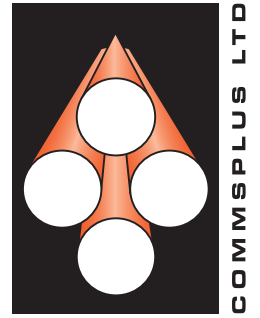


Case Study



Cheltenham Bournside School selects communications provider Commsplus - based on service, support and recommendation

Cheltenham Bournside School and Sixth Form Centre is a comprehensive school for 11 to 18 year olds, which also has Visual Arts Specialist College status. There are 180 staff who are responsible for more than 1,800 pupils, 500 of which are in the sixth form. The aim of the school's management team is to 'make learning memorable' and their specialist college status has enabled them to strengthen community links and to work alongside businesses, creating new opportunities for young people to experience art and design in a commercial environment.

In such a large school, and with so many pupils, it is vital that communications are as efficiently managed as possible. The school's bursar Gerry Sealy has overall responsibility for finance and IT, and he explains further:

"Parents phone in regularly for a variety of reasons, and messages must be able to be communicated effectively throughout the building. This makes our communications system vitally important. Our old BT Meridian was rather antiquated and in need of replacement. In fact, we'd had it for seven years and the lease was just about to expire, but we had not really got as far as thinking about a replacement. This was in early Summer of 2004, and it just so happened that we were contacted by the telemarketing team at Commsplus at the same time. I decided that it was a good time to start looking round for a new system, and of course Commsplus were one of the companies I considered."

"Commsplus are very helpful and I am absolutely happy with the service they provide. We really did make our choice based on the company. I enjoy dealing with the people there and that's the key thing."

Gerry Sealy - Bursar

Gerry was unhappy with the old system, not only because of the limited functionality but also because of the lack of support from BT. Having started the process of looking for a replacement after the call from Commsplus, he considered two other companies, as well as trying to talk to BT. But in the end it was Commsplus that won the day.



Cheltenham Bournside School

"I was looking for a similar solution, but with better service," he continues. "BT were not interested in talking to me about an upgrade, and to a certain extent, I thought that all the systems I looked at would do what we needed. It was really the company, rather than the technology, which was the decision-making factor. I decided they were the best company to deal with, and their proposal also included some other options which they felt would be useful for us."

Commsplus installed a Samsung OfficeServ 500 in the Summer of 2004 during the school holidays, with 45 extensions, an operator console and a number of incoming DDIs for key staff. The new solution also included voicemail and an auto-attendant to improve external communication with parents and internal communication between staff, both of which were recommended by Commsplus as part of the proposal. The system was purchased on a lease arrangement, meaning regular monthly payments for the school and no capital expenditure.

With the new Samsung OfficeServ 500 in place, calls could either come in directly to admin staff using their DDIs, or via the operator console in reception which handles all other calls to teaching staff. Each member of the teaching staff was also given their own individual voicemail box, which could be accessed securely from a single handset in the staffroom by keying in a PIN code.

One of the key benefits of the Samsung OfficeServ product range is that it is fully scalable and can be upgraded easily to allow increased capacity, without the need to replace handsets. This was also an important factor in the decision-making process as Gerry knew even back in 2004 that the school would continue to expand over the coming years. As a result, in early 2008



Commsplus replaced the OfficeServ 500 with a brand new OfficeServ 7400 for the school, which provides the increased capacity that Gerry needs and also has an auto-attendant system for improved call handling during peak periods. In addition, the OfficeServ 7400 also has ability to change voicemail messages into emails, which is of real benefit as previously reception staff had to write out messages in longhand and put them in people's pigeonholes, which was very time consuming.

Cheltenham Bournside and Commsplus have an excellent relationship and Gerry is extremely pleased with the decision that was made, as he concludes:

"We got references from other Commsplus customers and spoke to a number of users who were all very satisfied. But if we do have any little problems, we just pick up the phone and they sort it straight away. Commsplus are very helpful and I am absolutely happy with the service they provide. We really did make our choice based on the company. I enjoy dealing with the people there and that's the key thing."



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