

ST. JOHN AMBULANCE IMPROVES OPERATIONS AND REDUCES IT COSTS WITH INTELLISYN

IntelliOffice consolidates network operations and IntelliTalk reduces phone costs by 60%

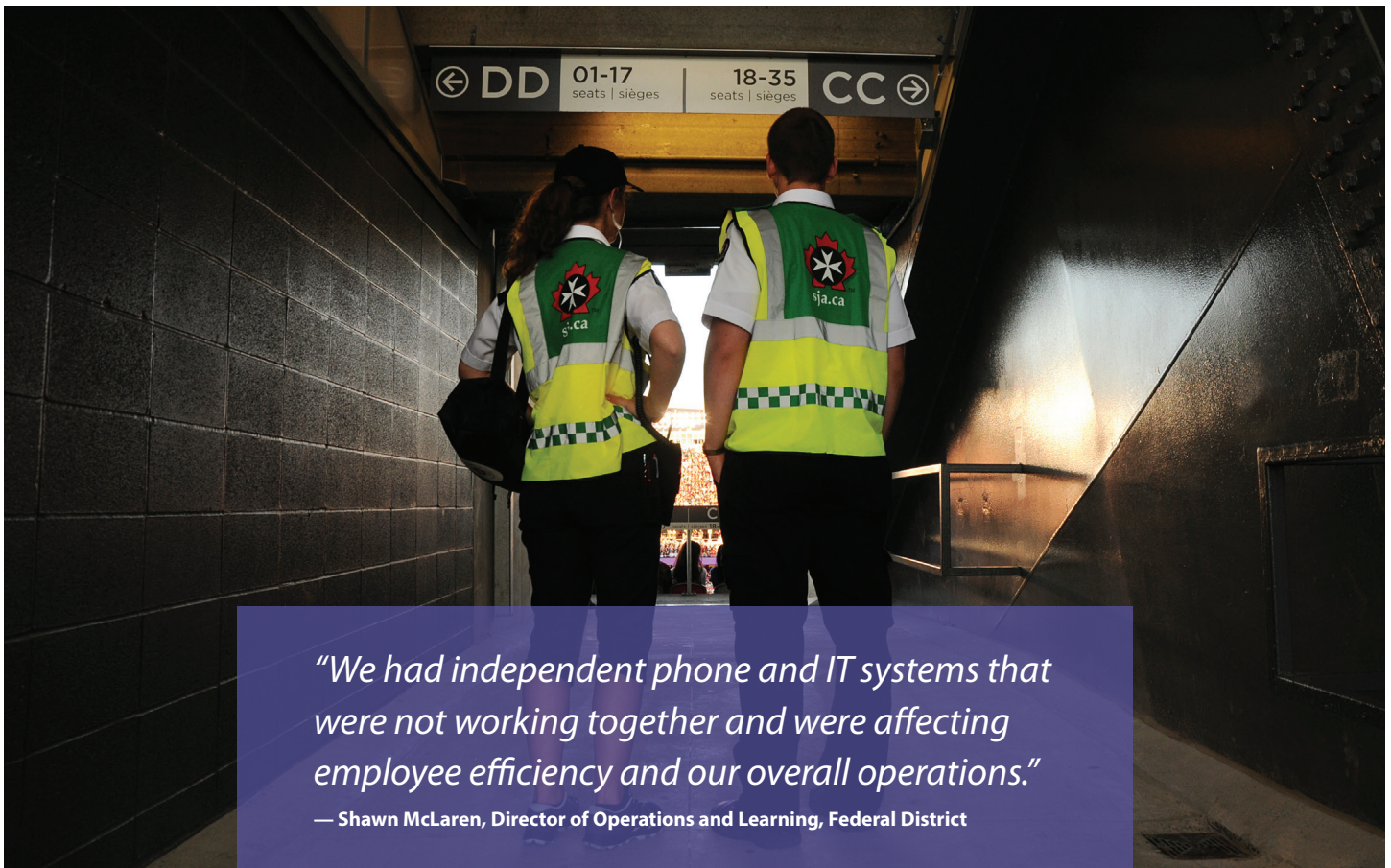


Established in 1883, St. John Ambulance is a charity dedicated to helping Canadians improve their health, safety, and quality of life through training and community service. With councils in every province and in the Northwest and Nunavut territories, the organization's network of volunteers across the country come to the aid of Canadian communities with assistance, expertise, caring, and compassion during human and natural disasters. Volunteers include uniformed members who provide first aid and emergency response support, as well as support for people confined to health care facilities. Instructors, volunteers, and staff also provide high-quality first aid training, CPR, and other lifesaving skills under the guidance of a network of medical and health care professionals.



St. John Ambulance Saint-Jean

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— Shawn McLaren, Director of Operations and Learning, Federal District

With presence across Canada, St. John Ambulance is structured around a network of regional councils, which includes a Federal District Council in Ottawa. Each council provides services to its community through its own volunteers and instructors, as well as a board and management team. The councils work together through a National Office to set policies, negotiate national agreements, establish a standard training curriculum, and conduct nationwide advertising.

