

The Gap Partnership takes advantage of Exchange Comms Knowledge to benefit



The Gap Partnership

The Company

The Gap Partnership in Berkhamsted is a great communicator. As a consultancy which advises some of the world's most influential purchasers, they have to be. Any company that offers training and consultancy to the Fortune 500 has to exude professionalism in an ultra competitive market.

The majority of its business is concentrated around organising conferences and seminars for clients, who will be trained in the fine art of negotiation. Some consultancy is offered over the phone too. In addition, the support staff must deal with logistics of organising conference venues, booking spaces and coordinating with consultants. So the company spends as much time making outbound as inbound calls.

The Challenge

This is a business whose value is created by intellectual capital, its chief knowledge workers being its consultants. Their time is at a high premium. But these assets, the intellectual capital of the consultants, are highly mobile. So it is vital that their time is utilised as efficiently as possible. Communications are the key to this.

The company is thriving, tripling in numbers in the last two years. From a communications perspective, this presents a challenge. After Gap realised that their existing communications system wasn't helping them get the best out of their intellectual capital, Gap decided to upgrade.

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Saqib Altaf,
Infrastructure Manager
The Gap Partnership



The Solution

Exchange Communications created a more fluid infrastructure for them, using an Avaya IP Office with digital handsets and ISDN BRI voice mail.

The success of the company is attracting good people, and new consultants are constantly being taken on. As each new client is won, consultants are formed into teams, which share their expertise and pool their talents in order to get the best results for their new negotiating protégés. Each client is assigned a unique phone number to call in on, which automatically routes their call to the team members that are consulting with them.

The number of moves and changes, in a fast moving, fluid organisation like The Gap Partnership, is a process that needs to be managed well. However, Gap's infrastructure manager Saqib Altaf says the new communications set-up enables him to stay on top of the situation, no matter how intense the recruitment of consultants has been, or much new business is being won.

"Exchange Comms manages all the moves and changes for me," says Saqib. "If a new consultant joins, all I need to do is email their details to an engineer and he will put a phone on the new recruit's desk." Before the new recruit is inducted into the company, their phone will be fully configured for all their incoming and outbound calls.

The Outcome

Saqib says he's no telecoms expert, but even he finds it easy to manage moves and changes and set up voice mail for users. "If there's ever a technical question I don't understand, I can always ask Exchange for help," he says. "For example, I'm running a US project at the moment and the other day I emailed them to ask what PRI means. Within a few minutes, one of their engineers actually called me and talked me through it. That was impressive," he says.

With 60 users, many working from remote locations, Gap Partnership relies on the fluidity of its communications system to adapt to its needs. It is the service provider that makes all the difference, says Saqib. "The model of the phone system isn't as important as the expertise of the people that supplied it," he says. "The Exchange people know us, and they know how they work. So they know what we need, and can make the system do what we want it to do."



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