing. And we are less likely to miss important voice mails as we receive reminders via email."

Greater Flexibility to Work From Anywhere

Increasing numbers of the School's employees are choosing to work from home, and Microsoft Lync Server with Enterprise Voice supports this by making it easy to receive calls on computers regardless of location.

The School will also achieve improved collaboration between staff who work from home and those on campus because of the ability to share and discuss documents on-screen and easy conference call setup within Lync.

"We have lots of public areas and meeting rooms that will be equipped with common area phones so that users can hot-desk on these devices or use their own laptops to continue to collaborate in meetings and maximize the use of space," says Buttigieg.

IT Time Savings

Initial indications are that the Infrastructure and Media Services team will experience significant time savings.

"Switching to email via Office 365 means we will no longer have to spend time updating and maintaining our email system," says Buttigieg. "Neither will we have to deal with adjusting mailbox quotas while balancing limited capacity which was a frustrating administrative overhead."

Similarly, the rollout of Enterprise Voice will mean Buttigieg's team will no longer have to support the PBXs and spend time administering the various phone systems every time an employee moves to another office.