

Customer EXPERIENCE

ABOUT DE WAERDENBORCH

De Waerdenborch is a comprehensive school for VWO (pre-university education), HAVO (higher general secondary education) and VMBO (secondary vocational education). De Waerdenborch originated in the 1950s and became the comprehensive school it is now as the result of various mergers. The main location of the school is in Holten, the Netherlands, the secondary location is in Goor. The school has approximately 2,200 pupils and about 220 members of staff.

CUSTOMER NEEDS

- More capacity at the switchboard
- More functionality, such as redirection and caller information
- Replacement of the old DECT telephones
- Future-proof technology

“Mitel IP telephony has allowed us to improve our accessibility, both internally and externally. Our objective of dealing properly with every single call is now easy to achieve. In addition, we have much more flexibility in the way we use the telephony environment. It is easy to redirect calls or take over calls from one another, and by using Microsoft Office Live Communications Server 2005, we also have more information that enables users to see the availability of colleagues.”

– Jacques Heijnders,
Head IT, De Waerdenborch
Comprehensive School



De Waerdenborch chooses innovation, flexibility and manageability with a Mitel IP communications solution

In the past, De Waerdenborch Comprehensive School in the Netherlands used a traditional telephone system from the network provider KPN. However, a few years ago, the school was confronted with a capacity problem and the switchboard was no longer sufficient to cope with the volume of calls. De Waerdenborch went in search of a suitable solution with scalability, functionality and service being important considerations. The school chose an IP communications solution from Mitel®.

Modernization

“We were confronted with the fact that the switchboard could no longer meet the required capacity, said Jacques Heijnders, Head of IT at De Waerdenborch Comprehensive School. “We also missed basic functionality such as being able to identify the caller. In addition, the DECT telephones had to be replaced. We went to talk to the supplier we had at the time, but could not really get any further. We did not want to invest in old technology. Finally, we chose Mitel IP telephones and new wireless phones based on Wi-Fi.

“De Waerdenborch decided to implement the new communications environment for a small group of users: the people who use the telephone most often. These were the supporting services of the school: the administration, the caretakers, the switchboard operators and the IT department. In addition, we made the transfer to fibre through the TReNT Association. The TReNT Associations objective is to create, maintain, manage and operate a regional IT infrastructure for companies, as well as (knowledge-based) institutions on a non-commercial basis. As a result, we could open up our location in Goor.”



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SOLUTION COMPONENTS

- Mitel 3300 IP Communications Platform (ICP)
- Mitel Live Business Gateway
- Mitel 6160 Intelligent Queue
- SpectraLink Wi-Fi handsets

RESULTS

The intended results of the implementation at De Waerdenborch Comprehensive School:

- Easy to manage
- Free calls between school locations
- More internal flexibility; calls can be taken over from one another
- More functionality, such as redirection and caller information
- Future-proof technology
- Scalable solution, which can also be extended to other schools

Easier management

“The transfer to an IP communications solution went well, and has provided us with more advantages,” says Heijnders. “One advantage is that we are now able to handle most of the management tasks ourselves. In the past, we had to call the supplier – even for minor issues such as the connection or disconnection of a telephone. Now we are able to do these things ourselves. We have, however, outsourced the management of the telephone switchboard. The expertise related to Mitel technology is where it should be, and we would like to keep it that way. In addition to being the IT manager, I am also a teacher, which means I have limited time available. But Mitel supports remote management, which means outsourcing management is no problem. Another benefit for us is that we were able to reduce the telephone costs by bundling lines and because our internal calls are now free, including calls to our location in Goor.”

Flexibility

IP communications also offer De Waerdenborch more flexibility. Said Heijnders, “It enables us to easily take calls from the Goor location. If they are too busy or have limited staff available, the telephone is answered in Holten. This also applies to us internally here at Holten. What often happens is that around eight o’clock, all the lines are busy, because this is the moment when pupils call to say that they are ill. Absenteeism is handled by caretakers, but when all the lines are engaged, it is important that the switchboard operators can provide assistance, the Mitel solution allows for this. Furthermore, the telephones themselves offer much more functionality, such as call redirection when someone is absent and call redirection within groups. For example, in our IT department, if somebody calls me there, it is highly likely that it concerns a question about IT, so the question can probably also be answered by a colleague.

“The use of groups ensures that the call is directed to another member of the IT team when I am not available. We try to ensure that every call is responded to. So, if one employee is not there, the call goes to a colleague. Our wireless telephones use our existing Wi-Fi network – and offer additional flexibility, allowing us to walk from one room to another during a telephone conversation, or to take calls while we are not at our workplace. In this way we have much more flexibility.”

Presence

De Waerdenborch deployed Microsoft® Office Live Communications Server 2005, a Microsoft tool based on IP communications that enables users to see the availability of colleagues. Viewing the screen, which looks like an MSN screen, a user can now see whether or not a colleague is available through email, instant messaging or by telephone. "As a result, you can quickly see whether you can contact somebody before approaching him or her via chat or the telephone. This is useful when you need to speak urgently to a colleague who is at the other side of the building. The users in Goor also get to see this. What happens is that telephony becomes integrated into the PC; telephony actually gains the same status and priority as the PC", said Heijnders.

Cooperation of schools

"Furthermore, De Waerdenborch is busy creating a form of federation in which more schools share IT resources. The purpose is to combine knowledge and to jointly form an infrastructure via TReNT, which will allow us to do joint purchases. Telephony is included in this initiative and purchasing telephony capacity jointly is cheaper than each school doing this individually. IP telephony is very scalable, which means we can easily expand it to more schools," said Heijnders.

Satisfied

"We are very happy with the solution offered. It provides us with much more functionality than before. The flip side of this functionality is that your organization should be ready for it. People also have to get used to it. In future, we will move further in this direction and will be prepared for this", concluded Heijnders.

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GD 12113 PN 51010933RA-EN

