

## Unified Workspace Helps Reseller Improve Customer Relations



### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

#### boice.net

- Cisco Silver Certified Partner
- Paoli, Indiana
- Two additional offices in Louisville and Lexington, Kentucky
- Cisco Channel Customer Satisfaction Excellence Award winner

#### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

- Take advantage of productivity and collaboration benefits of collaboration
- Gain deeper understanding of technology
- Improve speed of communications with internal personnel, Cisco, and customers

#### NETWORK SOLUTION

- Deploy Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners to enable employees to experience capabilities first-hand
- Create real-world, living demonstration that can be carried into customer sites
- Use single-number reach to improve communications

#### BUSINESS RESULTS

- 100 percent internal adoption of Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing products
- Reduced sales response time by 50 percent, significantly reducing sales cycle
- Increased Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing attach rate from 2 to 21 percent in first year

boice.net drives collaboration sales while improving customer relations by deploying the full suite of tools companywide.

### Challenge

Too often, small companies shun new technologies for fear of cost and complexity. Founded in 1994 in the heart of Indiana's Hoosier country, boice.net is a Cisco<sup>®</sup> Silver Certified Partner whose business has grown by helping regional small and medium-sized business (SMBs) affordably integrate new technologies in a measured, successful manner. Headquartered 45 miles south of Bloomington, boice.net serves Indiana's eastern region and down into Lexington, Kentucky. Although boice.net has had success in many verticals, the company specializes in education and in the growing healthcare industry. Offering a full range of Cisco technologies, the company of 46 employees has increased its efforts in the areas of mobility, security, data center build-out, and unified communications (UC).

Voice technologies such as private branch exchange (PBX) installations have been a significant part of boice.net's growth since its inception. When Cisco began championing the possibilities of voice, video, and data convergence, the company became one of the first to take advantage of Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners.

"We saw the potential the Cisco collaboration platform has to transform a business," says Keith Grieshaber, boice.net's vice president of

technology. "We felt the best way to gain a deep understanding of it would be to run our own business on it. Becoming users as well as resellers would allow us to understand the platform more completely and make better recommendations to our customers."

boice.net also recognized how the technologies in Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners could affect internal communications. “At one time email seemed blazingly fast, but it’s not anymore,” says boice.net data center architect Scott Klink. “With so many of us working virtually, we needed to be able to communicate more instantaneously. We saw how collaboration would enable us to get intra-office connectivity wherever we were so we could collaborate more easily, and make it easier for our customers to reach us.”

## Solution

When Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners first became available, boice.net deployed it across the entire company. Sales, engineering, support personnel, even the company president now use the technologies on a daily basis. These applications have become part of each individual’s day-to-day operations, including Cisco Unified Mobility Manager, single-number reach, Cisco Mobile Connect to extend functionality to smart phones, Cisco Unified Personal Communicator for presence and Cisco WebEx™ Connect. Other technologies in place include Cisco MeetingPlace® Express for audio conferencing and Cisco Video Advantage cameras.

“Everyone has their favorite applications that help them do their jobs better and more efficiently,” Klink says, “but the collaboration tools are huge with me. I am in a pre-sales role, which means I meet with customers and develop the designs for different configurations. Prior to having these collaboration technologies, I’d have to email, call, then wait for a reply. Now I look online, see what Cisco or boice.net resources are available, send an instant message and receive an immediate answer. That’s made a huge difference in how my time is spent, and how quickly I can get designs into the hands of our customers.”

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**—Keith Greishaber, Vice President of Technology, boice.net**

For Grieshaber, single-number reach has been a tremendous boon both for internal collaboration and for servicing boice.net’s customers. “Customers can call one number to reach me, whether I’m in the office or somewhere else. It’s also easier for me to collaborate with others on a daily basis, so we can meet our sales numbers and accomplish our goals,” he says. “And thanks to unified messaging, our users can forward voicemails from other users or customers no matter where they’re located, so the recipients can hear the sense of urgency in the caller’s voice as well as get the message first-hand.”

