

# Voice in a Virtual World

## Telappliant swaps physical servers for managed VMware platform



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Telappliant

Telappliant VoIPOffice™ moves to a bluesource managed virtual infrastructure, with staggering improvements for the business and its clients.

Telappliant is an internet telephony specialist with more than 20,000 business customers. One of the first companies to launch VoIP services into the UK SME market, Telappliant was a founding member of the Internet Telephony Service Providers Association and is now one of the largest Voice over IP (VoIP) networks in the UK. Its customers range from small and medium sized enterprises through to large blue chip companies.

### The challenge

Over the last 10 years Telappliant has grown rapidly, thanks in no small part to the success of VoIPOffice™, its proprietary Voice over IP (VoIP) business telephony service. Starting with a single server which could host 12 clients in 2003, by 2012 Telappliant had scaled to an estate of 160 physical servers. Although a server-by-server growth strategy had worked well for Telappliant to date, they were reaching a critical mass in terms of what could be managed reliably.

With seven full racks and in the context of dramatic increases in data centre costs, each new server meant further hosting, power consumption and cooling charges. Virtualization pointed towards a range of benefits, including greater resilience and a lower cost base. However, when it came to researching the options, there was very little evidence to suggest how hosted voice, like VoIPOffice™, would fare in a virtual environment.

“When we first engaged with bluesource we were clear about the importance of our reputation and the need to provide a consistent level of service to our clients” says Telappliant’s Director and CTO Muhammad Nasim. “There was a lack of references giving guidance about how this type of complex infrastructure had been virtualized before, but bluesource gave us the confidence to start a managed assessment of the technology.”

## The solution

On paper, using VMware to virtualize and consolidate the physical estate made sense, but it raised a question about how Telappliant could successfully switch and then maintain an unfamiliar technology. Franco Lepore, Telappliant's IT Manager, had worked with systems specialist bluesource previously and engaged them to deliver a supported, turnkey solution. In the first stage, bluesource configured a pilot VMware server to test the migration process from physical to virtual, proving that the Linux-based VoIP application would work well. The next step

was to performance test the new environment, working closely with Franco to finalize a phased migration plan.

bluesource consolidated the 160 server instances onto a clustered VMware environment, in-built with fibre channel networking, enterprise-grade SAN, and fully configured for High Availability (HA). "Once we were comfortable with the technology, our thoughts turned to how we would run it once it had been deployed" says Franco. With its experience in this area, bluesource was an

obvious choice to provide on-going monitoring and management of the new infrastructure.

The bluesource Managed Service for VMware constantly checks the health of the virtual environment, ensuring potential issues are identified and fixed before performance can be affected. Knowing where his time is best spent Franco says: "we are experts on VoIP and our focus will always be on the VoIPOffice™ application, so having bluesource run our VMware platform makes more sense because that's their speciality."

## The benefits

The virtualization of its infrastructure has benefited Telappliant in a variety of different ways. Most importantly its customers gain, because thanks to VMware's High Availability the system now features additional fail safes which improve service continuity. With financially backed customer SLAs, Telappliant has therefore also reduced a risk that directly impacts their bottom line. The consolidation of so many servers also helps to reduce the mounting OPEX costs associated with rack space, power and cooling. It provides scope to grow the infrastructure, without the issue of physical server sprawl, and VMware management features make provisioning and maintenance easier.

"We've managed to reduce costs and resource overheads, from the supply chain right through to the data centre" explains CTO Muhammad, "we can bring new customers online in a matter of hours instead of days. Virtualization has also helped make us a more agile organization. We can respond to our customers faster and deliver an even higher quality of service."

"We cannot fault bluesource on their handling of this project" adds Muhammad, "Their technical guidance in the design stage was second to none and with the managed service we feel we have 360 degrees of coverage, protecting our clients and our reputation."

With 24 x 7 monitoring and support, bluesource has reduced the risk of server related complications for Telappliant, improving the efficiency and ease of server management. With a core business offering so dependent on reliable server uptime, Telappliant now has complete peace of mind, safe in the knowledge that its VMware infrastructure is in the hands of experts.

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