

Case Study

MyCloud PBX for PJT & Co



PJT & Co

PJT & Co is a firm of UK accountants with a long history of serving SMEs and personal clients with distinction over many years. Originally established in 1965, the company recently acquired another firm, Harrison Young, and grew the practice significantly as a result.

As well as accountancy, audit and tax skills, PJT & Co's partners have individual specialisms which enable them to provide clients with a first class tailored service. With their wealth of experience, they pride themselves on delivering an unparalleled service to all clients, whatever their size or sector. Increasingly, having the right systems in place have played a key role in being able to deliver to these high standards.

After the acquisition, the company was looking to consolidate its systems across both the formally separate businesses. Its main aims were to improve and simplify services while reducing costs and enhancing support.

Better communications at lower costs

As its incumbent IT support company, Cerberus recommended that PJT & Co replace their existing PBX as a means to achieve its goals. It was clear that there were cost savings to be made by replacing the old phone system and telephony services. While the company had partially made the move to IP telephony with a first generation IP PBX system, the public telephony was still delivered over ISDN and using an ageing hardware system, at the customer's premises.

The shortcomings of the old system were evident; high ISDN rental and call charges, substantial ongoing maintenance costs for the system hardware and reliability issues due to reliance on a single, obsolete hardware device onsite with limited options for backup and resilience.

Sunil Parekh, Partner at PJT & Co, recalls,

"Our old phone system was quite expensive month to month, and it required more looking after than we were really comfortable with. After a power outage, it took hours to get the system running again and for a system as important as this, that was just something we weren't comfortable with."

Cerberus Networks could see the opportunity for PJT & Co to not only save money but also gain significant functionality and reliability. Michael Rudge, Senior Consultant at Cerberus comments,

"Our MyCloud PBX provides a really simple drop-in replacement for most SME phone systems. It has a very wide range of features and is very flexible in terms of configuration so we were confident that it would not only provide cost savings and increased reliability, but also provide all the features that the client was reliant on."

Solution Summary

The first step in assessing the client's requirements was to look at the number of users and the number of calls they needed to make day to day. Based on existing usage, it was determined that a 4-channel system, providing up to 4 simultaneous external calls and a total of 8 simultaneous calls would be suitable for PJT's 20 users based on their typical phone usage.

As a fully hosted service, MyCloud PBX required no new onsite equipment or system reconfiguration. The new system was set up fully in parallel with the existing system, ready for a migration when the time was right for the client.

Smooth transition, same numbers, same phones

Next, Cerberus assessed the client's requirements for hardware. Due to MyCloud PBX's large compatibility list for IP handsets, the client was able to re-use their existing Polycom handsets. This reduced the costs of the project substantially and also meant that almost no user training was required as all staff were already familiar with the equipment.

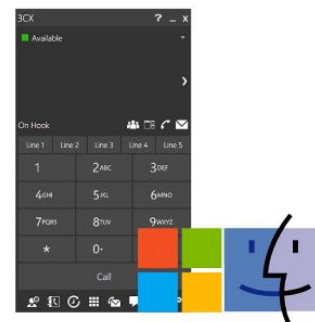
Cerberus phased the transition to reduce disruption to a minimum, providing a new range of numbers for PJT & Co to use during the transition. During the transition, PJT forwarded calls from their own numbers to the temporary numbers to ensure that not a single call was missed. Then using Cerberus' number porting service, PJT transferred their numbers to the Cerberus MyCloud PBX service. Cerberus helped at every stage to ensure a smooth changeover to the new system.

More tools for users

However, the seamless change didn't mean that users didn't see an immediate improvement. For more sophisticated users, they were able to install and take advantage of the softphone for the system. This allowed them to control their phone from their desktop, including screen popping, dialling from Outlook and message management. They were also able to use completely novel features like presence, chat and Web Meetings.

With the advanced, and completely free, client for smart phones, staff could now be available on their work phone whenever and wherever they needed to. Sunil was very pleased with the evolutionary approach to gaining new functionality.

"The new system provided us a reliable phone system, without a major change to how we worked being forced on us. But it also gave us access to new tools that also make it easier to stay in touch with people, and on top of our calls and messages, especially when we are not in the office."

A screenshot of a call log table. The table has columns for 'Caller', 'Callee', 'Duration', and 'Details'. The first row shows a call from Shelley Ann Johnson[184] to Bianca Allery[142] with a duration of 00:00:24. Below the table, there's a section for 'Blind transfer' showing a call from Shelley Ann Johnson[184] to Bianca Allery[142] as 'Connected'. At the bottom, there's a list of users with their status: 142 Bianca Allery (yellow), 103 Arthur Moroz (green), 128 Andreas Aristidou (green), 129 Alice Karlson (green), 161 Marcos Valassas (green), and 164 Amy Elliott (green).

Caller	Callee	Duration	Details
Shelley Ann Johnson[184]	Bianca Allery[142]	00:00:24	
Blind transfer Shelley Ann Johnson[184] Bianca Allery[142] Connected			
142 Bianca Allery	128 Andreas Aristidou	161 Marcos Valassas	
103 Arthur Moroz	129 Alice Karlson	164 Amy Elliott	

Managed connectivity delivers reliable VoIP

Replacing ISDN with voice over IP does concern some businesses, worrying that they will suffer poor call quality. Michael Rudge at Cerberus says this is a key part to the solution.

"Even though it is now a mainstream technology, VoIP does sometimes have a reputation for bad call quality. The truth is that if you ignore the connectivity, you can risk an unreliable phone system. However, it only takes a few basic steps to get it right, and you then have nothing to worry about."

Cerberus took over PJT & Co's existing FTTC and ADSL2+ broadband Internet connections from BT, as well as management of their firewall. Cerberus applied its Quality of Service profile to the broadband services to prioritise VoIP over other traffic from end to end. They also configured the firewall to automatically re-route traffic over the backup connection if the main connection failed.

Michael explains how Cerberus set themselves apart from other providers when it comes to delivering Internet connectivity for IP telephony.

"We are almost unique in the market in that we allow customers to apply traffic management on their broadband connections. We don't take any chances with VoIP traffic. Our network management ensures that voice traffic always goes first, regardless of what users and the network are trying to do. Streaming, torrenting, it doesn't matter. The voice traffic always goes first, up and down. That guarantees call quality. Other providers can only do this by dedicating a connection to voice only, significantly increasing costs."

Lower, more predictable costs

Of course, one of PJT & Co's objectives was to control costs. That meant that the costs of the solution had to be as low and as predictable as possible. Therefore, they opted for a 3 year contract on the service. This allowed them to fix the cost of the system, but also get a call tariff that includes all UK landline and mobile calls for the duration of the contract included within the system rental charge. Sunil was very pleased with the refreshingly low bills.

"Our monthly costs are now about 40% less and much more predictable. Our call charges are always within about £20 month to month, and we are making big savings compared to the old system, the old ISDN and the call charges we were used to."

Trusted advice and a great service

When asked if he had any advice for people considering how similar companies should approach getting a great communications system for their business, Sunil Parekh at PJT & Co warmly endorses Cerberus.

"I would recommend discussing what you need with Cerberus. We had a quite a few things we had to get right so we talked it all through with Cerberus. They listened to what we needed and set out of a few options. We picked MyCloud PBX for the best features and for the cost savings. I'm pleased to say it has worked out really well. We have a better system and spend much less. We now recommend Cerberus to our own clients when they ask us how they can save money or do more with their phones."