



#### HEALTHCARE SUCCESS STORY

## ShoreTel UC System Transforms Multi-Office Health Service

At least 30% savings in annual telephony costs,  
10 people reassigned to more productive roles:  
\$450,000 in annual savings

#### CHALLENGE:

- Through organic growth and acquisitions, Access was using 13 multi-vendor, disparate telephony systems that were time consuming and expensive to maintain, and unable to provide business efficiencies.

#### SOLUTION:

- A ShoreTel UC system was deployed comprising ShoreTel 90 BRI voice switches and 150 easy-to-use IP230 and IP115.

#### BENEFITS:

- 10 call-centre personnel employed at sites throughout New Zealand have been reassigned to more productive work reducing salaries at by more than \$450,000 annually, and providing a minimum 30% savings in telephony costs
- Savings of \$2,500 per month in system costs were gained even after costs of leasing and installing an upgraded data network were considered
- ShoreTel eliminated the need for external support and a \$300 Telecom cost for adding 70 users
- IT staff at Access Homehealth have visibility across the system, now consolidated in one location, Christchurch, with three call centres and nine virtual call centres throughout New Zealand
- ShoreTel has enabled Access Homehealth to transform its business eliminating travel costs and downtime by using ShoreTel Conference for internal presentations and training, free calls between branches, and improved nursing care resources.

A not-for-profit national New Zealand health service, Access Homehealth provides support to 15,000 people in home care. Telephony is a critical resource for often home-bound people as it is for nursing and support staff at Access Homehealth who were using 13 disparate telephony systems across 20 sites that offered little more than call and talk capabilities. There was no visibility across the system. It was difficult to maintain. Phone system service, as well as moves, adds and changes were simply being put on hold.

Organic growth and acquisitions had resulted in Access Homehealth's multiple and disparate telephony including POTS and hybrid offerings from Panasonic, Samsung and Nortel, that resulted in a "system that never worked." Neither system was connected to the other in any way. Due to the Access Homehealth sites being located throughout New Zealand, telephony servicing required multiple technicians and all the resources of the Access Homehealth IT team for problem solving.

Phillip Hendry, Access Homehealth CIO said telephony maintenance was a constant issue for the home-care organisation.

"We had to maintain relationships with lots of different vendors and service people.

They were on a different page relative to our business expectations. Because it was such a hassle to service our telephony, we tended to leave things as they were and work within the envelope we had. As far as costs were concerned, we just couldn't get a handle on them."

He said Access Homehealth needed a single image system that could provide nursing and other care givers with improved resources to deliver better homehealth care. It also had to be robust, easy to maintain and flexible.

"The telephone is the most important link to the world for people living at home and in care. Responsive, flexible telephony becomes critical for patients and nursing



**“We were able to reassign 10 staff call centre staff to more productive work. In that move alone, ShoreTel must have saved us at least \$450,000 in annual salaries. When you add in everything, ShoreTel directly contributed to Access Homehealth gaining a minimum 30 percent cost savings in telephony.”**

**Phillip Hendry**  
CIO  
Access Homehealth

staff, particularly when people’s health if not their lives are at stake.”

“Staying with old and failing technology and trying to keep it operational is dead time,” he said. It almost always proves ineffective in assisting an organisation and actually costs you money rather than saving it.”

Access Homehealth needed a telephony system that could drive efficiencies and contribute toward improved health service delivery. It also needed a strategic resource to improve the business.

### Unlocking business potential

Following a review of leading telephony systems, and working with consultants Telesmart, Phillip Hendry and his team selected a brilliantly simple ShoreTel Unified Communications (UC) system comprising ShoreTel 90 BRI voice switches, and 150 easy to use ShoreTel IP Phones models IP 230 and IP 115. Also included was ShoreTel’s Converged Conferencing Solution and later, ShoreTel Instant Messaging and Desktop Presence.

Other IP telephony systems reviewed during the tender process could not match the performance of ShoreTel.

