



Monumental Mobility

IPC and ShoreTel provide Monumental Sports & Entertainment with an integrated communications system that delivers needed flexibility and mobility.

“

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Yogi Berra once said, “The future ain’t what it used to be.” The baseball Hall of Famer could have been talking about the evolution of communications technology in sports. Advanced technologies have revolutionized the way teams, facilities and fans engage and interact.

Monumental Sports & Entertainment can attest to that. Monumental is one of the largest integrated sports and entertainment companies in the country with one of the most diverse partnership groups in all of sports. Monumental Sports owns and operates three professional sports teams: the NBA’s Washington Wizards, NHL’s Washington Capitals and WNBA’s Washington Mystics. The group also owns and operates Verizon Center, the premier sports and entertainment venue in Washington, D.C., and oversees the management of Kettler Capitals Iceplex, the state-of-the-art training facility for the Capitals, and George Mason University’s Patriot Center.

Monumental had an aging PBX that was inflexible and difficult to administer. The company turned to ShoreTel and IPC Technologies for a new phone system that could better support its dynamic operations.

“We have about 220 events a year — that’s 220 nights when we have anywhere from 5,000 to 20,000 people in our building,” said Gordon Armstrong, Senior Director of IT, Monumental Sports & Entertainment. “Thanks to IPC and ShoreTel, our staff can keep in touch with each other as well as the fans who come to our events.”

Fork in the Road

Siemens stopped supporting Monumental’s aging PBX in 2009. Faced with the need for a new phone system, Monumental looked at Avaya and Cisco — and contacted IPC Technologies regarding ShoreTel.

“At the time I wasn’t really interested in ShoreTel but we met the people from IPC and they convinced us to take a look,” said Armstrong. “They came out with a ShoreTel system basically in a suitcase. They were the only vendor who could demonstrate right in front of us how the system worked, how it was managed and show us the phones actually in use. That was impressive.”

Armstrong and his team visited the IPC main office in Richmond for a complete demo and a

tour of the facility. Armstrong was equally impressed with what IPC had to offer.

“We dropped into many of the different departments, and all the people were extremely friendly,” Armstrong said. “We also visited the TechFirst NOC where they monitor all their customers’ systems. It is very impressive.

“We liked the phone system, we liked IPC and we liked the people there, so we decided to let them bid on the project. And we were surprised when the pricing came in very low compared to the other vendors. So we took a second and third look and decided to go with ShoreTel and IPC.”

Start to Finish

Monumental is busy in the fall — hockey season starts in October and basketball season in November. The company hoped to implement the new phone system during the summer, but it took longer than anticipated to get everything in place.

“It was November before we were able to do the install, which was scary for us,” said Armstrong. “But IPC did a great job. We got everything working on the ShoreTel system and put the new phones side-by-side with the Siemens phones. It gave our people a chance to get used to the new phones before cutting over to the new system.”

Monumental also took advantage of IPC’s training.

“We made ShoreTel training mandatory for all our employees — around 500 people. The system has a little bit of a learning curve but the training went great. IPC’s trainer was excellent,” Armstrong said.

By mid-November, Monumental was ready to cut over to the new phone system on a day when no events were scheduled. There was no room for error given that there was an event the next day.

“It’s fair to say that if we didn’t get the phone system working we probably would have had major problems with the event. We were very concerned about getting everything up and running,” said Armstrong. “It went smoothly. IPC had four people helping us, and we finished about 5 p.m.”

Flexible Solution

IPC and the ShoreTel system provide Monumental with much-needed flexibility when it comes to communications. It’s easy to add and delete users and move phones around. ShoreTel’s unified communications capabilities also integrate telephony, conferencing, voice mail, email and other functionality.

“Because of the nature of our work, we have a lot of seasonal employees, so we’re adding and deleting users and moving phones a lot. Before, we had a separate phone system, a separate voice mail system, a separate email system and a separate

conferencing system. And we had to manage every user within each system,” Armstrong said. “With the ShoreTel solution, everything is combined into one interface and users have one login. That’s what really excited us about the system.

“It’s also much easier to manage than the old PBX. We had two people who went through extensive training on that old system just to be able to add and change phones. The ShoreTel System Director is very easy to learn. My lower-level help desk people are now able to add and delete phones, change services and add features with no problem at all. It’s the easiest interface of any of the three voice systems we looked at.”

In addition, users can simply log into any available phone to accept calls and access voice mail and other features. Staff members who work at remote facilities but come to the Verizon Center for events don’t miss any calls.

Going the Distance

Mobility is also a plus. Key personnel use their mobile devices to stay in touch while moving throughout the Verizon Center and other facilities. ShoreTel Mobility enables Monumental to extend phone system features to mobile devices. Even if they don’t have an integrated iPhone or other device, users can have their calls transferred to any phone.

“Our sales people don’t want to miss any calls, so mobility is important to them,” said Armstrong. “A customer who’s here for a game can call the sales person’s office phone and be transferred to his cell phone. It keeps customers happy and keeps our sales people in touch.”

IPC’s world-class support ensures that the system is always available. IPC’s TechFirst team monitors the phone system, and is always there should Monumental need help.

“IPC is very knowledgeable and their TechFirst response center is right on. If I ever have a problem I give them a call — which in truth is very rare because the system works so great. I think in two years I had to call them maybe four times, mostly for information about upgrades and how to enable certain features,” Armstrong said.

The successful implementation of a communication platform requires a team effort between an organization and a knowledgeable solution provider such as IPC. Working together, they can develop a game plan that ensures a winning result. As Berra also once said, “If you don’t know where you are going, you might not get there.”

“I don’t know if you can tell, but I’m a pretty happy customer,” said Armstrong. “Working with ShoreTel and IPC has been a great experience. The system works perfectly for us.”



IPC delivers IT solutions that help organizations become more agile, productive and profitable. We specialize in best-of-breed cloud services, carrier services and on-premises solutions from industry-leading providers, and provide professional and managed services that maximize the efficiency of our customers’ operations. We have served as a trusted advisor to our customers since 1981, employing a consultative approach that ensures each solution makes good economic sense and delivers an attractive return on investment.