

NORTHUMBRIA UNIVERSITY ENTERS IP TELEPHONY ARENA WITH NEC PHILIPS

June 2007: Northumbria University has purchased two UNIVERGE SV7000 IP server blades from NEC Philips Unified Solutions. The University is a long-standing customer and partner of NEC Philips, and has established an excellent working relationship.

The new communications systems are part of a major £100 Million plus Newcastle City Centre estate development being undertaken by the University. This includes a plan to migrate to a Voice over Internet Protocol (VoIP) communications infrastructure which will support the voice communications for around 600 members of staff in three of Northumbria's schools on the new Newcastle City Centre Campus East. The University will 'go-live' with the new system in September, in time for the start of the new academic year.

The University, which recently won 'The most IT enabled organisation' award at the Computing Awards for excellence, has recently acquired a new seven acre site adjacent to the existing City Centre Campus and this has provided the opportunity to create new buildings and to refurbish and refocus the existing ones. The intention is to create a unified City Campus to match and underpin the University's vision for the future. The first major stage of campus development will be completed by September 2007, and three schools, Design, Business and Law will be relocated there.

Ray Jenkins, IT Services Infrastructure Manager at Northumbria University explains, "The further investment required due to the creation of a new site, gave us the ideal opportunity to re-evaluate our communications strategy. As an organisation we are keen to keep abreast with, and where possible utilise the latest technology. Despite already having a very reliable communications network, this project provides us with a chance to exploit the enormous potential and flexibility that VoIP can offer."

Ray continues, "We piloted alternative systems but the NEC Philips solution was the one which had the best fit with our requirements. With the NEC Philips offering we were able to continue using our current DECT handsets and have consequently been spared the considerable cost we would have incurred had we had to refresh our old handset base. In addition, the UNIVERGE SV7000 gives us a very flexible number portability solution, meaning we can easily move

individuals throughout the network. With a network the size of ours, this is a very important consideration.”

At present, the University’s telephone exchange resides in a building that does not belong to the University and that is currently being completely refurbished. The new communications infrastructure is a further step towards eliminating a potential vulnerability. By having two exchange locations, the University will gain extra resilience and will have another fail safe back up facility.

Commenting on the benefits that the University expects to achieve with the migration to VoIP Jenkins explains, “VoIP will enable us to reduce the excess cabling in the office by converging voice and data networks and this will lead to considerable cost savings. We are also looking forward to the benefit VoIP provides in terms of additional mobility. The ability to work remotely will improve accessibility for employees.”

The University is also keen to exploit Unified Communications – using thin client technology and server-based applications to deliver rich communications functionality to the desktop and to mobile users.

Commenting on the relationship with the University of Northumbria, Chris de Silva, UK Managing Director of NEC Philips concludes, “Northumbria University is a long-standing customer and partner of NEC Philips and we have an excellent working relationship with them. The University is determined to keep abreast with the latest technology and has aptly identified the enormous benefits that IP telephony and unified communications can bring. Its receipt of an accolade at the Computing Awards this year underlines the University’s ability to innovate in a strategic manner.”

ENDS

For further information, please contact:

Ian Guest
NEC Philips Unified Solutions
Tel: +44 (0)1223 468000
Fax: +44 (0)1223 468333
Email: ian.guest@nec-philips.co.uk
www.nec-philips.co.uk
sopho.philips.co.uk

Lisa Williams / Kieran Kent
The *itpr* Partnership
Tel: +44 (0)1932 578800
Fax: +44 (0)1932 578801
Email: audreyb@itpr.co.uk