“Avaya could not provide a single image system, and the other vendors similarly could not deliver a logical pathway going forward,” Mr. Hendry said.

“No vendor except for ShoreTel had a solution that made sense in terms of us being able to administer it in one place, once. They could not match ShoreTel for its ease of use and flexibility.”

ShoreTel’s distributed architecture enabled businesses to push the boundaries of what could be achieved with communications.

“ShoreTel helps you create a world of new telephony-based services that takes your business to a higher level,” he said. “Everything ShoreTel is largely out-of-box and is simple to use. Staff find it easy to learn, it’s friendly, and it provides you with the flexibility to move or add additional phones at almost no cost beyond handsets.”

### Scalability for growth

Mr. Hendry said the scalability of ShoreTel was an unexpected benefit.

“We did not originally consider this in our selection decision yet it has been a major enabler for our rapid growth over the past year. The ShoreTel solution can comfortably accommodate up to 10,000 users on the one system and, importantly, scale down to 3-users, which is not an unusual small office size in New Zealand. ShoreTel’s larger competitors were unable to match this flexibility,” he said.

The benefits of ShoreTel’s scalability hit home for Access Homehealth when it created a new site at Nelson. “Our service consultants, Telesmart, provided us with a ShoreTel switch for line access and installed a couple of ShoreTel IP Phone model 230 handsets that were basically plug and play. The whole set up took a couple of hours at best and we were fully operational from then on,” he added.

Since the installation of ShoreTel, Access Homehealth had acquired an additional two branches and increased its staff from 150 to 220 people.

“Accommodating this growth into our operations with telephony was relatively straightforward,” he said.

“As an additional bonus we now have the flexibility to pull out handsets from one branch or more and set them up in another location for a special project or need, and then you can take them out at the end. You can do all of this internally without worrying about additional costs.... because there really aren’t any,” he added.

### Telephony as a strategic resource

A major impact for Access Homehealth has been the emergence of the ShoreTel solution as a strategic resource, and one that has helped to reposition the healthcare provider among its customers and other stakeholders.

“For most businesses, the first contact that a potential customer has with your organisation is by telephone. You are measured by the experience. When you are a large nation-wide provider, particularly



**“Staying with old and failing technology and trying to keep it operational almost always costs you dead time and effort. It almost always proves ineffective in assisting an organization in real terms.”**

**Phillip Hendry**  
CIO  
Access Homehealth

in the healthcare area, the intent is for all callers no matter where they are located, to have a consistent, positive experience with your telephone assets.”

Mr. Hendry said the ShoreTel solution provides visibility across the system as well as flexible resources to ensure consistency. Previously, Access Homehealth had different voice prompts, dissimilar voices, different on hold messaging, and different or no capabilities to do little more than call and talk features.

Hendry believes that the importance of a single telephony system is underestimated.

“At Access Homehealth we have a one-arm process manual for people who work in our call centres no matter where they are located. They use the same IP 230 black phone and ShoreTel Conference resources. Training is undertaken consistently even when you have multiple branches and different needs.”

### **Major cost savings**

He said a clearer picture of the cost savings created by ShoreTel did not emerge until after installation.

“The roll out of the telephone system produced savings of \$2,500 per month even after accounting for the leasing costs of ShoreTel and installing an upgraded data network to hold it together,” he said.

The monies were later reinvested in a Quality of Service WAN that has improved the delivery of its health support services for 15,000 people.

“The real savings came from eliminating on-call part-time call centre roles in our regional centres and consolidating operations to the main centre in Christchurch, which services the entire country,” Mr. Hendry said. “We were able to reassign 10 call centre staff to more productive work. In that move alone, ShoreTel must have saved us at least \$450,000 in annual salaries.”

“Mr. Hendry estimates that ShoreTel directly contributed to Access Homehealth gaining a minimum 30 percent cost savings in telephony.”

He said many people didn’t understand that the reduction in labour costs and time provides the real savings in telephony.

