



Industry: Professional Services/Legal
Installation: 65+ ShorePhone IP phones,
5 ShoreGear voice switches,
1 ShoreGear conference bridge
Date of Install: July 2005



Challenge:

In 2005, Greene Broillet & Wheeler was faced with an outdated system that was going to be shelved by the vendor. At the time, the law firm decided to look at VoIP systems to increase functionality and simplify management.

Solution:

ShoreTel provided the firm with a comprehensive solution including ShoreGear voice switches, a ShoreGear conference bridge, and ShorePhone IP telephones.

Benefits:

- Firm saves money with the ability to manage the ShoreTel system internally.
- Conference bridge is available whenever a team needs one—there is no need to call a service provider to arrange a call.
- ShoreTel capabilities improve productivity, help enhance client service, and provide a method for archiving case-related voice messages.



MAKING A CASE FOR IP TELEPHONY

Leading Law Firm Switches to ShoreTel IP Telephony for Enhanced Client Service and Reduced Management Costs

Greene Broillet & Wheeler, LLP, based in Santa Monica, California, is among the top performing plaintiffs' trial law firms in California. Specializing in a full range of personal injury and civil law, each client is represented by a highly skilled legal team led by several attorneys specializing in the specific legal issues surrounding their injury. Trial experts, in-house investigators, demonstrative evidence experts, jury consultants and mock trial experts add strength to the firm's successful teams. The firm's commitment to presenting irrefutable evidence of its clients' claims has helped it achieve a phenomenal success rate.

THE CASE FOR IP TELEPHONY

In early 2005, the law firm decided that it was the right time to look into IP telephony to replace its outdated Meridian PBX system. The old system was being phased out by the vendor and at the same time, Greene Broillet & Wheeler wanted to simplify the management of its telephone system and also ensure that the system would meet all its needs currently and into the future.

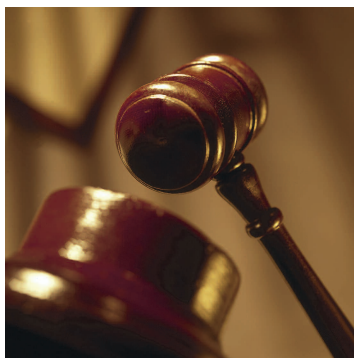
Ken Stone is Greene Broillet & Wheeler's Information Systems Manager. "I decided to start with our integration partner, Innovative Computing Systems, Inc. (ICS), and see what their recommendations would be for a new system," said Stone. "I knew about VoIP (Voice over IP) but not the way Innovative Computing Systems, Inc. does. They were really excited about ShoreTel and they gave us a demo and customer references. I also wanted to look at Meridian's VoIP solution and Cisco's system."

JUDGE AND JURY

Stone and his colleagues received and studied proposals from all three vendors. With priority placed on ease of use and management, lowering their total cost of ownership, and a robust feature set, Greene Broillet & Wheeler chose ShoreTel. "The bottom line was that ShoreTel was going to save us money from the beginning, with the cost of the system and right through the years because it's so easy to manage in-house," said Stone. Bill Krovetz, Executive Director with the firm adds, "ShoreTel was also built from the ground up to be VoIP—it's not just an altered version of an old solution. The sound quality of the phones was the icing on the cake and we went with ShoreTel."

THE DECISION

ShoreTel, with the help of Innovative Computing Systems, Inc., which has three offices in California - Torrance, San Francisco, and Lake Tahoe, provided Greene Broillet & Wheeler with three of its ShoreGear® 120 voice switches, two ShoreGear-T1 switches, and more than 65 ShorePhone™ IP



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– Ken Stone
Information Systems Manager,
Greene Broillet & Wheeler

phones. A dozen or so of the phones are used as a phone bank for charitable or political causes. They are stored when not in use. For occasions when they are needed, it is simple for a secretary to pull the phone bank together and plug them in anywhere. Previously, the phone lines were permanently installed in a single location, which was not always available.

Greene Broillet & Wheeler also has a 12-port ShoreGear Conference Bridge, which delivers high reliability and integrates smoothly with the rest of the ShoreTel system. The ShoreGear conference bridge is an embedded appliance built on the Linux operating system and supports any number of conferences with up to 12 ports (Conference bridge is also available in 24, 48 and 96 port configurations).

“The quality of sound on the ShoreTel system is great, which is important since we have a lot of conference calling going on at the firm,” said Stone. “We save money because we handle our own conference calls internally, and it’s easy for anyone to set up—they don’t need to put in an IT request to set up a call.”

