

Beyond Dial Tone to On-Demand Collaboration



NHS Connecting for Health accelerates time to market, productivity, cost savings, and CO₂ reductions.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Customer Name: NHS Connecting for Health

Industry: Healthcare

Location: United Kingdom

Number of Employees: 1650 (including 150 hosted Cisco UC users)

Challenge

- Reduce travel, improve productivity, save money, and promote greener IT

Solution

- Leveraged investment in existing Cisco technology to deliver best of breed IP based communications and collaboration strategy
- Cisco Borderless Network foundation supports Collaboration Applications, purchased via Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing

Results

- Easier to deploy, collaborate, share information, and speed up decision making
- Recurring annual saving of £200,000 with potential 20-30 percent reductions in travel costs and CO₂
- Flexible platform for growth and future performance improvements

Challenge

NHS Connecting for Health (NHS CfH) is the internal service provider responsible for maintaining and developing NHS IT infrastructure in the United Kingdom. This national role places NHS CfH at the forefront of major transformational programs, such as the Spine, New National Network (N3), and other digital healthcare initiatives.

NHS CfH's internal Information and Communications Technology (ICT) functions are provided by their ICT Services team. ICT Services share the same challenge facing most departments: how to achieve on-going improvements in service and efficiency. Its response was to place technology at the center of its operating model, striving to adopt new technologies where possible to improve productivity of their workforce.

The roots of this strategy can be traced back as far as 2003, when NHS CfH, then formally known as the Information Authority, became one of the first trialists and early adopters of Cisco® Unified Communications Manager. As well as saving money on infrastructure, maintenance, and calls, the move to Cisco Unified Communications greatly simplified call handling and introduced productivity-enhancing features, such as extension mobility and corporate directory. The addition of Cisco Unified Contact Center Express enabled the creation of several IT helpdesk facilities, which despite being physically located across multiple UK locations, run as one virtual contact center.

Like all progressive strategies, the journey continues today. Cisco routing and switching technologies provide a borderless networking environment that combines with load-balancing features to speed up access to information and applications across the organization.

The provider's latest innovation was to find a way of extracting greater value from its investment in Cisco Collaboration architecture and third-party applications.

"With demand growing for a reduction in our corporate travel spend, as well as awareness that 2012 would be a critical year for remote working in light of the Olympics, our vision was to empower staff to be able to participate in any meeting, anytime, from anywhere," says Paul Everson, ICT technical architecture and

infrastructure manager for NHS CfH. "Cisco's CUWL licensing model has enabled us to deliver a hybrid of on-premise solutions as well as cloud based offerings—cherry picking the most appropriate delivery mechanism for each specific requirement. The ability to consume NHS CfH initiatives such as NHSmail and N3 voice services were paramount in this approach."



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Paul Everson
ICT Technical Architecture and
Infrastructure Manager
NHS Connecting for Health

Solution

NHS CfH challenged the Cisco account team to come up with a proposal that would deliver more savings and technology for about the same amount that it would cost to update the Cisco Unified Communications software that was approaching end-of-life.

“Given that our existing investment in Cisco voice technology was becoming end of life we had already planned a refresh of our Cisco Unified Communications Manager, Contact Center Express, and Unity software” says Everson. “For us, Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing was a clear winner. The licensing route meant we could get the software upgrades plus access to performance-enhancing tools that deliver increased balance sheet benefits.”

Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing includes a wide range of Cisco Collaboration applications and services in one simple package, making deployment flexible and easy as business needs dictate. It provides client and server software licensing on a per-user basis and is available in three editions based on different business needs: Standard, Business, and Professional.

By selecting Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing Professional Edition, NHS CfH has made Cisco WebEx® Meeting Center available to all employees. Hosted on premises with a Webex Node for Media Convergence Server (MCS) and MeetingPlace® Audio conferencing, the desktop sharing and conferencing solution provides IT helpdesk staff and mobile knowledge workers with a platform for collaboration and virtual learning.

Staff dialing into WebEx audio conferences are routed via the corporate network, helping ensure lower overall conferencing costs for the organization. Outgoing conferencing costs are now zero. People who dial in are charged at the local/national rate.

By choosing to use WebEx Node for MCS with the MeetingPlace servers on site, along with integration into a cloud-based WebEx service, NHS CfH get the best of both worlds in relation to on premise and cloud technologies:

On Premise

- Reduced charges. Because all internal staff are hosted on its servers and network, the cost of WebEx licenses for these users is lower than for those hosted on the cloud
- Reduced network bandwidth. Using this solution each WebEx meeting now only requires one connection from the corporate network to the Cloud, instead of one for each user connecting.
- Audio conference savings. Housing these servers on premise allows audio conferencing to be delivered with zero ongoing costs. By integrating MeetingPlace into WebEx NHS CfH can provide the audio stream within WebEx at zero cost as well

Cloud

- Scalability. By utilizing a hybrid on-premise/cloud topology NHS CfH can scale up quickly should it need to by using the full breadth of the Cisco WebEx cloud solution
- Multi-Vendor support (especially mobile devices). Using the Cloud service NHS CfH can instantly bring in diverse endpoints, such as iPhones, iPads, or Android devices. As and when Cisco introduces new clients in the future, these will natively work with the NHS CfH solution.

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ICT Technical Architecture and
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The solution also minimizes the amount of traffic leaving the corporate network, a critical issue when you consider the sensitive nature of the data used within the NHS.

Following the CUWL project, NHS CfH acquired several Cisco Unified Videoconferencing Gateways. This hardware refresh simplifies interoperability across 31 standalone endpoints and provides back-end capabilities for supporting video telephony, slide sharing, and a high-definition viewing experience.

