



Case Study

Downer Group

Telstra Calling for Office 365
Leading the way to next level collaboration





Who are they?

Downer designs, builds and sustains assets, infrastructure and facilities. The company provides integrated services to customers in industries including transport, energy, resources, utilities and defence.

With a history dating back over 150 years, Downer is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange and New Zealand Stock Exchange and also owns 88 per cent of Spotless Group, a provider of integrated facilities services.

Downer employs approximately 56,000 people across more than 300 sites, primarily in Australia and New Zealand but also in the Asia-Pacific region, South America and Southern Africa.

Reimagining the workplace

Downer has been pursuing a digital transformation strategy with the adoption of Microsoft Office 365 across its business, to drive productivity and empower its workforce to be more mobile.

“Our business depends on being able to meet our customers’ needs quickly and efficiently,” Ian Harvison, Downer Group Chief Technology Officer said. “Our transformation strategy is about enabling our staff to access the right information on the right device at the right time to help our customers to succeed. In the past we have been reactive, and we want to be managing things more proactively for our customers. That means we need to help our team become mobile and spend more time with our customers, without losing their productivity when they are away from the office.”

Ian and his team were looking at how to consolidate a disparate and disconnected set of communications solutions across the different business units and locations.

“Most of our people were using fixed lines at their desks or mobiles, but in terms of technology we have a real mix. We have WebEx-equipped rooms throughout the group, while our Spotless business has Skype for Business with Polycom. Our operations in New Zealand use Skype for Business, with a blend of different hardware,” Ian explained.

“Our strategy is to roll out unified communications across the group, with a vision that anyone who has a laptop or a need for mobility has soft phone capability. They should have access to their landline and messaging wherever they might be. We found ourselves asking: what is the best UC solution for our business?”

Contact your Telstra account representative for more details.

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Early adopters: why Telstra Calling for Office 365?

After discussing Downer’s requirements, the Telstra team invited them to join the Early Adopter Program for Telstra Calling for Office 365, an Australian first that delivers seamless and intuitive landline calling from within Microsoft Office 365.

“Traditionally we haven’t been at the forefront of new technology adoption but the fact that two of our strategic partners in Microsoft and Telstra combined to create this solution made Telstra Calling for Office 365 a compelling proposition,” Ian said.

“The pilot has proven to us that the move to Telstra Calling for Office 365 will support our ambitions for a more agile workforce,” Ian said.

“We are leveraging technology to make life easier for our staff. Wherever you are, you have the ubiquitous experience of the whole platform. You can be productive if you are in a hotel or at the airport. In fact, we had an occasion when people dialled into a leadership meeting from the airport and the participants were impressed by the quality and performance.”

Furthermore, Telstra Calling for Office 365 is helping to deliver Ian's objective of consolidating the diverse unified communications solutions currently being used across the Downer business.

“What is great from a business perspective is that it enables us to connect existing investments such as WebEx and Polycom. It delivers the simplicity, flexibility and scalability that comes with consuming telephony from a public cloud service. It’s simple to roll out and avoids the need for a complex migration. And with PBX capabilities being provided and managed by Telstra, we don’t have to spend time building up the internal capabilities and resources to manage it ourselves.”

Final word: what’s next?

“The collaboration experience at Downer is now where we want it to be. We are looking at putting Telstra Calling for Office 365 at the centre of how we build our Skype for Business solution.”

“The early adopter program has been perfect for us. Rather than make tactical decisions on UC and telephony solutions at each stage of the migration, we will be able to leverage Telstra Calling for Office 365 and use it as the foundation.”

Downer and Telstra will be aiming to roll out the solution progressively to Downer’s sites, including those in regional and remote areas, in the coming months.

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