



Caritas Speyer optimizes communications with its institutions and customers

Efficiency gains and cost savings with Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise technology

Customer Story
CARITAS SPEYER

HEALTHCARE DEAL IMPLEMENTED: 2013/2019
COUNTRY: GERMANY

NUMBER OF USERS: 2,700
COMPANY: CARITAS SPEYER

Alcatel·Lucent 
Enterprise

The German welfare association “Caritas Association for the Diocese of Speyer” offers advice and support to people seeking help in difficult situations. The association’s institutions previously all used their own communication systems, which were not interconnected. Today, a uniform infrastructure with centralized administration is in place, based on proven communications technology from Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise. This has resulted in considerable cost savings and highly increased efficiency, while duplicate components in the Caritas data center ensure maximum reliability. COM plan + service GmbH was commissioned to implement the new solution and has migrated more than 50 Caritas Speyer locations.

Caritas Speyer

The Caritas Association for the Diocese of Speyer is a Catholic umbrella organization in the independent welfare sector. With some 40 institutions and services in the diocese of Speyer, it is an important contact point for people seeking help in difficult situations. Caritas centres provide comprehensive social advice and help from a single source. The range of services includes an outpatient hospice service, three social department stores, and two facilities for assistance to the homeless.

Through a wholly-owned subsidiary, the association operates 14 Caritas centres for the elderly, nine Caritas support centres for people with physical or mental disabilities, and one youth welfare facility. Around 3,400 full-time employees work at 100 locations of the Caritas Association for the Diocese of Speyer.

Fragmented environment

Caritas facilities previously had a very fragmented communication environment. Although up to 80 per cent of the components came from the same provider, the systems operated independently. There were no standards uniform processes or centralization, and cabling was implemented differently at individual facilities. Separate systems for telecommunications, nurse calls and the LAN/WLAN infrastructure resulted in high maintenance costs and a heavy administrative burden.

Selection process

Caritas Speyer commissioned a consultancy firm to carry out a tender procedure in 2011 for a new communication system, with the goal of reducing costs, simplifying administration and ensuring constant availability through a central solution. A preliminary selection of qualified providers was made, including COM plan + service GmbH. They entered the race with Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise technology and were able to offer the best coverage of customer requirements at the most competitive price, and were awarded the contract in 2012.

Caritas

Caritas is the Catholic welfare organisation in Germany. The diocesan, regional and local Caritas associations and some religious orders bundle their work under its umbrella.

Legally independent, the associations operate 25,000 facilities in Germany, in which some 700,000 employees and hundreds of thousands of volunteers provide care, advice and support to more than 13 million people each year.

For more information, visit:

www.caritas.de

www.caritas-speyer.de

The Diocese of Speyer

The Catholic church has been organized in dioceses led by bishops since the Roman era. Today, there are 3,000 Catholic dioceses worldwide.

The diocese of Speyer, one of the oldest bishoprics in Germany, is situated near the French border. It comprises 70 parishes in the Palatinate and the Saarpfalz district. 550,000 of the region’s 1.4 million inhabitants are Catholics.

For more information, visit:

www.bistum-speyer.de

The new solution

The Alcatel-Lucent OmniPCX® Enterprise Communication Server forms the core of the new solution and provides the required services for all locations. The network is controlled centrally via the Alcatel-Lucent OmniVista® 8770 Network Management System.

WLAN is today operational at two locations: the headquarters in Speyer and the vocational school for geriatric care in Ludwigshafen. As part of the wider digital transformation initiative, WLAN implementation will be accelerated in the future. All new buildings are pre-equipped for WLAN.

A total of 2,700 telephones are connected to the new solution. IP telephones are used in the head office in Speyer, mainly from the Alcatel-Lucent 8028 Premium DeskPhone range. IP-DECT phones are also heavily used in the facilities.

Alcatel-Lucent OpenTouch® Multimedia Services are used for voice mail and as fax servers to supplement existing analogue fax machines.

Nurse call and alarm server

In hospitals and nursing homes, the nurse call functionality allows residents to call for help at any time. Caritas Speyer uses a solution from the German provider Ilper to provide this vital function, which consists of a central control unit and call buttons in the rooms. COM plan + service developed an interface between the Ilper solution and their robot5 alarm server.

When the nurse call is activated, robot5 initiates a call to a defined DECT phone. The call gives information about the alarm and logs it at the same time. If required, further alarms can be processed via the server, such as in the event of fire or technical faults. Notifications can also be sent by SMS or email.

As the nurse call functionality must always be available, a separate alarm server has been installed in each facility to ensure the security of customers.

