



Accessible Media Inc.



BACKGROUND

Accessible Media Inc. (AMI) is a non-profit organization dedicated to enriching the lives of all Canadians through opportunities to share in daily media activities. AMI is a multi-media organization operating VoicePrint and TACTv - The Accessible Channel.

On a daily basis more than 600 volunteers read and record full text spoken-word versions of current articles from leading newspapers and magazines, making local, regional, national and international news and information accessible through VoicePrint. And with TACTv, the world's first and only network to broadcast all programs with closed captioning and open description, AMI provides a vital service to the hearing and sight impaired.

In Canada, AMI serves more than five million people who are blind, with low vision, print-restricted, deaf or hearing-impaired, learning disabled, mobility-impaired, in need of literacy skills or are learning English as a second language through its services.

CASE STUDY

With a planned transition from being a charitable organization to NPO and an expansion of volunteer offices from 10 to 13, AMI's Director of IT, Fil Magnoli, conducted an internal audit to help uncover the challenges associated with integrating and consolidating towards a new operational structure. "We needed a road map", said Magnoli, "to help us move forward".

The audit identified the following gaps:

- Need for a single effective environment for 13 disparate locations.
- Lack of network visibility, carrier diversity or a Disaster Recovery plan.
- IT resources were stretched too thin.
- Lack of internal resources to effectively manage and handle multiple projects.
- A need to consolidate three brands into one.

Armed with his new insight, Magnoli approached several providers for the project and decided on Primus as a result of their ability to offer a total suite of services, in keeping with AMI's business goals. "After reviewing a number of potential partners, Primus was the natural choice for AMI's consolidation," said Magnoli. "We were looking for a 'one-stop' technology supplier that had proven capabilities and understood the needs of the various IT requirements of our company. Primus fit the bill in every respect."

DISCOVERY MEETING

Fil met his Account Executive at Primus Canada, Frank Capuano and detailed his organization's situation. "We are a broadcaster, not an IT company" said Magnoli, "I need a provider to manage our daily IT tasks so we can focus on what we do best".

During the meeting, Capuano was joined by Technical Sales Specialist, Jim Gogos. "It was clear that Fil's IT team was overwhelmed" stated Capuano, "and with numerous vendors and inter-connects to manage, his department was stretched to the limit".

Magnoli explained that the volunteers at the island offices were responsible for collecting and recording news information and then sending that data to a head office in Toronto for editing and finally onto the distribution office in Hamilton. "All of the data was carried over multiple carriers without a Disaster Recovery (DR) plan" said Gogos, adding "if a disaster struck, thousands of hours of work would be lost".

It also became clear AMI needed a cohesive and inclusive environment for their communication needs. "During the audit, we realized that by contracting multiple vendors for long distance and access, we were wasting money" remarked Magnoli, "and without a unified strategy, our productivity would continue to suffer".

SOLUTION

Frank and Jim concentrated on providing a total solution in an effort to consolidate AMI's three brands, increase employee productivity with a unified telephony solution, increase their effective IT resources and enable cost effective expansion of their offices.

First, they recommended centralized network management with diversity and DR to provide a common security and network management approach for their diverse technology implementation across the entire organization.

This included:

- Managed WAN for 13 locations including Fiber, T1, ADSL, XDSL, BEX – Business Ethernet Extended, with carrier diversity and disaster recovery.
- Colocation 1/8 Cabinet, MSA Managed Firewall, Managed VPN, Managed Switch, Managed Router.
- Hosted PBX to provide a single image telephony system across 13 locations and 100 users

Secondly, they would provide AMI access to the Primus Managed System Administration team, who would be tasked with handling the day-to-day IT duties. By utilizing Primus' expertise, Fil and his team could now focus on delivering accessibility of all media in Canada to the AMI constituents. This co-sourcing model was well received by Magnoli. "I liked the flexibility to add resources when I need them" adding, "it was a welcome relief for my team".

And finally, the Primus team suggested one all-inclusive voice platform for tighter collaboration and cohesiveness. Hosted PBX was recommended as a means to manage 13 disparate locations with a single support mechanism for all users. "By introducing VOIP with 4-digit dialing, every employee was connected regardless of geography", said Capuano "and the money they would save on long distance is huge".

With the solution in place, AMI now has the following:

- Integration of 13 disparate locations into a cohesive singular environment allowing for a sound and efficient communications and IT infrastructure setting.
- Consolidation of AMI's three brands into one – enabling more streamlined business operation.
- Merging the consortium of partners under a single umbrella, providing a more efficient structure for growth.
- Centralized Network Management now provides a platform for filtering and monitoring the entire organization.
- Flexible network and server support providing continuous access to expertise and enabling AMI to focus on their business and drive greater success.

- Managed Hosted PBX system across 13 disparate locations with a single support mechanism for all users.
- Inclusive VOIP solution over a private network

“Primus is thrilled to have been able to provide a leader such as Accessible Media Incorporated with the tools and technology required to evolve their successful business” said Jeff Lorenz, V.P. of Sales & Marketing for Primus Business Services. “By integrating various platforms, the company will be able to realize a more streamlined, efficient and productive working environment.”

A year into the solution, AMI is seeing increased productivity and reductions in expenditures. “This is a direct result of dealing with one vendor and consolidating our network and IT infrastructure”, said Magnoli, adding “Frank and his team were fantastic during the implementation process and our employees have benefited tremendously, due to the ongoing service and support provided by Primus”.

ABOUT PRIMUS BUSINESS SERVICES

Primus Business Services is a national leader in advanced communication solutions, providing a comprehensive portfolio of voice and access solutions.

Canadian Businesses rely on Primus' industry leading service and support commitment that delivers reliability, security and compliance. When you partner with Primus, you get access to a dedicated Account Representative and team of experts who will collaborate with you on your business requirements.

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