

## Bron Afon Community Housing

### Moving ahead with 5i and CNT

Bron Afon is a Registered Social Landlord formed on 31st March 2008 to manage and take control of a housing stock of over 8,000 homes from Torfaen County Borough Council. It is a not-for-profit independent local Registered Social Landlord with charitable status. Any surplus generated is spent on improvements to homes and services.

Bron Afon is a community based housing organisation with a rapidly growing membership - currently over 1,300 people - drawn from tenants and residents of Torfaen. The membership play a key role in the shaping and governance of Bron Afon, which currently has over 450 permanent members of staff working from 36 different offices and housing schemes.

Until March 2008 the Council continued to provide ICT infrastructure and support to the organisations covering PCs, servers, networks, applications and telephony. From this date it was necessary for Bron Afon to establish an independent infrastructure based at its own new offices.

In December 2007, 5i in partnership with Central Network Technologies were selected as the supplier, and planning for the project began in December 2007 with implementation being completed during the first quarter of 2008

### Building on strong foundations

Up until the point of stock transfer, the Council provided all ICT infrastructure and telephony systems for the support of its housing business. Bron Afon therefore needed to establish an independent infrastructure and telephony system in readiness for day 1 of the transfer. As this was a greenfield development they had the opportunity to exploit the latest technologies available.

Bron Afon decided to procure and implement a new IP based telephony solution at the head office that extended to remote offices and other locations (such as sheltered schemes). The IP Telephony solution needed to include contact centre technology to support a 24 hour operation. Requirements included call queuing, call recording, accounting & billing. The voice systems needed to integrate with the SunRay thin-client technology that was being procured in parallel with this.

Consultancy workshops were held to define the requirements and all systems were established in a very short space of time. All users were trained in the use of the new technology and were successfully migrated to the new systems in readiness for day one of the new organisation. Given the short timescales involved, the implementation was relatively pain free.

## Desktop Virtualisation - The next step

In further developing this already successful project, Bron Afon have been active adopters of the Sun Ray Ultra Thin Client technology which delivers desktop computing environments to users without the equipment and management costs associated with deploying full featured PCs on their desks.

Session mobility introduces significant employee flexibility. As well as giving the end user the ability to take their desktop with them wherever they need it, they are now able to take their phone and related communications tools with them.

Bron Afon's requirement was to leverage their existing investment made in the Cisco Systems IP telephony system and integrate that with Sun Ray session mobility to allow their users to have a single sign on for their desktop Windows session and IP phone.



## Bron Afon's challenge

With the new IP telephony system working well there were still some challenges to be overcome. If a user was not at their desk when a call was received, the phones just rang until it diverted to their personal voice mail. This caused issues for the Bron Afon Help Desk agents as the users' presence indicator shows the phone as 'logged in' and they assumed that the user was at their desk. Calls transferred were therefore routed to voicemail and if they were out of the office (on vacation or sickness absence for example), there was often a delay before the voicemail was acted upon.

If the user did remember to log out out from their phone, then once again calls were routed to their personal voicemail but at least the Help Desk could see the user was not logged in and handled the request accordingly. The main problem was that logging out from the phones was often forgotten and it was much easier for the user to leave the phone logged in. From a customer's perspective, the service was not satisfactory.

## The Solution - 5i BeAnywhere

The BeAnywhere solution automatically logs in and logs out the Cisco IP phone when the user logs in and out from their Windows session. This provides users with the ability to 'hot desk' between different areas in Bron Afon without the need to continually login and out from their desk phones.



The BeAnywhere solution also integrates with the JAVA smartcards which allow users to move their active profiles and authenticate themselves between desktops. BeAnywhere enforces additional security to the JAVA cards by disabling their current session when the JAVA card is removed and requesting the user to re-authenticate when the JAVA card is inserted into the same or different Sun Ray client. Previously, if a user mislaid their JAVA card, anyone who found the card could insert the JAVA card and have immediate access to the owners desk top.

Ian Taylor, Head of ICT at Bron Afon comments: “Through a combination of 5i BeAnywhere, team broadcast groups and team voicemail accounts, the Bron Afon Help Desk now has much better visibility of their colleagues’ presence, and can connect the caller to the appropriate team much quicker, typically providing first-time resolution of issues and delivering a much better service to our customers.”

## How it works

5i's Be-Anywhere for Sun Ray is an application which solves the annoying problem of having to log on securely to the Sun Ray workstation and then log into Cisco Unified Communications Manager.

Be-Anywhere supports Sun's Terminal Client Connect and Virtual Desktop (VDI) solutions and integrates with JAVA SmartCard technology. Be-Anywhere for Sun Ray logs users into the directly connected Cisco IP phone when the user logs into their Windows session providing the following business benefits:

- Reduces the time it takes for users to logon on to their Windows session and IP phone.
- The ability to remove a JAVA SmartCard and move to another Sun Ray client taking with you your current windows profile and your phone profile without the need to logout and back in allowing user to hot desk more easily.
- Introduces a more secure environment by reducing the risk of toll fraud. Leaving your phone logged in provides an opportunity for users to make unauthorised phone calls from your phone.
- Enable Operators and Help Desk agents to see immediately whether users are at their desk allowing them to handle calls appropriately.
- Above all, it presents a much better customer service proposition

## Working with 5i

**'The accreditations held and the experience gained from many projects ensures the very latest innovations in Unified Communications solutions are brought directly into our customers' business delivery models.'**

5i's accreditations reflect the breadth of its technology skills and expertise. They recognise 5i's knowledge and expertise in selling, designing, installing and supporting comprehensive Unified Communications solutions.

5i's accreditations include Cisco Advanced Unified Communications Specialist and Service Extension Partner; Microsoft Gold partner focusing on Unified Communications as well as many other third party applications such as Verint, Tiger, Zeacom and Stonevoice.

5i is also certified to the ISO90001 standard.

## Your Trusted Partner

**5i's biggest strength is its commitment and flexibility in turning our expertise into your success. To learn how 5i can help your business contact us at:**

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