

# Kawasaki Motors Europe gains flexibility while saving money with IP telephony solution from IBM and Typex

## Overview

### Customer challenge

Kawasaki Motors Europe NV needed a modern telecommunications system for its new headquarters building.

### Solution

IBM Business Partner Typex helped Kawasaki introduce an IBM IP Telephony Express system that met its time, cost and service-level demands, while giving room for future growth.

### Customer benefits

- *Reduced costs.* Installation cost less than with rival systems and running costs are significantly lower
- *Rapid implementation.* Kawasaki was on a tight deadline, which it met comfortably
- *Flexibility.* Being software based, the new system will allow Kawasaki to expand the system with little cost or difficulty. New features and services can be introduced with ease.
- *Better service.* Employees are already using many of the new features. Dealers will be able to benefit, too, improving Kawasaki's customer service.



Moving to new offices gives businesses the opportunity to rethink the services and systems they use. The chance came for Kawasaki Motors Europe NV when it decided to consolidate its head-office activities into one new building.

Kawasaki had to make a decision on telephones. It decided to adopt Internet Protocol (IP) telephony, running on IBM Power Systems™ and Ethernet connections.

Kawasaki chose an IBM/3Com unified communications solution from IBM Business Partner, Typex Group. This not only saved time and expense, it gave the company a more resilient and adaptable telephone system. The company will move to IP telephony across its entire European operation.

Kawasaki Motors Europe markets and distributes a popular range of Japanese motorcycles, jet skis and all-terrain vehicles. It supports an extensive network of dealers from regional offices and its new headquarters building in Hoofddorp, near Amsterdam.

The company employs around 300 people, in 8 European countries. Most are based in the Netherlands, either in the new HQ building or in a warehouse in the south.

*“It was a big plus that the system runs on IBM servers. We’re familiar with these and know they are reliable.”*

– Brian Haselgrove, Chief Information Officer, Kawasaki Motors Europe NV



**Meeting multiple challenges; removing constraints**

The move to IP telephony gave Kawasaki the chance to achieve several objectives while eliminating some technical constraints. It particularly wanted to:

- cut the annual cost of internal and external communications
- gain a more adaptable system
- get the system working quickly
- make good use of existing resources
- achieve a short payback period.

Brian Haselgrove, Chief Information Officer at Kawasaki Motors Europe NV, says: "The IBM solution from Typex Group not only offered an economical and low-risk way forward, we could be up and running quickly. It was a big plus that the system runs on IBM Power Systems. We're familiar with these and know they are reliable."

**Making it happen**

John Taylor, Technical Director at Typex Group, explains how his company addressed Kawasaki's needs: "Nearly all telephone systems today are custom made. In a small to medium-sized business like Kawasaki that can make it expensive, risky and needing too many skilled staff. We produced a bespoke solution but kept costs down by standardising much of the process."

Typex worked on the project with TeamUC partners, Acuity BV and Van Helvoirt Automatisering BV. TeamUC is an international team of IBM Business Partners that Typex set up. It collaboratively offers resources and expertise where customers need them.

One of those resources is a knowledge base called UC2Go (unified communication to go). Taylor says: "This lets us give other business partners detailed instructions on setting up an integrated system, saving time and money for the customer."

Kawasaki adopted the IBM System i® IP Telephony Express system. This combines VoIP (voice over IP) software and telephone handsets from 3Com with IBM's "i" operating environment – all running on two IBM Power 520 Express servers.

The company was already using IBM Power Systems to run its dealer extranet and an intranet based on Lotus Notes®. The IP software integrates with both, allowing greater communications flexibility for systems staff as well as users. Kawasaki can administer the new system itself. Also, the IBM Lotus Notes/Domino® software manages some aspects of the IP system automatically, such as enrolling and deleting users.

### **Showing the value quickly**

For Haselgrove, one of the major benefits of the new system is knowing how much communications is costing the company. "The old system didn't give us detailed figures. We can now analyse the figures for all calls."

The cost of those calls has been drastically reduced. Taylor explains: "Calls between offices are free because they go down existing data lines. As more locations are added, the savings increase." This approach may also be practicable for calls between the Netherlands and the parent company in Japan.

Maintenance is a further area of saving. PBX-based systems are much costlier to maintain than IP-based telephony. Kawasaki was previously running nine PBXs. Six remain. As Kawasaki replaces each, so the annual savings grow.

Energy conservation is important. The IBM Power Systems are significantly more energy efficient than the previous PBXs.

Another saving was in set-up costs. The new HQ building needed much less cabling than with PBXs because voice and data traffic travel down the same wires. This saved time and money.

A bonus was that Typex could carry out configuration, testing and training elsewhere before the building was ready.

### **Users enjoy the new features**

Some of Kawasaki's senior managers split their time between Amsterdam and the UK offices in Buckinghamshire. With the new system, they can travel to Amsterdam, log on and have incoming calls routed to them automatically.

Kawasaki's buildings are wifi-enabled, allowing BlackBerry mobile telephone users to pick up incoming calls anywhere. Taylor points out: "It isn't a cellular call. It's free and the system treats the BlackBerry as a direct extension of the 'phone system."

### **Adding new functions as people learn**

Kees de Raad is Project Manager for VoIP at Kawasaki Motors Europe NV. He says: "We have already identified 10 new areas of additional function we'd like to pursue, such as fax to email."

Other possibilities include integrating the telephones with Kawasaki's transactional systems. Haselgrove explains: "When dealers 'phone in, we will get information about the caller on a computer screen. We can even go directly into a sales application, so can deal with callers immediately."

*"Typex has been great to work with. Naturally, there have been teething problems but we can count on Typex to work with us to sort them out."*

*– Brian Haselgrove, Chief Information Officer,  
Kawasaki Motors Europe NV*

Taylor foresees the possibility of closer links with Lotus Notes. "In Typex, if someone leaves me a voicemail, it is copied into a voice file that automatically goes to my Notes in-box. Also, the Domino and telephone directory are synchronised."

### **A successful partnership**

Haselgrove is pleased with the IBM Telephony Express solution. "Our new system provides real productivity improvements. We are getting required cost savings and improving customer service."

He continues: "Typex has been great to work with. Naturally, there have been teething problems but we can count on Typex to work with us to sort them out."

de Raad reinforces that: "Typex is very professional and knowledgeable about VoIP. It was new to us and they have helped us get up to speed."

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