



CLARION CASE STUDY CBM UK

After an office move, the
3CX Phone System proved
a timely tool for teamwork
for international charity
CBM UK



HOSTED
COMMS



MOBILE



CLOUD
SOLUTIONS



DATA
CONNECTIVITY

CBM UK – THE OVERSEAS DISABILITY CHARITY



From humble beginnings in 1908, Cambridge-based charity CBM UK has grown into one of the world's leading disability and development organisations. Driven by Christian values, the charity tackles poverty, prevents blindness and improves health in developing countries. Through its work, it has transformed the lives of millions of people in the poorest parts of the world.

In recent years CBM UK has also become a leading advocate of inclusiveness, in all aspects of society, for disabled people. As a forward-thinking organisation, CBM UK played an important role in ensuring that disability was included in the UN Sustainable Development Goals agreed in 2015.



Founded in 1999, Clarion provides comprehensive IT, Voice & Data services to clients across a broad range of Industries, throughout the UK. Clarion offers complete technology solutions for Private and Public Sector organisations.

We specialise in the installation, maintenance and support of voice and data networks and systems. We also advise on and supply our clients with disaster recovery options, mobility solutions, cloud and hosted services, etc. We have partnerships with multiple hardware and software vendors and we are proud to be a Platinum 3CX partner.

THE CHALLENGE

Bringing people together is a challenge for CBM UK in more ways than one. The organisation is part of a wider CBM Global network of staff, supporters and volunteers from Member Associations and Country Offices operating in many different locations. Keeping everyone connected is an important aspect in the day-to-day running of the charity. Even before the outbreak of coronavirus, there were moves afoot to find more flexible ways to enable remote working.

Their existing phone system was an end of life Samsung Officeserv, with 50 users across 8 ISDN lines. An office move prompted a general review of costs, and revealed an alarming rise in telephone charges.

It quickly emerged that these costs were being incurred because staff were having to use their own mobiles to make and take calls. Limitations within the phone system meant that it lacked the necessary reach to guarantee reliable coverage across the network.

CBM UK was also aware that their existing ISDN telephony left them exposed for the future. BT has announced the planned phasing out of ISDN lines by 2025.

A new phone system was identified as a key tool to bring costs under control, and improve operational efficiency.



THE CHALLENGE

WHY CLARION?

The charity decided that a more versatile, cloud-based phone system was the way forward.

We were recommended to CBM UK, by another Cambridge-based charity and long-time Clarion customer, SOS Children's Villages.

CBM UK put us in touch with their IT consultants, specialists in ICT cost reduction. The brief was to find a unified telecoms solution that would enable CBM UK to forge ahead with its communications plans.

We suggested the award-winning 3CX Phone System, and included in our proposal a number of additional services that we felt would be useful for CBM UK. Our bespoke approach, carefully constructed to incorporate all possible user applications, resulted in our bid being successful.



OUR PROPOSAL: 3CX...AND MORE

More than 250,000 organisations around the world have transformed their telephony by switching to 3CX. The appeal of 3CX is that it provides a simple, but highly advanced, all-in-one unified communications platform for enterprises of all sizes:

- Free calls to UK Landlines and Mobiles
- No per extension licensing – based on simultaneous calls
- Unified Communications - combines voice, video and messaging
- Mobile and softphone options for remote working
- Self-administration from simple management interface
- Easy set-up - no expensive hardware purchase
- Deploy on premise or in the Cloud

We were able to address all of the concerns that CBM UK had with their existing system, and enhance our offer with some additional service benefits.

Especially welcome was that our proposal included the provision of Softphones for PCs and Laptops at no extra cost, with unlimited scalability to add further users – again without charge.

We also simplified our tender with a one-off cost for telephone handsets and headsets, and a POE (Power over Ethernet) switch and configuration. We were able to demonstrate that 3CX integrates fully with Salesforce, the charity's Customer Relationship Management software.

When CBM UK compared overall maintenance, licence charges and SIP channel monthly rental, Clarion proved to be the best value supplier overall. In short we offered CBM UK the most useful features for the lowest monthly cost.



“Clarion’s support team has been accessible and responsive”

PERFECT TIMING

Moving to new offices is always a bit disruptive, but 3CX is so easy to set up that we were able to fit around CBM UK's relocation plans.

And the timing proved extraordinarily prescient. Almost immediately after the new phone system was installed, the first UK lockdown began. For CBM UK, which supports communities in other parts of the world, shutting down was simply not an option. Without 3CX, staff would have been obliged to come into the office in order to keep in touch with its audience. As it was, all the features which make 3CX so suitable for remote working, were put to use from the start.



THE BENEFITS

- 3cx has enabled the CBM UK team to work remotely from home, with a smooth transition as all staff were given access to the new phone facility.
- Teamwork has been enhanced as all members can update their presence, and see everyone else's, directly on the system
- Quick messaging ability – different departments have found live messaging helpful, especially for handling responses within the switchboard supporter-relations team
- Reporting – extensive call data capabilities have allowed CBM UK to monitor timing of calls for donations, and frequency of contact by regular supporters
- CBM UK has seen benefits from free UK calls, thereby reducing their monthly phone bill
- At all times Clarion's support team has been on hand to provide training and help the charity get the most from the system.



“You can look at that dashboard and almost feel that you can see your colleagues, just as though they were in the office”



SYSTEM APPRAISAL

The 3CX Phone System has more than met CBM UK's original goal to enable remote working - quite independent of the COVID-19 pandemic.

CBM UK can now manage everyday affairs more efficiently. Staff can work remotely but have reliable contact with each other through Softphone applications on their PCs and laptops.

Internal communication has improved, as colleagues all access the phone system to relay presence or send each other messages with the built-in chat function.

Call reporting has provided management with invaluable data, showing differing patterns of calls relating to donations from new and regular supporters.

The charity has found the video conferencing facility to be a perfect online communications tool for small group meetings, and one-to-one discussions between colleagues and supporters.

Among the best-known names associated with CBM UK is former Blue Peter and Songs of Praise presenter, Diane Louise Jordan. During lockdown the charity was able to organise a free online event, where she talked movingly about the impact of sight loss on her family, and a life-changing trip to Rwanda with the charity.



“3CX has enabled us to find more flexible ways in which we can communicate, especially remotely”

