

Software Developer Improves Communications for Employees Near and Far

Global Vision and ESI Technologies use unified communications to improve employee productivity and enhance customer service

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p>GLOBAL VISION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SMB/Technology/Pharmaceutical • Montreal, QC • 32 employees in Montreal and London, UK <p>BUSINESS CHALLENGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Desire to improve network performance and communication systems
<p>NETWORK SOLUTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Replaced legacy telephony equipment with unified communications solution • Implemented wireless network between two locations • Upgraded switching and security equipment to support a VPN for mobile staff
<p>BUSINESS RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to work remotely has improved employee productivity • Faster, more reliable network offers increased support for Web applications • Easier communication with traveling employees and sales reps worldwide has improved collaboration

Business Challenge

Global Vision, Inc. is a Montreal-based company that specializes in technology to help ensure content integrity for labeling and packaging for the global pharmaceutical industry. Eighty-five percent of Global Vision's customers are in the pharmaceutical industry and include the top pharmaceutical companies in the world. Global Vision's Montreal team of 30 employees and two sales employees in London, England serve the company's mandate as software developer, integrator, and supporter.

In the pharmaceutical industry, it is especially important that Global Vision's product does what it is supposed to not only in terms of complying with each country's federal regulations but also helping ensure the safety of its clients' customers as well as containing the clients' risk and potential costs. A label recall, for example, could exceed a million dollars for a pharmaceutical company, or worse, result in the death of a patient from improper labeling.

To continue to serve its customers with the same degree of reliability, it was essential that Global Vision upgraded its communications platform to one that provided stability and room for growth.

The small company had also increased its number of employees and added an additional temporary location in Montreal, which it could not support with its aging telephony and network infrastructure. Global Vision's sales employees in the United Kingdom and traveling employees also needed a way to access the network outside of company walls so they could work from anywhere in the world. The company also needed a more resilient network that could support bandwidth-intensive applications such as [Cisco WebEx®](#), which sales reps use to demonstrate the software to clients - a crucial part of the sales cycle that could result in lost sales if network performance is poor.

Network Solution

In 2006, after becoming dissatisfied with a competitor's networking solution, Global Vision's Chief Operating Officer, David Perlis, turned to [Cisco® Silver Certified Partner](#) ESI Technologies, based in Montreal, Quebec. Global Vision replaced two of its old switches with three [Cisco switches](#), including one that is connected to the two buildings wirelessly. This, in large part, was to accommodate Global Vision's expanding workforce, which grew by 40 percent last year and is anticipated to grow at that rate over the next several years, and a new temporary Montreal location directly across the street from its corporate headquarters.

Having grown from six to 30 employees in just under a decade, Global Vision's network infrastructure had evolved into a patchwork of equipment that was now insufficient to satisfy the present-day demands of the company. Global Vision realized that it needed to upgrade its switching and security equipment in order to accommodate a VPN (virtual private network) so that its employees both in Canada and in the United Kingdom could work more productively from anywhere in the world. Initially, Global Vision was thinking of buying one switch. But after talking to ESI, the plan expanded into reviving the company's entire network over the last year and a half.

“We need to protect our business, and we need to be accessible for our clients, which was a big push for our communications platform.”

— David Perlis, Chief Operating Officer, Global Vision

“With a rapidly growing business, including setting up a UK office, Global Vision quickly realized that an investment in a solid network infrastructure and communications solution would give them a platform for continued growth,” says Patrick Naoum, vice-president, client solutions at ESI Technologies.

“We need to protect our business, and we need to be accessible for our clients, which was a big push for our communications platform,” says Perlis. “Once we started looking at the feature set of what Cisco had to offer, it seemed like a natural step to replace everything to help ensure our future growth.”

Global Vision ripped out its wired network and installed [Cisco APs](#) (Access Points), connecting its two buildings in Montreal through a WAP (Wireless Application Protocol), which enables employees to access the Internet from a mobile device such as a laptop, cellular phone, or PDA. Global Vision has a wireless network internally in the building as well as one that connects the two buildings with a 54 MB connection that Global Vision will be upgrading to a 100 MB connection in the near future.

Global Vision also replaced its legacy telephony equipment with 30 [Cisco Unified IP Phone 7900 Series](#). With its old phone system, Global Vision was at a point where it could not add any more phone lines and would have to add more hardware if it wanted to add new equipment. Now, adding an additional phone is as easy as calling up ESI and ordering a phone. Global Vision's staff can install the phone themselves, and employees can take phones with them wherever they go.

The old phone system was separate from the company's voicemail system, which did not give employees the ability to transfer calls to their mobile phones - an important business function for traveling employees. Global Vision brought all communications (data, voice, and video) together with [Cisco Unified Communications](#) for SMBs, which is specifically designed to meet the needs of businesses under 250 employees.

Business Results

Based on employee feedback, one of the main benefits that Global Vision staff have gained from a Cisco Unified Communications system is the ability to work from home or a hotel room. Prior to implementing the solution, if employees could not come into the office, which can be often during Montreal's harsh winters, they could not work from home, says Perlis. With the VPN in place and soft phones installed on internal sales staff's laptops, they are able to work from home and while traveling, saving time and improving productivity. Global Vision also saves a lot of time in terms of sharing information. Now that the sales office in the United Kingdom can connect to the network in Montreal, the team has experienced significantly improved communication and collaboration.

As a company that serves a global marketplace, Global Vision itself is now able to be more of an international company with the improved mobility of its workforce. Employees now can take their phones with them and plug into the network from virtually anywhere. In the past, moving employees and their extensions was an issue. Now, employees can set themselves up in a short period of time and do not require external help with setting up voicemail or other call features. Improved access to the phone system with call transfer to an employee's cell phone has also meant that employees can always be on call even if the customer is halfway around the world.

Global Vision also achieved significant cost savings from switching to a wireless network. "We went with wireless because the cost of wiring and renting the poles from Hydro Quebec would have been cost prohibitive," says Perlis. "Because we designated the second building as a temporary solution, the network can come with us anywhere, and we can continue to take advantage of our wireless capability as we continue to grow our business."

FOR MORE INFORMATION

To find out more about Cisco Unified Communications, go to:

<http://www.cisco.com/en/US/products/sw/voicesw/index.html>

For ongoing news, please go to <http://newsroom.cisco.com/canada/>

**Americas Headquarters**

Cisco Systems, Inc.
170 West Tasman Drive
San Jose, CA 95134-1706
USA
www.cisco.com
Tel: 408 526-4000
800 553-NETS (6387)
Fax: 408 527-0883

Asia Pacific Headquarters

Cisco Systems, Inc.
168 Robinson Road
#28-01 Capital Tower
Singapore 068912
www.cisco.com
Tel: +65 6317 7777
Fax: +65 6317 7799

Europe Headquarters

Cisco Systems International BV
Haarlerbergpark
Haarlerbergweg 13-19
1101 CH Amsterdam
The Netherlands
www-europe.cisco.com
Tel: +31 0 800 020 0791
Fax: +31 0 20 357 1100

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