



CASE STUDY

Greater Than One

SOLUTION SUMMARY

- Eastern DataComm replaced a poorly performing cloud-based phone system with a state-of-the-art ShoreTel Unified Communications platform.
- Superior call quality and reliability enhance Greater than One's image as a tech-savvy digital marketing agency.
- The Eastern DataComm team ensured the success of the project by assessing the agency's environment and architecting a solution to precisely fit its requirements.
- ShoreTel delivers industry-leading functionality in a system that's easy to use and administer.
- The end-to-end solution included network design and implementation, project management and training across an international footprint.

Eastern DataComm replaces a poor-quality cloud-based phone system with a robust and reliable ShoreTel Unified Communications platform.

Greater than One is a digital marketing agency that provides integrated strategies and tactics for omnichannel marketing initiatives. The firm has offices in New York, San Francisco and Madrid to support the global requirements of its diverse clients.

With multiple locations and limited IT resources, **Greater than One** had decided to replace its legacy analog PBX with a cloud-based IP phone system. The goal was to provide its three offices with a modern communication platform without complex administration and maintenance. The result, however, fell far short of the mark.

"We were opening help desk tickets every day because we had no management capabilities. If we needed to add a new user, voicemail box or extension, we had to contact the service provider," said Andrew Cioppa, Network Systems Administrator, **Greater than One**.

"But more importantly, people could not hear each other on the phone. It sounded like a really bad cellphone connection. We actually lost business because the phone calls were not clear enough and clients thought we were an amateurish company."

As a marketing agency — and, more significantly, a digital marketing agency — **Greater than One** needed to represent to its clients that it had strong technical capabilities. The firm decided to start from scratch and look for an IP phone system that would provide high-quality communications and leading-edge functionality.

Whether on-premises or in the cloud, it's critical to have not only a high-quality phone system but an integrator capable of delivering an end-to-end solution.

PROBLEM SOLVED

Eastern DataComm provided **Greater than One** with a demo of the ShoreTel Unified Communications system at Shore-Tel's corporate headquarters in New York. The agency also conducted independent research, and felt comfortable that ShoreTel and Eastern DataComm could deliver a high-quality communications platform.

The **Eastern DataComm** team designed the solution from end to end, including the multiprotocol label switching (MPLS) connection that would link the phone system to the outside world. **Eastern DataComm's** engineers also recommended modifications to **Greater than One's** internal network.

"We scrapped everything and started from scratch," Cioppa said. "We built everything from the ground up with **Eastern DataComm**, hand-in-hand, so we could make sure we could scale it out. Now we're adding our Madrid office to the network. They had even worse phone problems than we did, and are thrilled about bringing ShoreTel to the table and building the network properly."

The implementation of the ShoreTel system immediately solved the call-quality problems the agency was experiencing, also gained a phone system with advanced functionality that showcases the agency's technical capabilities.

"The call quality is obviously the selling point for the Shore-Tel system, but our tech-savvy users also love the mobility app and the productivity-enhancing features of the Shore-Tel interface," said Cioppa. "I like the system because it's simple enough for people who are not tech savvy but robust enough to satisfy the people who want all those features."

The ShoreTel system is also easy to administer. Rather than opening help desk tickets with the service provider, **Greater than One** can handle administrative tasks in-house. said Saxton.

"I was worried about training my IT staff who had no phone experience," Cioppa said. "**Eastern DataComm** showed us how simple it is. We make changes on the fly all the time now, which is really good for us due to the dynamic nature of our business."

THE RIGHT SOLUTION

While many organizations are moving their phone systems to the cloud, **Greater than One** did not feel confident that the cloud could support its mission-critical communications needs. With the ShoreTel platform, the agency gained the reliability of an on-premises solution along with the simplicity ShoreTel is famous for.

"We had put the cloud-based system in New York and San Francisco, and were supposed to put one in Spain but I put the kibosh on that when I realized how bad the system was," said Cioppa. "We had issues where for three or four days we had no phone system in New York because there was a hiccup in the data network somewhere between here and Tennessee. With a local phone system, we don't have those problems."

"I don't think everything should be in the cloud just yet. I think there are certain scenarios where an in-house system works better, and telecommunications is one of those things. You're better off having a dial tone in the building than in some third-party data center. If mistakes happen, they're on your head, not on someone else's."

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With **Eastern DataComm**, **Greater than One** gained a partner capable of designing a technically sound communications platform that would meet the company's needs now and in the future.

"I cannot say enough good things about how well this has gone," Cioppa said. "**Eastern DataComm** took what was probably the Achilles' heel of our business, something as basic as making a phone call, and resolved all those issues. Now the phones are probably one of the best features we have at the company."