

# Unified messaging platform helps top digital agency LBi cut complexity & costs

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**Keith Newton,**  
Senior ICT Systems Administrator,  
LBi Ltd

## Overview

### Business challenge

- Replace outdated, complex and difficult to manage PBX telephony systems.
- Benefit from the latest technologies to remove administrative hassle for IT, reduce costs for the business, and provide powerful new features and services for end users.
- Gain a flexible and scalable network infrastructure to support further productivity gains and cost savings, helping underpin consistently great client service.

### Solution

- BT Engage IT's proven expertise in delivering and integrating Cisco and Microsoft technologies, particularly in networking, unified communications and messaging.
- Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CallManager) and Microsoft Exchange 2007 Unified Messaging integration; from cabling to IP Telephony and more.
- Ongoing support and maintenance.
- Future plans include integration with Microsoft Office Communications Server (OCS).

### Benefits

- A real partnership: BT Engage IT understands and meets LBi's requirements, from leveraging existing IT investments to highly responsive maintenance support.
- Internet call routing has led to a significant reduction in calling costs.
- A single system means vastly reduced complexity—easing administration and helping save time, resources and further costs.
- Future benefits anticipated include further cost efficiencies, productivity gains and enhanced client service.



## Case Study

LBI is the leading full service digital marketing agency, helping its international clients use digital channels to communicate in the most effective ways. When LBI decided to consolidate its three London offices into a single location, this was an excellent opportunity to create a powerful new approach for its communications; the old offices each had ageing and complex non-IP PBX systems.

"This was a chance to replace the old systems with a new approach founded on a brand new network infrastructure," says Keith Newton, Senior ICT Systems Administrator, LBI. A move to Unified Communications was in line with the digital agency's reputation for boldness, innovation and creativity, with a new Cisco network able to support voice over IP (VoIP). Indeed, with Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CallManager) designed to simplify voice systems, reduce costs and improve productivity by replacing traditional PBX, LBI would gain an enterprise-class IP telephony call processing system.

### Why BT Engage IT?

Newton continues, "A key supplier requirement was the ability to leverage our existing investments in Microsoft Exchange whilst being able to specify and supply the new underlying infrastructure. Having a 'blank sheet' was a rare opportunity to use new technology without worrying about issues like compatibility and interoperability." The solution would also need to be compatible with Microsoft Office Communications Server (OCS). "That meant either Cisco or Nortel," Newton says, "so I researched UK suppliers of those technologies who also had good Microsoft skills. BT Engage IT came top: it had the longest-standing

relationship with Microsoft, and the business was larger and more reliable than other potential suppliers. It also became clear the Nortel solution's interoperability with OCS was in its infancy."

"BT Engage IT demonstrated a fully functioning solution, and we visited its Barlborough facility to see the system in action. BT Engage IT was the right choice as our partner." In particular, it was clear that Microsoft Exchange Unified Messaging could help LBI 'break down the walls' between different messaging systems, to increase productivity while consolidating infrastructure, driving more value from its IT investments.

### Fast implementation

BT Engage IT implemented and commissioned the system in around eight weeks—for 450 phones. The overall project had three stages: first, the CallManager/Exchange Unified Messaging integration; second, the Cisco infrastructure; and third, OCS. With the first two stages and OCS infrastructure design completed successfully, Newton and his team are now working towards OCS rollout.

"We have an ISDN line for inbound calls, with outbound calls routed over the Internet," Newton says. "It's all IP-based." Benefits include lower cost calls, thanks to smart call routing via an SIP provider. "With a single system we vastly reduced complexity. And as originally specified, integration with Exchange leverages our previous investment in that platform. We're now two-thirds of the way to achieving the unified communications environment we want. With the addition of OCS, we'll be able to communicate with clients using instant messaging, and federate with our clients and partners, with further productivity benefits and cost savings to be made.

"End users are now reaping the benefits of the latest technology with services like voicemail to their email inbox and Outlook voice access working fabulously. It's all very simple with, for instance, a single lead from phone to floor. We're a marketing agency and the system is great visually. With their large screens, the IP phones look good and are easy to use—which means creating the right impression for clients and visitors. The Cisco technology is also far easier to manage; we used to get bogged down in technical complexity with the old systems."

LBI is currently working with BT Engage IT to evaluate Cisco MeetingPlace for audio conferencing, replacing third party services. Newton adds, "From the outset, BT Engage IT understood our requirements better than any of the others. BT Engage IT people also demonstrated a very good technical knowledge of the solution, so we had confidence. And they continue to be highly responsive: our support and maintenance contract is with BT Engage IT. If we have any problem, they deal with it."

### Customer profile

Industry: digital marketing & communications  
Services: international full service digital agency, including digital branding, online marketing, media strategy, e-commerce, and multi-channel design.

Employing 1,450 professionals, primarily in major European and US business centres such as Amsterdam, Atlanta, Berlin, Copenhagen, London, Madrid, Mumbai, Munich, New York, Paris and Stockholm, LBI has annual sales of around €160 million.

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