



- ▶ **Industry**
Solar energy production
- ▶ **Use**
 - Telephony and collaboration in a unified communications (UC) environment
- ▶ **Solution**
 - First company in France to implement Microsoft Lync Server 2010. Deployed nearly 150 Polycom CX IP phones optimized for Microsoft Lync.
- ▶ **Results and Benefits**
 - Very high level of user satisfaction as regards sound quality
 - Significant (over 50%) reduction in communication costs
 - The doorway to a new collaborative way of working



Solairedirect Switches to Polycom® CX/Microsoft® Lync™ Telephony and Showcases its Innovative Spirit

A young company with a bright future

As the leading French operator in the solar electricity industry, Solairedirect is the first company to be entirely dedicated to the production of solar-generated electricity in France. Solairedirect plays a leading role in all phases of the solar electricity chain, from project specification, development, industrial manufacturing of solar panels, and technical and financial engineering to installation and operation.

Today, Solairedirect is not only a major supplier of photovoltaic roof panels to both private and corporate customers, but also a leader in the design, construction and operation of solar farms, in collaboration with public authorities.

Its 300 employees, spread out between its headquarters in Paris, a technical center in Aix-en-Provence, France, a manufacturing site in South Africa and subsidiary offices in China, India, Morocco and Chili allowed Solairedirect to generate a turnover of almost EUR 200 million in 2010.

Innovative in their production, and innovating with their choice of communication

As a company focused on industrial excellence and quality of service, Solairedirect required the same level of innovation and excellence in its communication tools! They chose not only to switch to IP telephony, but to distinguish itself once again as an innovative force by opting for Microsoft® Lync™ and becoming the first company in France to deploy this solution.

This switch is the result of a project completed in record time and with minimum difficulties — the solution was commissioned no more than a month and a half after the order was signed. The huge levels of drive, energy and skills demonstrated by those involved (the customer Solairedirect, the systems integrator ABC Systèmes, and the developers Microsoft and Polycom®) are what made this project a success.

An open solution tender, 3 proposals, 1 choice

A move to new offices provided this fast-evolving company with the perfect opportunity to replace the existing telephone system, which featured a congested PABX and an internal call center. An RFP was issued. This contained specifications relating to volume, function and scalability requirements while still remaining very open to a variety of solutions.

Three very different responses were received: offers strictly for IP telephony, offers for outsourced unified communications services and the chosen solution, which pooled the expertise and resources of the suppliers Microsoft and Polycom and the network provider Colt under the careful coordination and management of ABC Systèmes.

Analysing and choosing from such a wide variety of offers afforded ample opportunity for animated discussion, made the comparisons rather complex and enhanced the expertise of those involved in the selection.

“We were looking for a lasting partnership to accompany us as we grow, rather than a one-shot deal.”

► *“Our status as a ‘Microsoft Use Center’ allowed us to meet the demands of Solairedirect point by point.”*

Emmanuel Levy, Technical and Strategy Director, ABC Systèmes

Selection criteria: integration, scalability

Two fundamental principles guided the Solairedirect's decision.

The solution had to be flexible enough to adapt to the significant growth forecast for the next few years, and the solution also had to allow for seamless integration of existing (Exchange, Sharepoint etc.) or future (EDM, ERP, CRM) applications.

These criteria eliminated the possibility of a pure VoIP solution from the outset. This left two offers to examine: the first, which was fully outsourced and proposed by a systems integrator/manufacturer, and the internal solution proposed by ABC Systèmes.

The cost of the solutions was, of course, taken into account. While a higher initial investment, the ABC Systèmes solution was most economically viable over a three-year period.

The fundamental role of the systems integrator

In regards to the system architecture, the outsourced solution could not provide all the guarantees required for the integration of existing or future Solairedirect applications.

The sales and technical approach is what really made a difference. ABC Systèmes met each requirement systematically, demonstrated the benefits of the solution, and provided all the elements required to globalize costs. In addition, the ABC Systèmes project team, led by Emmanuel Lévy, Technical and Strategy Director, demonstrated their experience and expertise in their field.

The implementation

The strategy adopted by the IT department to implement this solution is “controlled development.”

Aware of the risks associated with switching from simple, analog telephones to an integrated UC solution, the IT department chose to implement the solution progressively: first, the telephones were replaced with Polycom CX IP phones. The phones

were very well received by the users, who were immediately impressed by the extremely high-quality audio provided by Polycom telephones.

Two or three months later, the IT department introduced additional functions such as call-waiting, calendar access and an instant messaging service. This will be followed shortly after by the introduction of video capacity along with the telephone/PC interfacing system “better together” from Polycom. The features and functions available with the Microsoft Lync and Polycom integrations being so extensive, the IT department wishes to introduce gradually to the users.

The controlled development extends further: the South African production site currently uses an analog PABX that is satisfactory, but the site is affected by its distance from the company headquarters. Consequently, the company will initially be installing Lync customer collaboration tools on PCs and leaving the analog telephones on the desks for a few more months.

Astonished users!

The IT Department has achieved its goal – by avoiding overwhelming users with a multitude of new functions, each user was able to fully familiarise themselves with their new telephone or UC voice end points. The users appreciate the large color display to view call and directory information, and the stunning voice quality and clarity of the HD Voice™ technology. Many said “It's like my correspondent is right here in the office!”

Without a doubt, the gradual addition of new functions, such as video, will only heighten this enthusiasm.

About ABC Systèmes:

ABC Systèmes specialises in consulting services, IT engineering and sales of hardware and software to small and mid-sized companies, and seeks to assist these companies in all phases of IT development.

For more information

Visit our website at www.polycom.co.uk, or contact our Polycom Sales Department.

► Partner



www.abc-systemes.com

► Products used **Telephones**

- 120 Polycom CX 500 IP phones optimised for Lync
- 25 Polycom CX 600 IP phones optimised for Lync

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