

ABOUT SOUTH KENSINGTON MUSEUMS

South Kensington Museums group incorporates the Natural History Museum, Science Museum, Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum in Tring, and offices in Wandsworth, London. The group employs around 2,500 people who work seven days a week to service visitors to the museums as well as engaging in important research projects. The Natural History Museum is one of the world's foremost resources for natural science, with magnificent collections and groundbreaking research expertise. It is an international leader in the scientific study of the natural world.

For more information, visit www.nhm.ac.uk

CUSTOMER NEEDS

- A flexible telephone system to cope with frequent moves within and between buildings as well as external events
- Replacement for old PBX systems that were reaching end-of-life
- Need for single, standardized system across multiple sites
- Desire to reduce intra-site call costs and mobile phone bills
- Demand to support home and flexible working
- Rapid implementation

“With the Mitel IP communications network in place, we have built a springboard from which we can leap into the 21st century. Previously we were constrained by our infrastructure but putting in place such a flexible IP system has opened up new opportunities to work in a smarter, more efficient way.”

– Bob Estcourt,
Group Telecoms Manager,
South Kensington Museums



Natural History Museum Steps Into the 21st Century With Mitel IP Communications

Natural History Museum is part of the South Kensington Museums group that incorporates the Science Museum, Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum in Tring, and offices in Wandsworth, London. The group employs around 2,500 people who service visitors to the museums as well as engaging in important research projects. Its employees travel nationally and internationally when engaged in research and frequently liaise with other museums around the world.

Rethinking IT

Having used Mitel® PBX systems for its phones since 1988, Bob Estcourt, group telecoms manager at South Kensington Museums, realized that he had to prepare for the end of support for their legacy products. This prompted him to devise a strategy to migrate to IP communications.

The strategy was driven by a desire to create cost savings on calls and infrastructure. It was accelerated by several new building projects that resulted in employees having to move between offices while they were being refurbished. This meant that a new site in Wandsworth had to be rapidly brought into the telecom's network and IP provided the quickest and most cost-effective solution to this challenge.



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SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- Three Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platforms (ICPs)
- Two Mitel Contact Center Management applications
- Mitel Enterprise Manager
- Range of Mitel IP phones, including dual port

RESULTS

- Increased functionality for users with minimal training required
- Flexibility to get users up and running in a different building or at home in the event of a disaster
- Power users given teleworking capability for the first time
- Increased reliability and robustness of systems
- Simplified configuration and control through web-based management interface

Natural History Museum selected an IP-based solution to increase productivity and enable more flexible cost-effective applications, such as a teleworker solution. Now when users move desks they can simply pack up their phone with their PC, plug it straight into their new location and be up and running immediately. The implementation was so smooth that Mitel will remain the Natural History Museum's standard communications platform for the future.

Beyond a platform

Estcourt and his team soon realized that moving to IP communications presented more opportunities than simply cost savings. With add-on applications they could take advantage of functionality that had previously been the domain of large enterprises.

One such application is the Mitel Contact Center Manager, which is used by Natural History Museum's sister organization, the Science Museum, to handle incoming calls and rapidly solve inquiries. Screen pops automatically appear based on the caller's identity, providing the information to solve inquiries quicker and more efficiently. The Contact Center Manager is also used internally to handle all South Kensington Museum's IT related issues, supporting 2,500 users.

Hosting events are a major source of revenue for the museums. The Natural History Museum provides the site for an annual ice rink and is a popular venue for functions. With the legacy telecom system, it was difficult to service the needs of event organizers and often contractors would be brought in to set up the telecommunications. Now that IP communications is in place, the museums will be in a position to offer a fully functional system that meets all the requirements of these temporary users.

Reaching beyond the office

One of the key attributes of IP communications that attracted Natural History Museum is the removal of location as a barrier to communication. Staff are often on the road or working from home, using mobile phones to stay in touch with colleagues and business associates. This costs the organization a considerable amount in mobile phone bills and causes confusion over how people can be contacted.

In a bid to reduce these costs and to improve its employees' work-life balance, Natural History Museum is rolling out the Mitel Teleworker Solution to its staff. Initially five power users will trial the system that will enable staff to work from any office, on the road, or at home. The teleworker application provides a single extension number, toll-free internal calls, and removes the need to borrow international mobiles when travelling abroad.

Bob Estcourt, group telecoms manager at South Kensington Museums, said: "We intend to advertise teleworking as a service to the business and anticipate at least 50 employees using it in the first year. Staff deal with people all over the world and currently they have to stay late in order to deal with calls from different time zones. Many don't feel comfortable giving out their home number so the only alternative until now was an expensive mobile call."

Preparing for the unknown

Following the disasters and acts of terrorism of 2005, South Kensington Museums like many other organizations, has pushed business continuity to the top of its agenda. In devising a disaster recovery strategy, IP communications and the use of home working plays an important part and provides the flexibility to work from anywhere.

Estcourt explained: "Although everyone has mobile phones that can be used in the event of not being able to reach the office, this presents its own problems in terms of networks becoming jammed, lack of access to contact details and high costs. By using IP phones from home or another office, staff will simply be able to log on from a remote location and have the same functionality that they have at their desk. It is a major additional benefit of moving to IP communications."

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Companies don't make decisions, people do. That is why Mitel is leading the way toward a new and more personalized approach to communications for enterprise and small business. Our innovative solutions, applications and desktop appliances enable you to access, process and control your communications and information naturally, simply and efficiently.

Our solutions allow you to collaborate over distance and time and to interact with your customers, colleagues and partners as never before. By combining the power of voice, data and video over converged high speed networks, Mitel provides you with flexible and personalized tools that let you leverage the latest advances for personal and organizational advantage.

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GD 12918 PN 51010403RB-EN

