



London-headquartered HLM Architects is a multi-award-winning, multi-disciplinary International Architectural practice with studios in London, Sheffield, Belfast, Cardiff, Glasgow, Manchester and the UAE.

Named as a top 10 UK employer by the Building Good Employer Guide 2018, HLM offers a broad range of architectural and design services to public and private sector clients, both nationally and internationally.

HLM's decision to upgrade its existing telephony software and infrastructure was driven by a range of factors. The firm's on-premise Avaya IP Office platform had reached end-of-life and was running across ISDN 30 lines which, as well as attracting high lease costs, were no longer future-proof.

These unavoidable realities meant change was a necessity rather than a luxury. However, the firm also saw an opportunity to introduce next generation technology which would better suit its own working practices.

avoira
fluent in technology



Business Needs

"We had a system that was very much reliant on our office buildings. It was very fixed, difficult to adapt," explained HLM's IT Director, Marcus Earnshaw. "We were increasingly working in different environments and flexible working spaces and needed a system that would match that."

He also wanted to further strengthen network resilience to support the firm's business continuity plan.

"We were looking at what we do and how we do it to establish if there was a smarter way to give us financial and efficiency benefits, without a massive upfront cost."

Rolling out the solution across HLM's five core UK studios "would give us a more hands-on approach, maintaining our level of involvement and allowing our IT team to be available across all sites," he explained.

Our Solution

Avoira recommended the firm upgrade to Avaya's IP Office Server Edition, hosted at its data centre, a 'tier four' facility specifically designed to host mission critical applications.

IP Office was already familiar to and appreciated by HLM's 160 staff and offered appealing flexibility and scalability.

"We have a very simple view of telephony in that we want people to be able to sit at a desk, wherever that desk may be, and be able to pick up a 'phone and make a call," said Earnshaw. "We don't want the 'phone itself to become part of the main hub of the day."

To further support HLM's flexible and remote working practices, Avoira recommended supplementing IP Office with Avaya's Equinox Experience, the vendor's unified communications and collaboration user interface and cloud service.

Business Benefits

The upgrade has made life easier and more productive. The Avaya's 9608G handsets used by most staff offer a simple log-in using a personal extension number rather than user and password combination.

Many employees make use of the Equinox software, enabling them to communicate via desktop, mobile or laptop devices, share desktops and benefit from licence-free audio and video conferencing.

Financially, Avoira's monthly fee operational expenditure model removed the need for significant capital investment. Removal of ISDN leases and a supremely competitive call package realised over £5,000 in annual operational costs.

Avoira's expertise and service philosophy meant "the upgrade was managed really well, It's a perfect fit for HLM's modern day working practices and, says Earnshaw, is "absolutely making us more productive."

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