Uninterrupted service

To ensure the key Caritas Speyer requirement for uninterrupted availability is met, the servers and the network management system were installed in two separate fire compartments of the Caritas computer centre in Speyer. High availability is further increased by local back-ups of the telephone systems. Should the WAN fail, passive call servers at the location take over, and the operation in the facilities continues independently of the central server.

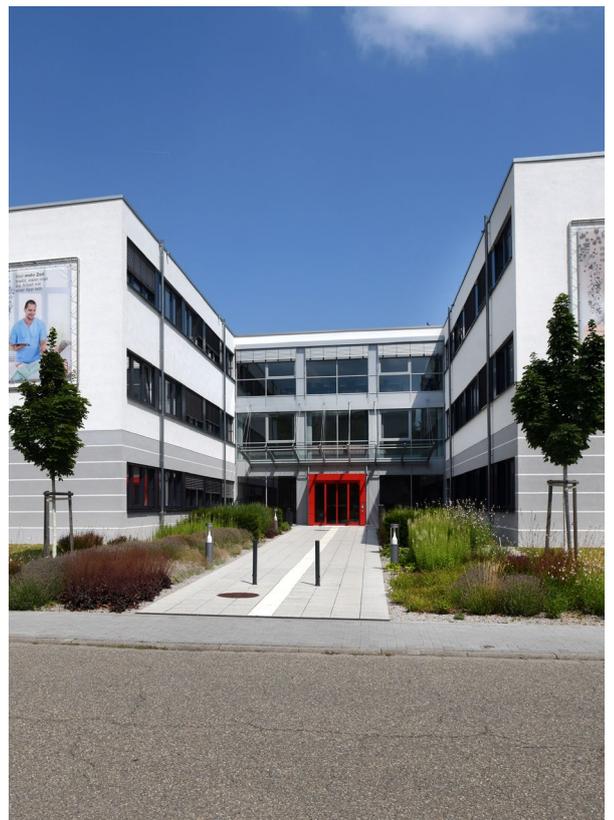
About COM plan + service

COM plan + service is one of the largest owner-managed ICT system houses in Germany. Founded in 1991, it today has 135 employees working in the company's five offices.

COM plan + service cooperates with leading providers of IT and telecommunications technology and has been a business partner of Alcatel-Lucent Enterprise for many years.

Its portfolio is complemented by self-developed products, such as the robot5 platform for applications spanning call centers and emergency call servers.

For more information, visit: www.cpls.de



Cost efficiencies through centralization

Whereas the telephone system and emergency call system used to be one single unit that had to be completely replaced in the event of a breakdown, the new platform has a modular structure. The telephone system, nurse call and alarm server are three separate components that work together smoothly but can be replaced individually if necessary, reducing future investments.

Considerable cost savings have also been achieved through the centralization of the entire solution. Network-wide administration of all system components makes it possible to upload changes and updates from any computer in the network. The new features are directly available to all facilities and users. Moving between facilities does not require any adjustments. The user logs on to the new location and the system accesses their centrally stored profile.

Since the headquarters in Speyer and all connected locations use identical components, spare parts inventory is simpler and cheaper than before. Finally, the standardization of the solution significantly reduces training and maintenance costs.

Conclusion and outlook

Since the project began in 2012, the headquarters in Speyer and more than 50 locations have been migrated to the new solution. Other facilities will be upgraded over time, especially in the event of a new building or relocation. A number of small locations that only require one or two telephones are currently not scheduled for migration.

A major development is set to arrive in the near future: the switch to All-IP. Internal calls are already being made over IP at all migrated locations. External communications use a mix of analogue, digital, ISDN or IP-based ISDN connections. This is expected to change in 2020, when the switch to All-IP will be made. The required SIP trunks are already available at all locations.

“We are extremely pleased with the progress and results of our project . In eight years of cooperation, COM plan + service have proven to be consistently competent, flexible and reliable, making a major contribution to the success of our project. ”

MARKUS ANSTÖTZ, HEAD OF FACILITY MANAGEMENT,
CARITAS ASSOCIATION FOR THE DIOCESE OF SPEYER

CHALLENGES

- Fragmented communication environment
- Disparate systems
- High administration and maintenance burden
- Lack of comprehensive visibility

SOLUTIONS

- Unified, centralized communication platform
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniPCX Enterprise Communication Server
- Alcatel-Lucent OmniVista 8770 Network Management System

BENEFITS

- Efficiency gains through centralization
- Cost reduction through standardization
- High availability through double servers and local back-ups
- Sustainability through future-proof technology

“Since we now supply, install and support a majority of the ICT at Caritas Speyer, we were able to adapt well to the customer’s requirements. The projects run smoothly and the customer has single point of contact for all issues. ”

FLORIAN KEILMANN, KEY ACCOUNT MANAGER,
COM PLAN + SERVICE GMBH.