



# City Care's unified solution opens communication freeway

Cisco's unified communications solution, delivered through TelstraClear, is providing a range of business improvement benefits for infrastructure service provider City Care while facilitating better collaboration among staff.

**T**o Barry Clark, CIO of national service provider City Care Ltd, an ideal world would be one where any form of communication within the organisation is free.

"I wanted to get to a place where it doesn't matter if you pick up a mobile phone, a landline, send an instant message or call someone for a video conference – communication should be easily accessible and free so that people can solve problems and get on with their day," Barry says.

With the rollout of a unified communications solution, provided by TelstraClear and Cisco, Barry is one step closer to his goal. The system integrates

communication services, such as instant messaging, voice-over-IP telephony, video conferencing, 'presence' and email, and presents it as a unified user interface across different devices. "We have now got to the point where our communication usage costs are virtually zero," he says.

City Care, based in Christchurch, provides services to local and central government authorities, education providers and commercial companies throughout New Zealand. The company works around the clock building, maintaining and managing parks, gardens, sportsfields, cemeteries, waterways and coastal areas, buildings and public facilities, roading

## KEY POINTS

- Since deploying the unified communications solution from TelstraClear and Cisco, travel costs have reduced and collaboration between staff has increased.
- Total cost of ownership of the centralised environment is steadily decreasing.
- With the platform established, City Care is ideally suited to take advantage of communication technologies such as instant messaging and centralised call handling.
- TelstraClear's managed service desk ensures peace of mind for the CIO.



PHOTO BY: DAVID BAIRD

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Barry Clark, City Care’s Chief Information Officer

networks and water, wastewater and stormwater networks across both the North and South Islands.

Two years ago, the company found itself in a situation where its existing telephony environment just didn’t cut it anymore. The solution was piecemeal, end-of-life and hence costly and difficult to manage.

“When looking forward to what we are planning to do over the next few years, the infrastructure we had was simply not going to be sustainable,” says Barry. “It was going to cost us too much to manage and run, if it didn’t break down under the load.”

City Care also wanted to facilitate increased collaboration within the organisation. “We saw an opportunity to make a leap from the old and tired telephony solution to unified communications – an area that could help us work better together and allow for growth.”

Another reason for wanting to make that leap was future-proofing the business. The company is considering adding a contact centre and the new solution provides the infrastructure required for that, says Barry.

In 2008, City Care went to market for the unified communications solution that would take the organisation into the future. After a tough evaluation process, it came down to three providers – all strong and established in the marketplace.

In the end, City Care chose the solution proposed by TelstraClear and Cisco because it met the future needs of the organisation.

“The overall solution appeared more coherent and provided more scalability than the other choices,” says Barry.

And as it happens, the TelstraClear/Cisco solution was slightly better priced than the other two, says Clark.

The company also had a strong existing relationship with TelstraClear; the telco has provided services to City Care for over ten years, including the current Private IP network platform.

The deployment, which was done over a quiet period, had no major issues, says

Barry. The TelstraClear team was available to deal with any problems or changes that came up throughout the implementation.

“After working together for ten years, I had complete faith in TelstraClear’s solution deployment,” he says. “The groundwork was done so well that the

deployment process was relatively straightforward.”

His challenge started after the implementation – to reach the full potential of the solution, the staff needed to completely adopt the new avenues of communication it offered. And so far, efforts to push the new technology have paid off. The system has been in place for 18 months and now there is a “subconscious acceptance of it”, he says. Even better, it’s already saving money for the business.

“There is evidence that our travel costs have reduced since rolling out the unified communications technology. People can now meet online instead of needing to travel to meetings. But perhaps even more beneficial is the increased interaction that probably wouldn’t have occurred before,” he says.

A good example of this is City Care’s finance team, which is spread out across the country. Before the unified communications solution was put in place, the team struggled to meet often. One-on-ones and conference calls were “very ad hoc”, says Barry. Now, the team of nine meets regularly via MeetingPlace Express (video conferencing using TelstraClear’s Wide Area Network). “That is a significant change in how the solution is being used and optimised. And there are plenty of opportunities like this one to gain productivity and further reduce costs.”

With communication inside the organisation now improved, the next step is to fine-tune video conferencing with suppliers and clients outside of the organisation.

Most of City Care’s clients have been with the company for a long time – some staff have known and worked with clients for over ten years, says Barry. The nature of these long-term relationships has naturally become more personal, he says, which is why the video and collaborative component of the solution is so important to the company. But the communication still needs to be high quality, he says.

Another benefit of the system is Intelligent Call Routing (automatic call diversion to reach the user, whether they are in or out of the office), which helps to cut landline to cell phone costs considerably. With many staff members working out in the field and communicating with head office mainly via mobile, this functionality has led to “substantial savings”, Barry says.

TelstraClear also provides a managed service desk for City Care, taking significant workload off Barry’s internal IT support team and enabling them to focus on other, revenue-generating tasks.

“The managed service desk gives me peace of mind,” he says. “Outsourcing that part makes absolute sense and it works well.”

To discover how TelstraClear can provide the right solution for your business, simply call **0508 BUSINESS (287 463)** or visit **[www.telstraclear.co.nz](http://www.telstraclear.co.nz)**

## City Care

- City Care is a leading provider of construction, maintenance and management services across New Zealand's infrastructure.
- Clients include local and central government authorities and other major owners of infrastructure and assets, including educational institutions and commercial businesses.
- City Care provides services to over 1.8 million people throughout New Zealand, approximately 40% of the population
- City Care is a major employer with approximately 1,000 staff across 15 operational branches nationwide.

Overall, the new solution is helping City Care keep costs down. The legacy environment offered no opportunity to consolidate services or manage usage in a strategic way, says Barry. “Putting in a centralised solution means that we are able to manage and route our traffic in the most cost-effective way. Total cost of ownership is progressively coming down and we are seeing overall reductions in our communications costs.”

# Why TelstraClear?

Telecommunications is one of the world's fastest changing industries.

In New Zealand, TelstraClear has developed its own network and range of leading edge voice, data, internet and mobile solutions for New Zealand businesses. Many of the largest organisations in New Zealand rely on TelstraClear to provide their national and Trans-Tasman communication solutions. For these organisations, and many more, TelstraClear has shown it is adept at understanding the complexity of its customers' operations and designing relevant and reliable solutions. Our relationship with New Zealand businesses is based around four fundamental core offerings:

## 1 SERVICE

We understand and respect the needs of your business.

## 2 TECHNOLOGY

A complete range of services that are scalable to your business's changing needs, and organisational complexity.

## 3 TRUST

A company that you can rely on to deliver on the most challenging requirements

## 4 VALUE

Market Competitive solutions designed for your business.

When we combine these four elements we develop long term relationships with our customers. We can then ensure that our customers have the right products and plans to support their success with their own customers.

We also support the communities that support us. As part of our corporate social responsibility programme we work with children and young people, to help them develop the confidence they need to succeed and ensure a brighter future for all New Zealanders.

With TelstraClear, you are joining forces with one of the most dynamic communications companies in New Zealand that is backed by Australasia's largest and most progressive telecommunications company, Telstra Australia.

**We have the right technology, the right people and the right attitude.**