

CLEARLY BETTER

MICHAEL PAGE AIMS TO GROW ASIA PACIFIC BUSINESS BY IMPROVING CUSTOMER SERVICE LEVELS WITH CISCO IP TELEPHONY SOLUTION.

Michael Page International is one of the world's leading recruitment and human resource consultancy firms, specialising in the placement of sales & marketing, HR, legal, supply chain, engineering, accounting, banking and finance professionals around the world.

Founded in 1976 in London, the group opened its first Asia Pacific office in

Australia in 1985. It has become a leading recruitment services company in the financial and banking sector in Asia following its subsequent expansion into China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Japan. Michael Page's clients in the region include Microsoft, CSFB, Barclays Capital, Motorola, Kraft Foods and Accenture.

THE CHALLENGE

MICHAEL PAGE INVESTS IN TECHNOLOGY TO BRING THE BEST OF THE WEB TO ITS BUSINESS PRACTICE.

Michael Page's objective is to establish itself as the leading professional recruitment and human resource consultancy firm in each of the markets and disciplines it operates. Towards this end, the group has committed to provide its 2,300 employees worldwide with continuous training to ensure the retention of talents, who can in turn service Michael Page's clients with their in-depth knowledge of the industry.

It is this industry knowledge that has enabled Michael Page to further expand its specialist recruitment activity. For instance, in Australia, the company launched its recruitment services for information technology (IT) professionals in 1996. Following its expansion into this sector, human resource services for legal, human resources and engineering professionals were also introduced Down Under. In Singapore, Michael Page's recruitment services have grown beyond the banking and financial sector to include human resources, legal, sales and marketing.

Michael Page is quick to identify technology as the key to the effective management of its fast-expanding business. "We have to enhance our

technology capabilities to increase the group's market position, open up growth opportunities and offer improved services in a cost-effective manner," said Anthony Tan, the firm's Singapore-based information systems manager.

The group's IT efforts date back to 1993 with the computerisation of its recruitment database. Four years later, the company launched its first-generation Web site. Since then, the site has undergone major transformations, sporting new features such as an online resume builder and an advanced search function. Advanced search allows candidates to look for jobs by sector, work type, salary and location. Individuals can also track down a position by its advertised reference number or by key words.

"We are constantly watching for ways to improve our services. The Internet is a convenient tool for the general masses and many businesses, and thus, is an important communication channel between our clients and us. Today, up to 80 percent of all job applicants come to us through our Web site," said Mr Tan.



THIS IS THE POWER OF THE NETWORK. NOW.



THE SOLUTION

CISCO-BASED IP PHONE SYSTEM DELIVERS CLARITY AND OVERCOMES COMMUNICATION BARRIERS.

In line with its customer-centric business approach, Michael Page recently invested about S\$80,000 to converge its data and phone networks in Singapore in hopes of offering clients speedier services. The investment includes IP telephony solutions from Cisco Systems and integration services from IBM Global Services.

The infrastructure overhaul is part of a regional effort to keep a lid on International Direct Dial (IDD) charges incurred daily among Michael Page's key Asian offices in Singapore, Sydney, Hong Kong and Tokyo.

The IP telephony project began in August 2003 in Singapore with the installation of 25 units of Cisco IP Phone 7940G and one Cisco IP Phone 7960G.

The Cisco 7940G sports a large LCD display to provide caller information and access to applications. The higher-end Cisco 7960G, which also has a large display, is designed to provide access to multiple telephone lines for handling a high amount of voice traffic.

The Cisco Unity solution was also implemented. Cisco Unity integrates with desktop applications such as Microsoft Outlook and Lotus Notes and third-party fax servers for unified communication. With Cisco Unity, one can listen to one's e-mail messages over the telephone, check voice messages over the Internet and forward faxes to any local fax machine.

As an integral part of the Cisco AVVID (Architecture for Voice, Video and Integrated Data) environment, Cisco Unity complements the full range of Cisco IP-based voice solutions, including Cisco CallManager.

