



Customer: Rockford Corporation

Web Site:

<http://www.rockfordcorp.com/home/>

Customer Size: 175

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Manufacturing

Partner: Ensynch

Customer Profile

Rockford Corporation, based in Tempe, Arizona, designs, markets and sells high-performance mobile audio products. Rockford is a publicly traded company, with a workforce of 175 employees worldwide.

Software and Services

- Products
 - Microsoft Office 2007
 - Microsoft Outlook Web Access
 - Microsoft Exchange Server 2007
 - Microsoft Communications Server 2007
 - Microsoft Office Communicator 2007

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www.microsoft.com/casestudies

Mobile Audio Manufacturer Connects Remote Workforce with Unified Communications

“Our mobile workers love UC. They can access their information and messages from anywhere, at any time and are constantly connected. It’s an incredibly efficient solution.”

Mark Swisher, director of IT, Rockford Corporation

Rockford Corporation was looking for an IT solution that would help it cut cost and improve connectivity and communication for a remote workforce that operates worldwide. Microsoft Gold Certified Partner, Ensynch assessed Rockford's needs and implemented Microsoft's Unified Communications suite, which dramatically improved employees' access to messages, improved response time, and saved Rockford \$63,000 annually in licensing fees.

Business Needs

Rockford Corporation, a Tempe, Arizona-based manufacturer and distributor of high-performance mobile audio products and best known for Rockford Fosgate speakers, was not deaf to the changes it needed to make to stay competitive and profitable in a changing economy. Rockford once boasted staff levels of more than 600 employees – with 23 dedicated to information technology. As Rockford has reorganized over the years, staffing levels have been reduced to the current level of 175 employees, with an IT staff of only six. Over 50 of Rockford's

employees are field sales representatives who work across the globe with customers and dealers that sell Rockford products. These remote workers need to stay constantly connected to the corporate technology systems. The ability to access their voice messages, e-mail, and documents from anywhere at any time and gain access to important company information from a remote work station is critical to their performance. In addition, these solutions needed to be streamlined and simplified to be effective – the field representative's job is to focus on delivering



bottom-line results, not on being IT experts.

Rockford needed to find a solution that would cut costs, increase operational efficiency for all staff, be simple, reliable, and not require them to pay large overhead and licensing fees. The company's communication system alone was costing more than \$63,000 annually for licensing and maintenance fees. Server maintenance was also a major issue at the company. The IT staff was constantly maintaining the servers, and there were outages at least once a week. System instability was affecting employees' access to information, creating data loss, and was taking away IT resources from other issues and projects.

Solution

Rockford worked with Microsoft Gold Certified Partner Ensynch on a comprehensive IT solution to address the needs of its mobile workforce. After an assessment, Ensynch determined that a series of Microsoft's Unified Communications solutions would address all the needs of Rockford's dynamic and mobile workforce. After the decision was made to migrate to a comprehensive Microsoft Unified Communications suite of products, Ensynch went to work quickly, deploying the solution company-wide within eight weeks. Ensynch seamlessly integrated Microsoft Exchange Server 2007 into Rockford's existing hardware structure, eliminating the need for costly physical upgrades. Exchange Server 2007 is the foundation of the Unified Communications solutions, allowing for safe remote access to the company's network by off-site employees, and increasing business continuity, network security and storage capacity.

Ensynch also deployed Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 as the platform

for their new communications systems, and integrated Microsoft Office Communicator as the client application for synchronous communications. These solutions allows users to see the presence and availability of contacts, connect to phone and voice mail through different outlets (including the laptop computer), conduct live meetings and conference calls from anywhere at any time, and convert internet messages into rich, contextual conversations by allowing users to integrate audio and video as necessary. Users also have greater device functionality and choice, as handsets, web cameras, speakers, headsets and microphones are automatically detected when connected to the laptop via USB ports. The entire communications experience is integrated into Microsoft Office 2007 and beyond. A contact or user's presence can be detected while on a Microsoft SharePoint site, a document workspace, or even an e-mail string, and the integrated VoIP structure allows users to call contacts directly through the computer.

Benefits

Microsoft's Unified Communications solutions paid immediate dividends in ease-of-use, enhanced productivity and connectivity for remote workers, resulting in an annual cost-savings of \$63,000 in past licensing and maintenance fees. Rockford estimates the cost to support a user on the Unified Communications platform to be \$60 annually, which it packaged into an enterprise volume licensing agreement and the renewal of their Microsoft Office software. The greater stability of the Exchange Server platform has also eliminated the recurring problem of server outages and lost data that Rockford was previously experiencing.

- Employees can now access and manage their e-mail and calendars from anywhere with Microsoft Outlook Web Access – with the same level of functionality remotely they would from a desktop at a local office.
- Remote connections through Microsoft Exchange Server allow employees to receive their messages and information all through one product, allowing Rockford to simplify the support environment they need to provide for remote workers.
- E-mails and other messages can be converted into voice, allowing employees to access all of their information when they are traveling and can't access an internet connection.
- Since deploying Microsoft Exchange Server 2007, Rockford has not experienced a single outage and has not lost one e-mail due to failure.
- Employees utilized the online training provided by Microsoft, and are now utilizing the Microsoft Outlook client for all of their scheduling and messaging needs.
- Rockford sales staff reports a higher level of productivity in the field through the use of Unified Messaging capabilities. The ease of use and timely connectivity allows them to address prospect and customer needs quickly.
- Integrated VoIP capabilities allow for calls to route to numerous devices simultaneously, including the user's laptop.