

College Smarts: HCC improves service, cuts cost / support time with campus-wide IPT deployment

Customer Overview

Houston Community College (HCC), is a higher education organization reaching all of Houston through its many branch campuses, making HCC the fourth-largest community college system in the United States with over 55,000 students.

Business Challenge

When HCC began planning its historic building and renovation campaign, University leaders realized they needed to develop a plan to deploy a highly available and scalable telephony solution. This solution would need to facilitate a number of important objectives including:

- Perform as a highly available and scalable solution appropriate for such a critical application;
- Allow for rapid deployment to new buildings and campuses as they were completed and brought online;
- Reduce the various costs associated with Moves, Adds, and Changes as staff moved from room to room, building to building, and even campus to campus; and
- Provide Automatic Call Distribution (ACD) capabilities for the registration and financial services teams.

Proposed Solution

In collaboration with the HCC Team, Troubadour worked with Cisco to design and develop a solution to accomplish these objectives, leveraging the Cisco Unified Communications platform. The solution was designed to provide centralized call processing between HCC's two data centers. The design was initially sized to fit several thousand users, but was architected to be able to scale as more and more campuses are added. The deployment design over multiple data centers provides HCC with system redundancy over two separate campuses, which is particularly important in the unpredictable Gulf Coast climate. The proposed solution consisted of:

- Cisco Publisher and Subscriber at Core A, Cisco Subscriber at Core B;
- Cisco Unity for voicemail;
- Cisco Contact Center Express in a High Availability configuration for ACD functions;
- Cisco CMM module with PRIs in a 6509 at Core A, Cisco 2851 with PRIs at Core B;
- Cisco 28xx with SRST at each campus to provide failover call processing in the event of a WAN outage;
- Cisco VG224 to provide analog lines for high-density sites, ATAs for sites with fewer analog endpoints;
- Cisco 7961G IP phones for staff, Cisco 7941G IP phones with wall mounts for classrooms;
- Cisco PoE blades for IP phones;
- Cisco Emergency Responder for 911 location information.

Business Results

The solution has been approximately 80% deployed, and is meeting all of the objectives stated for the project by HCC. The system has performed flawlessly with no call processing outages, and overall user feedback has been extremely positive. Additionally, administration has been simplified to a web browser, and Moves, Adds, and Changes have been reduced to virtually no cost activities. Contact Center Express has transformed the registration and financial services functions for Central College by drastically improving customer service with better call handling, better use of agents, and extensive built-in reporting. The system configuration process to bring a typical new site online is less than a day, and phone deployment has been made easier as the deployment simply plugs an IP phone into a "hot" network jack. The success of this first phase has led to Phase II, which will consist of all of the remaining campuses.

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