

Case Study

HELPING HANDS

Helping Hands are the leading provider of home care across England & Wales. With over 80 branches nationwide, they have been assisting adults to stay in the comfort of their own homes for 30 years. With thousands of carers across the country, they offer the full range of care services, including live-in, visiting, dementia, nursing, respite and emergency home care.

The Challenge

Helping Hands had an existing SpliceCom phone system, but they were experiencing some frustrations with the service from

their maintenance provider. Finance Director Andrew Wood, explains, "As the majority of enquiries about care come through a highly-developed digital marketing presence, inbound call traffic and connectivity is of critical importance, with very high levels of availability required."

The Giganet & M12 Solution

First, we took over Helping Hands' maintenance contract and their ISDN30 line and calls. This allowed them to keep their existing SpliceCom phone system, but benefit from our high level of support and excellent customer service. Later, we installed a dedicated Giganet Leased Line into their Head Office in Alcester, to give uncontented internet access and much faster speeds than their old ISDN30 line.



The Result

Helping Hands have now been a customer of M12 for over 10 years. Director Ben Lee explains, "We are a 24/7/S65 service and have to have a reliable telephony solution in place as our staff and customers rely on us almost as an emergency service, so they must be able to get in contact with us at any time of the day or night. M12 have provided this service for us for a long time now, our loyalty to them shows how fantastic their service has been during this time."

After installing the Leased Line into their Head Office, Helping Hands started adding branches and we provided ADSL connectivity, SpliceCom handsets and VoIP telephony to each site. Soon afterward, their brand roll-out ramped up and we scaled their system to accommodate this. We converted their connectivity

to a fully managed managed MPLS, which now incorporates nearly 80 branches across the UK, as well as their HQ and call centre in Alcester. To ensure complete security, we provide Meraki MX100 Security Appliances to protect the MPLS.

Throughout our relationship with Helping Hands, we have worked very closely with their IT provider, ZenZero, to ensure everything runs



smoothly and all their project objectives and requirements are met, without disruption.

Their Testimonial

Director Ben Lee continues, "The telephony infrastructure has evolved over the years with M12's technical input, so we now have a robust system that covers our 80 locations around England and Wales, with very little downtime. In addition, a disaster recovery plan that works well when we have tested it, for if we were to lose our main communication hub."

As the organisation continued to grow rapidly, we converted Helping Hands' on-premise SpliceCom phone system to a resilient DBX Managed Hybrid Private Cloud with resilient SIP from Giganet. This solution offers control, visibility and manageability, coupled with lower running costs and complete flexibility. This ensures Helping Hands has a secure, scalable and seamless multi-site solution.

Andrew Wood, Finance Director, explains, "Moving to M12's Giganet Cloud has improved manageability, reduced overheads and increased our resilience and the associated managed service they provide with

suberb response levels, means we can keep up our business progress."

Further Additions

More recently, we have implemented call recording and reporting for the entire system. This gives Helping Hands a complete overview of all their activity and calls.

Andrew Wood explains, "M12 and Giganet have supported the very rapid growth of the business in recent years, with high levels of reliability and availability, with prompt response on the few occasions this has been required, to resolve issues which impact communications."

In 2018, Helping Hands were experiencing such a high number of calls that their teams were having some major issues. Their biggest problem was that they were abandoning a lot of calls. Customer

wait times were extremely high and callers were hanging up and potentially taking their custom elsewhere. We discussed the options available to Helping Hands and agreed that the fastest, most cost-effective fix would be to introduce Call Centre from SpliceCom. We integrated this with their existing SpliceCom system and infrastructure, to quickly fix the problem.

We installed Call Centre in 3 phases – the first phase was the New Business department, phase 2 was Carer Services and Phase 3 was Recruitment, which was installed last week. Phase 3 was the biggest deployment, with 44 agents, bringing the total up to 98 call centre agents.

Call Centre works by using advanced call-routing and a single ring feature to find the most appropriate agent to take calls when they come in. The preferred agents have the highest skill level, then the second

criteria is based on how long users have been idle. This ensures each agent is productive and working to their full efficiency. A week after Call Centre went live for their New Business department, Helping Hands' number of abandoned calls was reduced from 90 to 28. The average wait time for the week also decreased, from 17 seconds down to 9 seconds. They are now able to have fewer agents, who are more productive.

We also implemented wallboards to show live stats, which have dedicated tiles to indicate each agent's state. Summary tiles are also displayed showing the number of calls received, number of calls abandoned, and average customer wait time. All this is adding to productivity and improving their customer service.

Matthew Skipsey, M12 & Giganet Technical Director says, "We work hard on satisfying beyond expectations and look to achieve healthy, long lasting relationships with our customers. Helping Hands are one of these long-standing customers and we are so pleased to have been able to help them as they grow."