EVIDENCE: IMMEDIATE PRODUCTIVITY GAINS

Integrated directly with Microsoft Outlook, the ShoreTel system provides employees with integrated messaging, such as directory dialing, contact screen pop, and calendar integration. ShoreWare® Personal Call Manager™ enables employees to manage all of their communications—voice mail, e-mail, faxes—centrally on their desktop.

“Employees really like the convenience of seeing voice mail and e-mail together, and having caller ID history logs is crucial to our business,” said Stone. “With ShoreTel, even if they’re working at home, people still have the ability to view e-mail and voice mail in one place by signing into the system. It saves time and improves productivity by not having to make an extra call to hear voice mail.”

With Personal Call Manager, employees can quickly browse contacts and make calls from local directories or from Microsoft Outlook. The ShoreTel system is also integrated with Greene Broillet & Wheeler’s full client database, which includes previous clients from years past. If a former client from the database calls into the law firm, the screen will be populated with information about that person, including telephone numbers, address, etc.

Personal Call Manager’s graphical interface provides easy access to sophisticated features, including on-the-fly conferencing, transferring, and managing multiple calls. Voice mail messages are stored in the industry-standard WAV Audio for Windows format, allowing users to play them on multimedia PCs, attach them to e-mail messages or embed them in other documents. The ability of the ShoreTel system to track client phone calls and export and distribute voice mails as WAV files is helpful in continually monitoring and improving client service and satisfaction. It is also imperative that some messages are saved indefinitely for legal purposes, and ShoreTel makes this simple.



THE CLIENT COMES FIRST

Greene Broillet & Wheeler also utilizes ShoreTel's hunt groups capability, which allows multiple call routing options to ensure that live calls are answered by having primary and backup operators. With hunt groups, when a person is on the phone or unavailable, calls are routed to another extension, preventing the firm's clients from unnecessarily reaching voice mail. Calls can also be routed to the receptionist and if the receptionist doesn't answer, the call can then be sent back to the intended person's voicemail. Greene Broillet & Wheeler also has a hunt group set up for faxes.

"We use hunt groups to route fax calls because it is imperative that we successfully receive faxes," said Stone. "We have eight incoming fax lines. To ensure that all faxes are received, we have them in a hunt group so that calls roll over until they hit a fax machine that isn't busy. ShoreTel also allows us to get these faxes via e-mail so receptionists can forward them to the right person."

ShoreTel's ShoreWare Auto-Attendant provides Greene Broillet & Wheeler with 24-hour automated call answering information and outgoing prompts, which can be customized and linked to the time of day and/or day of week and/or holiday. Individual groups can also have their own menus with unique greetings and options.

"We have clients that sometimes have after-hour requests," said Krovetz. "It's important that they're able to navigate through the system so that their call is handled right away if necessary. With ShoreTel's Auto-Attendant, if someone has an urgent need, they can be directed through to a live person via certain prompts. It's just another way ShoreTel has helped us enhance client service."

EVIDENCE: MANAGEMENT SIMPLIFIED

For Greene Broillet & Wheeler, one of the most important factors in its decision to go with ShoreTel was ease of administration. The firm uses ShoreTel's ShoreWare Director, a browser-based management interface that allows a network administrator to launch a Web browser and gain access to ShoreWare Director from anywhere on the network. Through the browser, Stone or a colleague can manage every site, including voice mail, automated attendant and desktop applications. In order to add a new user, Stone or a colleague simply clicks "add new" and enters the user's name, which automatically updates the centralized database and every voice switch. Once the new user is added, a mailbox is created, the automated attendant dial-by-name and number feature is updated, and online directories are revised. The entire process takes just a few seconds. The administration of moves and changes is just as simple and can even be done remotely.

"One of the most significant benefits of the ShoreTel system is that we can now handle maintenance and support issues in-house and they're taken care of as quickly as I can handle them, which is usually very fast," said Stone. "Before ShoreTel, it could take days or a week to get things done because I had to call a vendor and wait for their schedule to free up. Maintaining the ShoreTel system is easier and less expensive."

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CASE CLOSED: THE VERDICT

Since the ShoreTel system was implemented, people at Greene Broillet & Wheeler are very happy with it, according to Krovetz. “It’s been easy to learn the ShoreTel system and some people are even asking about more advanced features, which means they appreciate how it enhances productivity,” said Krovetz. “Right from the beginning, the ShoreTel rollout was a positive experience. We’re able to do things with ShoreTel that we couldn’t do with our old system. Our firm is a very satisfied ShoreTel customer.”

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