

Marel upgrades telephony environment with Spectralink's DECT solution based on Microsoft® Skype for Business®; improves internal cooperation and staff availability

With over 4,000 employees worldwide, Marel has a strong presence in the BeNeLux region. Over 1,100 employees are based in the Netherlands, with offices in Oss, Boxmeer and Dongen. Marel is the leading global provider of advanced equipment, systems and services for the fish, meat and poultry industries. Marel is a multinational company, with offices in over 30 countries and manufacturing facilities in 16 locations worldwide.

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- Rob Janssen, Global IT Infrastructure Manager at Marel

The challenge

Marel's traditional telephony system had become out dated, so they started a search for an alternative for its Boxmeer and Dongen locations. After a few months, the telephony environment was phased out and replaced by Microsoft Skype for Business. This Unified

Industry
Manufacturing/Industrial

Overview

Marel's traditional telephony system had become out-dated, and was replaced with Microsoft Skype for Business. To complete the upgrade they needed a connection to the old switchboard. Wi-Fi telephony and consumer mobile telephony were ruled out as not stable or reliable enough. The prohibitive cost and variations in plans for mobile phones made a DECT solution the best choice.

Solution

- 150 Spectralink DECT handsets
- Seamless integration with Microsoft Skype for Business

Results

- Improved productivity - Mobility for all employees, better cooperation and understanding of staff availability
- Improved accuracy - Fast and efficient communication via high quality voice calls, no interference
- Solution is scalable - Ready to roll out to other Marel sites and offices

“ A big benefit of the new system and Skype is employees have insight into the status of colleagues. ”

- Rob Janssen, Global IT Infrastructure Manager at Marel



Communications platform is used by Marel worldwide for all its communications and allows Marel to communicate with external parties and internal employees via voice, chat messages, video conversations and online meetings.

In order to integrate fixed telephony with the new Microsoft Skype for Business solution, Marel looked at various options to replace the traditional telephony system.

Because a connection between a DECT system and the old switchboard was needed, Marel had to find a new, reliable DECT solution, after alternatives such as Wi-Fi telephony and mobile telephony were ruled out.

“In our opinion, technologies other than DECT were not stable and robust enough to use within Marel,” says Rob Janssen, Global IT Infrastructure Manager at Marel. “This was also the case for consumer mobile phones, where we looked at the average number of calls, duration and the number of different service plans per phone. The prohibitive cost and variations helped the IT department to build a business case for a DECT solution.”

Spectralink gets put to the test

Marel came into contact with Spectralink and discussed the replacement of its switchboard. It became clear very quickly that Spectralink was the best party to work with. The possibilities it offered to integrate the DECT solution with the existing Microsoft Skype for Business environment settled the matter to choose the Spectralink DECT solution as its new system.

The Spectralink team did a test between the different offices where the solution was needed. An important demand was that integral overlap was possible. This means that employees that work in different locations in Boxmeer are able to communicate with each other, and that this wouldn't have negative effects on the availability of the staff.

A combination of devices meets all demands

After the evaluation of the test results, Marel decided to purchase the new system with matching DECT handsets, that are compatible with the Microsoft Skype for Business solution. The 7622 handset, was specifically selected for the BHV team to allow them to send



text messages as well. This team is staff with special additional responsibilities in the case of a fire or accident, so they need to be able to respond quickly.

“ ...the solution we have in place now is scalable and therefore easy to roll-out to other locations worldwide, should there be need for it in the future. ”

- Christian Stoltz, IT Infrastructure Specialist, Marel

Spectralink's DECT solution with Skype for Business is currently used at the offices in Boxmeer and Dongen, where about 1,000 employees in total are based - ensuring these employees can communicate more quickly and efficiently with each other without interference due to the high quality of the voice calls.

Over 150 employees have a DECT handset, spread between office and manufacturing plant employees - and all received training and instruction, with information, on how to use the handsets and all the functionalities available.

“During the implementation, we were supported very well by Spectralink,” says Christian Stoltz, IT Infrastructure Specialist at Marel. “The only change experienced by our employees was a change in equipment. The goal was to make the transition as efficient as possible and we, with Spectralink, succeeded. Even when Marel faced some start-up problems, Spectralink followed this up and solved the issue efficiently and adequately.”

Jensen added: “A big benefit of the new system and Skype for Business, is that employees have insight into the status of their colleagues. If the phone is not answered, they can see if that person is already on the phone, in a meeting, or out of the office.”

“ Thanks to [Spectralink], we were able to change seamlessly to the new system, so employees didn't experience any difficulties. ”

- Christian Stoltz, IT Infrastructure Specialist, Marel

Marel decided to manage the Spectralink solution themselves, mainly because they also manage the Microsoft Skype for Business system. This means that the IT department has a better view of how the system is functioning and when problems arise. This is a huge benefit compared to the old situation.

Another benefit is that Marel can offer a fully integrated DECT solution at relatively low costs at the production facility in Dongen, where they used to work with standalone DECT phones with limited reach.

Conclusion

Continuous, real-time communication between the office and manufacturing plant is essential to improving productivity and more importantly, employee safety. Spectralink's ruggedized mobile devices offer unmatched voice quality, secure data sharing via Microsoft Skype for Business and via our SAFE program, applications to protect lone workers, who may find themselves in unpredictable situations, ensuring they can summon help in the case of an emergency.

Maximizing uptime using Spectralink's enterprise mobile solution has never been faster, easier, or more direct. Learn more at www.spectralink.com.



About Spectralink

Spectralink delivers secure, cost-effective mobile communication solutions that empower enterprises to streamline operations, increase their revenues and deliver a positive customer experience – each and every time. Since 1990, Spectralink has deployed millions of devices worldwide across the retail, healthcare, hospitality and manufacturing sectors – providing workers with the industry's most efficient, in-building communications.

For more information, visit spectralink.com or call +1 303.441.7500 (North America) and +45 7560 2850 (EMEA).