Although these technologies were originally deployed to improve internal efficiencies, first-hand use has also affected the sales process. It has saved boice.net an average of two hours per day, and has reduced the sales cycle by as much as 50 percent, because boice.net employees do not have to travel to and from the office to check voicemails and faxes, make long distance calls, and perform other tasks. And using it every day allows boice.net salespeople to better describe the product benefits.

“We don’t have to talk about the features and benefits in general terms,” Klink says. “We show customers how we use it to benefit our own business, and it really makes an impression. Often times we’ll bring customers in to our office and let them try it, or take a router onto the customer’s site and perform a full-functioning demo right there. Once they experience it for themselves, it becomes a lot easier for them to see how it could work in their organizations.”

The benefits continue beyond installation, as upgrades on the Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners are used to demo and upgrade customers who have purchased Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing.

## Results

All of this collaboration has helped boice.net gain the distinction of receiving the Cisco Channel Customer Satisfaction Excellence Award for being ranked in the highest level of customer satisfaction. The company has also been told that it has a customer retention rate that is among the highest in the world. "Once we have gained a relationship with a customer we keep it," says Grieshaber.

On the internal business side, Klink says productivity has increased; everyone can accomplish more in a shorter period of time. "There's no doubt 2009 was a difficult year for everyone," he says. "We had a couple of people leave that we didn't replace. Yet the tools in Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners allowed us to keep up with the workload. I know it increased my personal ability to provide designs by 50 percent. It's that ability to collaborate quickly and easily every day that gives us some of our time back."

Demonstrating the benefits has enabled boice.net to close some business that might have otherwise had a longer sales cycle, or been less profitable. "We had one financial services customer coming up for renewal of their PBX system," Grieshaber says. "They are very conservative, as many companies in that industry are, and tend not to embrace change. We worked with Cisco to put a fairly large demo in their hands for 90 days, and they decided they had to have it. They purchased Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing, and we rolled out a collaboration solution in their headquarters office in 18 months. We're now working on their fifth remote location. Another customer purchased Cisco Unified Workspace Licensing Professional Edition after seeing how we use Cisco collaboration technology, even though they didn't know what they were going to do with all those capabilities. As we rolled it out, though, they found more and more uses. Seeing it in action really makes a difference."

**"This is not a 9 to 5 job. It's a 'whatever to whatever' job. Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners makes it possible to do well by our customers and still have a life. I can't imagine what we'd be doing without it."**

**—Scott Klink, Data Center Architect, boice.net**

Overall, both Grieshaber and Klink believe being early adopters has given boice.net a distinct competitive advantage in selling while making its people more productive. That's a benefit not only to their work life, but their home lives as well.

"If we didn't have the technology in Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners we'd be spending 30 percent more time in the office, away from our families," Klink says. "I'd feel like I was working with one hand behind my back. This is not a 9 to 5 job. It's a 'whatever to whatever' job. Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners makes it possible to do well by our customers and still have a life. I can't imagine what we'd be doing without it."

NOTE: Cisco WebEx was not included in Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners at the time this case study was developed

## PRODUCT LIST

### Network Systems

- Cisco Catalyst 4500 Series Switch
- Cisco 2821 Integrated Services Router
- Cisco wireless access points
- Cisco ASA 5510 Series Adaptive Security Appliance with VPN

### Unified Communications

- Cisco CallManager version 7
- Cisco Unified IP Phones 7941
- Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners, including:
  - Cisco Unity® Unified Messaging
  - Cisco Unified MeetingPlace
  - Cisco Unified Mobility
  - Cisco Unified Personal Communicator
  - Cisco Unified Contact Center Express
- Cisco Agent Desktop
- Cisco Unified Attendant Console
- Cisco WebEx Meeting Center

## For More Information

To find out more about Cisco Unified Communication, visit:

[www.cisco.com/go/unifiedcommunications](http://www.cisco.com/go/unifiedcommunications)

To find out more about Cisco Unified Workspace for Partners, visit:

[www.cisco.com/web/partners/sell/promotions/unified\\_workspace.html](http://www.cisco.com/web/partners/sell/promotions/unified_workspace.html)

To find out more about boice.net, visit: [www.boice.net](http://www.boice.net)

To join conversations and share best practices about collaboration, visit: [www.cisco.com/go/joinconversation](http://www.cisco.com/go/joinconversation)



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