



Blount International

Case Study

About Blount International

Blount International, Inc. is a global manufacturer and marketer of replacement parts, equipment, and accessories for the forestry, lawn and garden; farm ranch, and agriculture; and concrete cutting and finishing markets, and is the market leader in manufacturing saw chain and guide bars for chain saws. Blount sells its products in more than 100 countries around the world and is based in Portland, Oregon.

Business Challenge

Blount's contact center played an essential role in the firm's revenue-generating lines of business as well as their customer support. Therefore, Blount places a high level of importance on system uptime.

The fact that Clarity Connect could support high availability architecture, a 24x7 help desk and the required system uptime were all key factors in Blount's decision to purchase the product.

"It was essential for us to select a contact center solution that was above all, reliable. We pride ourselves on the responsiveness of our support centers. Connect's high availability architecture far surpassed that of other available solutions," said Debbie Weintz, Helpdesk Supervisor at Blount.

While Blount had chosen to replace its Nortel PBX with Microsoft Lync, it was in need of a call center product that could provide IVR, ACD, detailed reporting and the ability to transfer calls internally and externally. After doing some research on contact centers for Lync, Blount determined that it needed a contact center solution that was native to Lync in order to more seamlessly work with their environment and provide a unified platform user experience.



Solution

Blount replaced their legacy Nortel PBX with Microsoft Lync, and selected Clarity Connect, a contact center that is native to Lync, to provide the required functionality for their contact center.

Blount took advantage of many of the standard features available in Connect, including IVR, ACD, call recording and reporting; all without having to install software on the agent or supervisor desktops. Clarity Connect also enabled Blount to easily transfer calls between agents, employees and outside vendors. Blount was able to utilize these features easily out of the box with Clarity's standard pricing model.

We're large enough that we have several different call centers, some with multiple sales groups. We needed a flexible contact center like Connect to adapt to our needs and that was easy for our agents to use," said Weintz.

It was essential that Blount and Clarity work together to provide a consistent and seamless support model to avoid outages and resolve any trouble tickets quickly. The combination of a robust, stable product and Clarity's world-class support services enabled the solution to meet all of Blount's requirements for stability and availability.

Clarity Connect supports load balancing in a high availability (HA) architecture to ensure seamless failover. Many contact center

products provide only a warm standby option with timeouts and agents failing over to another server, or worse yet, a cold standby where servers must be manually brought online to take over. Clarity Connect utilizes the same active/active deployment architecture that Lync uses and is able to leverage the same infrastructure components that are required for an HA deployment of Lync (e.g. load balancers, SQL Server clusters).

"The stability and availability of our product is something we take very seriously. We account for it throughout the development process and implementation for each client. For this project, we utilized Blount's existing Lync infrastructure to make the contact center a pure extension of their Lync environment. The platform is seamless for their agents, supervisors, and admins and really grounds the platform in the organization," said Jon Rauschenberger, Chief Technology Officer at Clarity Consulting.



Results

Blount uses Connect to power several different call centers that work internally and externally. Since implementation of Connect, Blount's contact center has experienced 100% uptime.

“Support and stability were very important to us when selecting a contact center product. The fact that we have not experienced any downtime or significant issues since went live with Connect in 2011 speaks volumes. There has been a significant reduction in time that our IT and contact center managers spend on the contact center since we moved to Connect,” said Weintz.

Blount was also pleased with Connect's agent and supervisor dashboards for their ease-of-use and intuitive user experience.

“All of our call center agents and supervisors have been very happy using the Connect product,” said Weintz. “When we switched our voice workload to Lync, we underwent training to get our users up to speed. Not having to train them on a whole new platform with Connect saved us a lot of time and money. The user experience is seamless.”