Inbound and outbound calls flows have also been simplified. By choosing to use a Local Gateway Service (LGS) from BT N3 (which is also run on a Cisco platform) NHS CfH can decommission eight ISDN circuits and, through economies of scale, make a sizeable saving on inbound and outbound call tariffs.

“With a greatly enhanced level of concurrency to specific Direct Dial-In (DDI) ranges, we can now host a meaningful audio conferencing solution in-house,” says Everson. “Whilst this is not directly related to CUWL, it is a critical component as without this we would have struggled to deliver MeetingPlace, and hence save the money in the first place.”

Results

By moving to Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing, NHS CfH has created an easy-to-scale, pay-as-you-go approach for making its IT estate compatible with future versions and introducing new collaborative applications. Moving to CUWL was essentially cost neutral when compared to upgrading ‘a la carte’ to the latest versions of CUCM, Unity and Unified Contact Center Express (UCCX).

“By purchasing CUWL instead we got these upgrades and a whole lot more,” says Everson. “With Cisco Unified Communications Software Subscription, we receive every Cisco software update throughout the year, at no additional cost. It’s very simple to add new users or Cisco applications using a consistent per-user price, which makes it easier to manage budgets.”

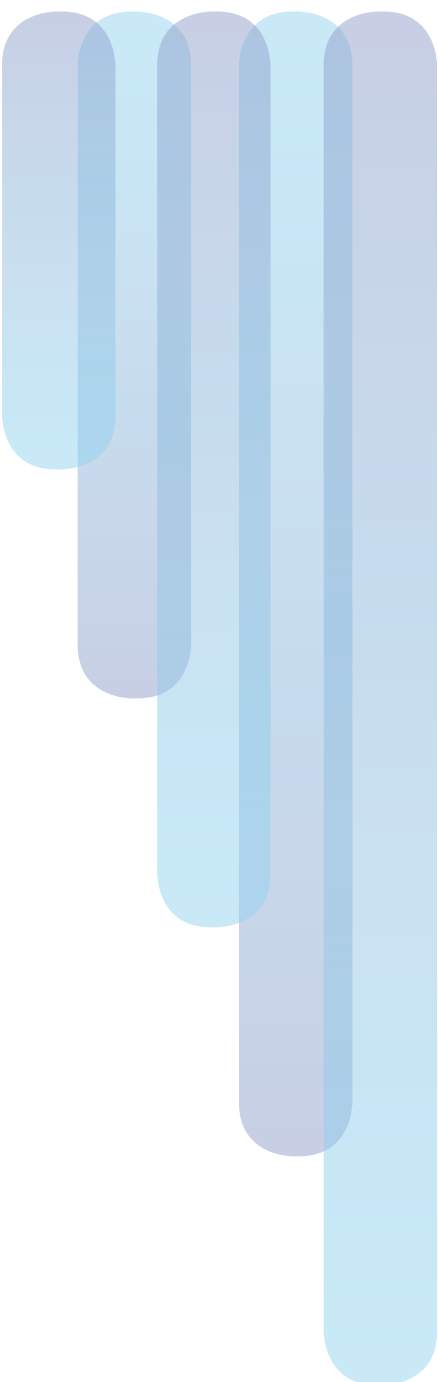
The decision to look beyond a basic software refresh and go with Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing has already provided a quick win. “By replacing our outsourced audio conferencing service with an internally hosted and integrated Cisco WebEx and MeetingPlace, we can now provide on-site audio conferencing with zero per minute charges, meaning that the investment in CUWL licensing will pay for itself within the first year,” says Everson.

Using WebEx solely as a virtual meeting tool, based upon Cisco experience on similar deployments, NHS CfH could achieve a 20-30 percent reduction in travel and subsistence expenses. A second wave of financial and carbon scorecard improvements are expected as WebEx becomes further embedded within business process, reducing the organization’s travel costs and carbon footprint even more.

Next Steps

The organization’s IT approach remains unchanged. It is still keenly seeking out the latest collaboration solutions to reduce costs and improve productivity however NHS CfH now has greater flexibility and choice, thanks to Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing.

Future projects under consideration include integrating Cisco WebEx with Cisco TelePresence. This goal is a key part of NHS CfH’s collaboration strategy and aligns with its desire to empower staff to participate in any meeting, anytime, from anywhere.



The organization is also looking into Cisco AnyConnect as a potential new corporate standard for wireless and VPN security. "Whilst we currently use Cisco VPN Client for our staff when working from home this is currently restricted to NHS CfH laptops," says Everson. "Using AnyConnect would open the door to allowing our corporate mobile phones to connect to our network remotely, and as such open the door to using services such as CUCM and Unity voicemail when mobile."

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Collaboration Architecture, please go to: www.cisco.com/go/collaboration

To find out more about Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing, please go to: www.cisco.com/go/cuwl

Product List

Unified Communications

- Cisco Unified Communications Manager
- Cisco Unity® Connection
- Cisco Unified IP Phones (7940, 7941, 7942, and 7960 models)
- Cisco Unified Communication Integration for Microsoft Lync (CUCILYNC)

Customer Collaboration

- Cisco Unified Contact Center Express

Collaboration Applications

- Cisco WebEx Meeting Center
- Cisco WebEx Node for MCS
- Cisco Unified MeetingPlace

TelePresence

- Cisco Unified Videoconferencing Gateway
- Cisco C20 Codecs
- Cisco 4510 Videoconferencing Bridge
- Cisco 3241 ISDN gateway
- Cisco Videoconferencing Control Server
- Cisco Videoconferencing Control Server Expressway



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