TalkTalk Business

MICHELDEVER TYRE & AUTO SERVICES

TYRE GIANT RELIES ON TALKTALK BUSINESS TO KEEP THE WHEELS ROLLING

ABOUT
MICHELDEVER TYRE SERVICES LTD

Micheldever Tyre Services Ltd sells six million tyres a year for cars, motorbikes, trucks and everything in between. The business is split between a large wholesale operation (supplying, among others, the VW group in the UK and a wide range of independents) and a retail arm under the Protyre brand. The retail business encompasses 170 sites across the UK which offer servicing and MOT, alongside tyre sales and fitting. The company employs around 2,200 people.

Micheldever has been working with TalkTalk Business since 2008, in which time the business has grown substantially. IT is considered a strategic department, supporting the company's ambitious expansion plans with a bedrock of efficient and reliable technology. For 13 years, TalkTalk Business has helped it achieve those aims.

talktalkbusiness.co.uk
0800 954 5707
Lines are open Mon-Fri 8:30am - 6pm

THE CHALLENGE

"OUR LEGACY TECHNOLOGY WAS HOLDING US BACK. WE USED DIFFERENT TELEPHONY SOLUTIONS IN EACH OF OUR SEVEN CALL CENTRES, ALL BASED ON ISDN LINES. PASSING CALLS BETWEEN SITES WAS CLUNKY AND INEFFICIENT. WE NEEDED TO MODERNISE OUR ENTIRE TELEPHONY INFRASTRUCTURE."

LUKE CLAUGHTON
HEAD OF IT, MICHELDEVER

The IT challenge for Micheldever can be summarised as a quest for continual improvement. In the last 18 months or so, that quest has focused on three specific challenges. The company operates seven call centres and its telephony solution – based on traditional ISDN landlines – was increasingly unfit for purpose. Having seven different systems in one business was inefficient, and handover between sites (for more effective call management) was "clunky". Legacy technology was proving a barrier to the company's ambitions.

While that was an issue the business was addressing before the onset of Covid, the pandemic added another dimension. In March 2020, Micheldever's telephony solution suddenly had to facilitate a mass transition to home working.

The third challenge centred around the digitisation of the company's warehousing. The logistics required to import, store and transport millions of tyres had always been complex, but this challenge had increased as the business grew. With a total of 14 warehouses, Micheldever's paper-based warehouse management solutions were proving inefficient and imprecise. Digital alternatives were essential, but they would require all-but infallible connectivity. The business couldn't risk prolonged periods of downtime that would effectively grind operations to a halt.

THE SOLUTION

"AFTER DISCUSSIONS WITH TALKTALK BUSINESS, WE CAME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT A SIP TRUNKING SYSTEM WOULD CREATE A SIMPLER, MORE RELIABLE AND MORE EFFICIENT SOLUTION TO COVER THE WHOLE BUSINESS."

LUKE CLAUGHTON
HEAD OF IT, MICHELDEVER

As part of a continual improvement strategy with Micheldever, TalkTalk Business suggested the company adopt a SIP Trunking telephone system. The switch would simplify its communications into one seamless solution. It would also add stability, allow the business to better manage call flows and take advantage of advanced unified communication features.

That project was completed before the pandemic and was working well. But in March 2020, the company's telephony required further modification as a large proportion of employees switched to home working. TalkTalk Business quickly stepped in to implement a cloud bolt-on to cover Micheldever's dispersed teams. It proved an excellent pandemic stop gap, allowing call centre staff to be as productive at home as they were in the office.

The warehouse digitisation project is ongoing and will be complete by the end of 2022, and at its core involves a significant connectivity upgrade that will benefit the whole business. In the last year, that work has included the installation of new Ethernet over Fibre to the Cabinet circuits across the business and Ethernet in the First Mile leased lines in larger sites.

These upgrades are all part of a new, more robust connectivity solution that will drive both the continued expansion of Micheldever and further digitisation of core operations. TalkTalk Business is also replacing many of the company's legacy network switches with Meraki alternatives, for easier configuration and monitoring. Warehouses have been equipped with dual connectivity to ensure digital solutions are always up and running.

THE RESULTS

"CALL CENTRE STAFF NOW ACCESS THE TELEPHONY SYSTEM WHEREVER THEY ARE, VIA A HANDSET OR SOFTPHONE APP. THAT WAS VITAL DURING LOCKDOWN, BUT IT'S ALSO ENHANCING THE BUSINESS IN THE LONG-TERM BY MAKING US MUCH MORE RESPONSIVE TO CUSTOMER NEEDS. IT'S MUCH EASIER TO OFFER CUSTOMERS A CALL CENTRE SERVICE BEYOND TRADITIONAL OFFICE HOURS."

LUKE CLAUGHTON
HEAD OF IT, MICHELDEVER

SIP solutions from TalkTalk Business was already proving a successful investment before the pandemic, allowing Micheldever's contact centres to manage calls more effectively. The pandemic further proved the solution's worth, with a simple bridging connection to the cloud allowing staff to take professional telephony home with them.

That stop gap has now been replaced with a more permanent but equally flexible solution. At the moment, Micheldever staff are splitting their time between the office and home. Their unified communications simply follow them wherever they go, accessed via handset or softphone app. That has allowed the business to be much more responsive to customer needs, with contact centre staff no longer restricted by office opening hours.

Meanwhile, enhanced connectivity has created a solid foundation for the company's continuing growth and plans for a fully digitised warehouse operation are firmly on track.

But Luke says that, with TalkTalk Business, it's as much about support as solutions. "The great thing about the account management team at TalkTalk is that they have time to invest in us," he adds. "Together we're always looking at what opportunities there are, what systems are available, and how we can get more out of the technology we have. It's about supporting what we've got, and at the same time looking at what we might do better."

Together, TalkTalk Business and the IT team at Micheldever have created a more resilient, agile and future-looking technology infrastructure. And thanks to TalkTalk's responsive, proactive account management team, recent improvements to the company's communications and connectivity are just the latest stage of an ongoing process of innovation. A strong relationship between two forward-thinking businesses ensures Micheldever always has the right IT infrastructure to keep the wheels turning.