“The different costs of running a solution are negligible relative to the costs of staffing the system. A lot of people don’t think about that. When they review telephony they look purely at upfront costs. They don’t understand Total Cost of Ownership and the hidden savings that can be unlocked over the lifetime of the system. Good telephony is a strategic business tool for any organisation particularly for those in sales or customer service. It is vital to get that right,” he said.

### **ShoreTel Conference**

Hendry said Access Homehealth was the first organisation in New Zealand to install a ShoreTel Conference bridge. This resource allows you to eliminate the need for third parties when hosting conference calls, which usually incurs high call-costs.

“ShoreTel’s Converged Conferencing solution enables you to conference internally among your branches and with people externally. You can also share applications through a web browser enabling you to undertake a multi-site conference call and go through a set of PowerPoint slides at the same time. Is it pretty cool,” said Hendry.

The conferencing solution is being used by staff at all levels at Access Homehealth. Support people often use it to share their desktop and click through with other people. It links with Microsoft Outlook and is used extensively with training.

“ShoreTel’s Converged Conferencing solution is a pretty impressive piece of kit. The business case for it was very simple. We were spending more on external conference calls that the cost of conference bridging and the external services could not provide us with anywhere near the functionality we now have. It is a value-add that other telephony vendors don’t provide.

### **Telephony for improved services**

Phillip Hendry said Access Homehealth was now working on using ShoreTel to gain higher level resources to improve its business.

“There is a software development kit with the ShoreTel solution. Our software guys



**“You can do things with ShoreTel that you cannot do with other telephony systems. It becomes an integral part your business far removed from the commodity basis that other phone systems operate in.”**

**Phillip Hendry**  
CIO  
Access Homehealth

are now working with ShoreTel APIs to tie ShoreTel very tightly into our core information system that will take it to the next level. By way of example, we are developing a system named Safety Checks. It will enable our staff to be alerted by call or message on their desktop if a high-needs client has not received a visit by a critical provider.”

“You can do things with ShoreTel that you cannot do with other telephony systems,” he said.

“It becomes an integral part your business far removed from the commodity approach that other phone systems operate in. It is an entirely different business proposition not an add-on.”

### About ShoreTel, Inc.

ShoreTel, Inc. (NASDAQ: SHOR) is the provider of brilliantly simple Unified Communication (UC) solutions based on its award-winning IP business phone system. We offer organizations of all sizes integrated, voice, video, data, and mobile communications on an open, distributed IP architecture that helps significantly reduce the complexity and costs typically associated with other solutions. The feature-rich ShoreTel UC system offers the lowest total cost of ownership (TCO) and the highest customer satisfaction in the industry, in part because it is easy to deploy, manage, scale and use. Increasingly, companies around the world are finding a competitive edge by replacing business-as-usual with new thinking, and choosing

ShoreTel to handle their integrated business communication. ShoreTel is based in Sunnyvale, California, and has regional offices in Austin, Texas, United Kingdom, Sydney, Australia and Munich, Germany. For more information, visit [www.shoretel.com](http://www.shoretel.com).

### About Access Homehealth

Access Homehealth is a nationwide New Zealand community-based not-for-profit organisation, established in 1927 as a charitable subsidiary of Rural Women New Zealand (formerly Women’s Division of Federated Farmers). Its heritage goes back to the early WDFB Bush Nurses. All Access profits are donated to the community via Rural Women or used to improve our business. Access Homehealth works with the Ministry of Health, District Health Boards, GPs, ACC and other organisations. We are also an accredited member of the New Zealand Home Health Association. The broad aims of Access Homehealth’s care are to provide services that restore, maintain or promote health, and to facilitate self-care in a client specific way. Visit <http://www.access.org.nz>

### About Telesmart

Established in 2005, Telesmart is the fastest growing telecommunications companies in New Zealand. It specialises in business communications platforms - rich presence integration, phone lines, voice over IP, data and internet connections, mobile, tolls and more. Telesmart ranked 4th on the Deloitte 2009 Fast 50, NZ’s list. Visit <http://www.telesmart.co.nz>

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