Case Study:
Make-A-Wish America

Since 1980, Make-A-Wish America has fulfilled over 270,000 wishes for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. Communication and collaboration are at the heart of what they do, as they rely on a vast network of over 27,000 active volunteers and 62 local chapters. Discover how Mitel is helping make those connections more simplified and more meaningful through mobile cloud technology.

AT A GLANCE:

SITUATION:
• Employees spread across local chapters around the country, including many who work at home
• Needed to keep communications and travel costs to a minimum
• Wanted a solution that could be quickly deployed so new employees/chapters could be on boarded easily and collaborate from day one

SOLUTION:
• MiCloud
• MiCollab
• MiVoice Business

RESULTS:
• Reduced operational costs with a single, easy-to-manage system—the entire communications system can be managed by a single administrator
• Delivered advanced features including single-number reachability, unified messaging and audio/web conferencing
• Every chapter, from the smallest to the largest, now shares the same collaborative capabilities for greater efficiency and productivity
• Lowered the cost of launching new chapters

Mitel®
Powering connections

Make-A-Wish America exists to make wishes come true for children with life-threatening illnesses and their families. Since granting its first wish back in 1980, the Phoenix-based organization today manages 62 distinct local chapters in the United States and a network of more than 27,000 active volunteers to turn children's dreams into reality. On a given day, Make-A-Wish may be asked to arrange VIP visits with police or fire departments, once-in-a-lifetime vacations to destinations such as Disney World or unforgettable celebrity encounters. Last year, the organization fulfilled more than 14,200 wishes.

Situation

Behind the magic of making dreams come true is a lot of communication, dedication and hard work on the part of Make-A-Wish employees, volunteers, donors and participating families. This requires a communications system that delivers high reliability, availability and, most of all, reachability. As Make-A-Wish CIO Bill Baumbach sees it, communication is at the core of everything they do: "It's really important for us to communicate with all the people involved in the wish process (including) the wish family, the volunteers, all the people planning and orchestrating the whole process, as well as our generous donor community."

Make-A-Wish is committed to keeping its operational costs as low as possible. So when it became apparent that the company's expanding operations were placing added pressure on their existing communications system, Make-A-Wish made the call to longtime partner Trans-West Network Solutions and Mitel.

Like many large organizations, Make-A-Wish had shifted over time from fixed communications to a more mobile environment where smartphones had replaced deskphones as the communications tool of choice. Yet their existing communications system still reflected the pre-mobile cloud era, with premise-based equipment and applications from a host of vendors. What Make-A-Wish wanted was a system that combined mobility with simplicity, so employees, volunteers and families could communicate and collaborate seamlessly from any location on any device.

Solution

Working with Trans-West Network Solutions, Make-A-Wish quickly identified Mitel as the one communications provider that could deliver everything the organization and its employees needed in a single, low-cost solution.

The rollout of the new communications system started at Make-A-Wish's headquarters in Phoenix, where they have more than 100 employees—approximately one quarter of whom work remotely. Make-A-Wish selected Mitel's MiCloud, MiVoice and MiCollab products as the core components of its new cloud-based communications platform.

The Mitel solution delivered a rich set of mobile-centric features that immediately brought Make-A-Wish's communications into the 21st century. These features included built-in audio and web conferencing applications, unified communications and messaging from a single application and single-number reachability on any device.

The migration to the cloud was simplified by the fact that Make-A-Wish was already using a Mitel PBX system as the foundation for its voice communications. One of the key advantages of the Mitel cloud is its seamless interoperability with Mitel's premise-based systems, which allows enterprises to easily shift to a more cost-effective and scalable cloud model while still leveraging their existing legacy system and features.

Rapid, repeatable deployments were an important consideration for selecting the Mitel solution. Together with Trans-West, Mitel was able to roll out the new cloud-based solution to everyone in the headquarters office in just a few days. As Jeff Pick, director of technology at Make-A-Wish, explains:

"What we've been able to do is onboard locations at our pace... deploy the technology solution, train, bring employees onboard and get those cost savings while keeping our existing investment intact."

> "Mitel came in with very competitive pricing, a better solution and ease of use. All these things just make my life easier."

Daniel Rivera, Manager of Technical Services
Make-A-Wish America

For the Make-A-Wish America chapters, migrating to the Mitel Cloud solution has made it easier to communicate and collaborate with the central headquarters. According to Make-A-Wish's Manager of Technical Services Daniel Rivera, employees were initially "blown away" by the difference. "Now," Rivera says, "when they're calling someone at headquarters, they're not just calling and hoping someone answers. They can look at the (Mitel) software and see if someone is available or in a meeting. If they're not available, they can send an instant message or simply leave them voicemail. They've got much more control and understand the (person's) availability now."

Results

Suffice it to say that the Mitel solution has been everything Make-A-Wish America wished for… and more. Since implementing the solution across their organization, they've been able to drive costs down while increasing efficiency and productivity. Today, Make-A-Wish has a simple, powerful communications platform that requires only one administrator to manage the entire system and one interface to access all of their communication and collaboration tools. "(Mitel) came in with very competitive pricing, a better solution and ease of use," Rivera adds. "All these things just make my life easier."

Make-A-Wish cites a host of benefits that have come with their new cloud-based Mitel solution, including:

- Seamless interworking between deskphones and mobile phones that allows them to forward calls between devices and be reachable on any device through a single number;
- Robust audio and web conferencing capabilities that simply work and save them money by eliminating the need for third-party applications;
- Less time spent tracking down colleagues and managing multiple message platforms such as voicemail, email and texts;
- Faster collaboration and fewer missed calls.

For Make-A-Wish America, the cloud has enabled them to communicate more effectively and more efficiently. Instead of a multiplicity of applications and equipment, the organization today enjoys the simplicity and mobility of a single solution that works the same on any device from any location. More importantly, Make-A-Wish now has the power to quickly extend its network of volunteers and national chapters with real-time collaboration and communications tools that can do more good in more places.

Learn More

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