Michael Page has also installed the Cisco CallManager, a software for processing circuit-based calls on packet-based networks and devices such as voice-over-IP (VoIP) gateways and IP phones.

"The entire system was implemented and launched in a week, marking our independence from an analogue PABX phone system that couldn't deliver the voice clarity we need," said Mr Tan. On selecting Cisco's solution, he noted,

CISCO IP TELEPHONY SOLUTION WAS IMPLEMENTED WITHIN A WEEK, DELIVERING THE VOICE CLARITY THAT MICHAEL PAGE NEEDED FOR ITS BUSINESS.

"Cisco is a known brand. Its products are reliable and the company provides global support."

"IBM Global Services has also done an excellent job in creating a system that meets our user requirements. Its dedicated team of services professionals exceeded expectations when it completed the project in less than a week. We are on track with plans to expand our IP phone networks to other offices in the region," he added.

Consistent vendor service is paramount for Michael Page since the implementation in Singapore is not a standalone project. Following the successful deployment of IP phones in Singapore, the recruitment firm proceeded to wire up its 100 employees in Sydney with IP voice networks. And the company is on its way to bringing the advantages of IP telephony to its Hong Kong and Tokyo offices.



THE RESULTS

MICHAEL PAGE EMPLOYEES IMPROVE RESPONSIVENESS TO CUSTOMER REQUESTS WITH CISCO IP TELEPHONY SOLUTION WHICH ENABLES THEM TO CHECK EMAIL AND PHONE MESSAGES OVER THE INTERNET.

When Michael Page first cut over to the new digital phone system in August 2003, users were amazed at the clarity of the voice calls, said Mr Tan. "Now, they expect that level of voice quality and stability wherever they go," he quipped.

Cisco Unity unified messaging solution also enables Michael Page employees to listen to their e-mail messages over the phone and check voice messages over the Internet. "The additional channel for retrieving voice and e-mail messages has allowed our employees to return customer calls more promptly. This has raised the level of professionalism at Michael Page.

The Cisco solution is a worthwhile investment."

MICHAEL PAGE RAISES LEVELS OF PROFESSIONALISM WITH CISCO IP TELEPHONY SOLUTION. THE COMPANY ALSO EXPECTS TO REDUCE IDD CHARGES SIGNIFICANTLY.

In the long run, the recruitment services firm also plans to eliminate pricey IDD charges levied on voice exchanges among the employees in its Asian offices. "With IP telephony, voice

calls are routed over a local area network connection. We do not incur IDD charges in this way. Rather, we pay only local call rates," he noted.

Michael Page is currently working on connecting the phone systems in Singapore and Sydney. When the IP phone networks are up in Hong Kong and Tokyo, the company will link up all four offices. Tan expects to save 20 percent to 30 percent on monthly communications fees.

Going forward, the recruitment services firm also envisions integrating its customer database with the IP phone system. This will allow the company to provide more personalised customer services over the phone. For instance, on receiving a call, a Michael Page service representative will be able to address a customer by name and retrieve data from previous conversations, upping the ante on service.

The personalised service will be supported by Cisco's intelligent networking architecture, which allows Michael Page to add technology components as its business grows.



THE PARTNERSHIP

TIE-UP WITH CISCO AND IBM BRINGS BUSINESS BENEFITS.

Understanding customer needs is the beginning of a successful story. Not only did Cisco and IBM Global Services grasp Michael Page's requirements, the two vendors are adept in project execution, resulting in the timely delivery of a reliable and scalable IP telephony system in Singapore.

"Our partners have come up with a wonderful system. We are very satisfied with their service levels and technical support. Their reliable engineers worked hard and suffered long hours to get the system running in a short period," said Mr Tan.

"We remain impressed with Cisco and IBM. There is little wonder why they remain market leaders in their respective fields today. We are also impressed with the performance of the IP telephone system," he added.

MICHAEL PAGE IS HIGHLY SATISFIED WITH CISCO SOLUTION PERFORMANCE AND SERVICE LEVELS FROM CISCO AND IBM.



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