Given this distributed structure, each regional council, including the Federal District, maintains independent communications networks and IT systems. Like most councils, the Federal District office was managing several legacy systems that were nearing end of life when it decided it was time to move to a more efficient, integrated business communications infrastructure.

The Challenges

“Our phone and IT systems were never designed to work together,” said Shawn McLaren, Director of Operations and Learning, Federal District. “We had a standard Bell phone system for our voice communications with basic phones that provided limited control over incoming and outgoing calls and our call tree. We had no ability to access our phones remotely. And, it was difficult to temporarily forward our call tree to another person in the office so that calls would be answered if one specific person was not available.

“On the IT side, we had a separate Internet service provided by a different supplier. That service was connected into a network of desktops, a file server, and a switch provided by IntelliSyn. The phone system, the Internet service, and the IT had all been in place for a few years and needed to be upgraded.”



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The independent systems from three separate suppliers were affecting employee efficiency and the Federal District’s overall operations. As in most of the regional council offices, the Federal District office phone system is the vital link between the local community and St. John Ambulance services. It is used to capture new business, such as bookings for first aid courses and CPR training. And, the IT infrastructure is the key to managing that business.

“The way we were set up made it difficult to manage the business and maintain continuity, especially when employees were working remotely,” Shawn explained. “The old phone system made it difficult to go through our call tree, get to an extension, and then through the system to finally collect messages. Plus, there was no way to forward an office phone to a cell phone so that calls could be received while we were out of the office. But, the biggest issue was that we couldn’t link our phones with our computers to manage messages and notifications.”

The IntelliSyn Solution

As part of its review of its IT system, the Federal District office asked IntelliSyn for suggestions on how to improve the business communications infrastructure to better support operations. After a full technology review and thorough analysis, IntelliSyn suggested a complete overhaul and consolidation of all business

communications services under IntelliSyn’s IntelliTalk and IntelliOffice solutions.

IntelliTalk is a voice over IP (VoIP) solution that replaces costly phone lines, switches, and cabling with easy-to-use Internet telephony. It provides all the call functionality of traditional voice systems at half the cost. This complete, turnkey voice calling solution includes a smartphone app and desktop software for Apple® or Windows® computers that allow employees to use their office extension from anywhere on any device. Employees can use a single number to make or receive calls wherever they are. Calls are seamlessly integrated with the system to appear to callers as if employees are in the office. And, because IntelliTalk leverages the Internet to provide IP-based voice services, all local calls are free of charge.

IntelliOffice eliminates the risk associated with creating, managing, and maintaining office networks. It gets organizations up and running with an end-to-end, turnkey, hassle-free network in a box built on the latest hardware and software from the world’s leading manufacturers and developers. With IntelliOffice, businesses get desktop-to-cloud managed office services including installation, ongoing management, maintenance and support for all hardware, software, and cloud networking elements for one monthly charge. All they have to add is power.



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The Benefits

“By moving to IntelliTalk and IntelliOffice we were able to upgrade our phone and IT systems, create one integrated infrastructure, and improve operations without any capital expenditure in network equipment, desktop computers, or phone hardware,” said Shawn. “IntelliOffice was packaged with a new Internet service that delivered an immediate 10 times improvement in Internet upload and download speeds. The IntelliTalk voice over IP (VoIP) service has delivered a 60% savings on our monthly phone bills. And, IntelliSyn delivered the combined services as a package under one monthly fee.

“But the greatest benefits are the savings in time and the increased customer service. There is a lot of competition in the first aid business. Half of our calls come from businesses looking for private courses and the other half come from businesses who want to send individual employees to one of our public courses. If we can’t answer the call, or if we can’t return a call fast enough, then they just move on to the next provider. So, we can’t afford to miss a call even if we’re away from our desks. With the new IntelliTalk system, if any of our employees are away from their desks for an hour or a day, they only have one button to press on their phones to automatically filter all the calls through to another employee. There is no time lost programming phones and there are no lost business opportunities.”

Shawn explained that one of the other benefits of the integrated IntelliSyn approach is that there is only one number to call for support. The IntelliOffice solution offers up to 24/7 support, if needed, which eliminates downtime with direct access to experts for everything from network consulting to complete technical support for desktop systems, physical networks, virtual networks, and all the elements in between, such as servers, routers, and switches.

“It’s a complete package that really makes everything a lot easier to manage and maintain,” Shawn said. “And, it’s a package that we can evolve and scale as our needs change because both IntelliOffice and IntelliTalk have features that we can integrate into our operation over time. For example, we’re a small office so we don’t need the video conferencing features that are available with IntelliTalk. But if other councils adopt IntelliTalk and IntelliOffice, I can see us using the conferencing features to stay connected with teleconferences and webinars.”

For more information about IntelliSyn’s IntelliOffice and IntelliTalk solutions, visit www.intellisyn.com.

