



# NATIONAL HOUSING FEDERATION CASE STUDY



**The National Housing Federation (NHF) represents 1,200 independent, not-for profit housing associations in England with the mission to support and promote the work that housing associations do for their tenants and to campaign for better housing and neighbourhoods.**

**VERTICAL MARKET**  
Housing Association

**CHALLENGES**  
NHF has offices in London, Manchester, Bristol and Birmingham, with the majority of its 150 staff based at their Head Office in London. A key aim of the NHF was to provide excellent, highly valued organisational and business support for all their members and tenants as well as ensuring that the NHF is an exemplary organisation and a great place to work. Having an effective communications strategy was key to achieving some of these goals.

**SOLUTION**  
Using a combination of Cisco's unified communications technology and MPLS from BT, ONI designed and delivered a solution that has improved communications and enabled collaboration among NHF staff and home workers. The solution also gives NHF an ideal platform to deliver enhanced services to their Federation members.

As well as basic IP telephony, unified communications has provided a number of useful collaboration tools including personal communicator, unified messaging, presence and instant messaging (IM). The introduction of IM has immediately delivered tangible benefits by reducing the cost of email storage. The Federation is required by law to store emails for a minimum of 3 years and IM has given staff the ability to send simple greetings and queries to each other without burdening the storage system.

ONI has continued to build on the unified communications platform, providing video telephony via webcam for person to person interaction as well as video conferencing across the 4 sites and with the external world. Staff can easily set up a video call from their pc whether at home, in the office or from a meeting room.

The solution has increased collaboration and helped bring together other stakeholders and partners as well as reducing travel costs and more importantly the Federation's carbon footprint. NHF have also seen some other additional benefits such as meetings being set up more quickly to resolve issues and agree actions as well as information being disseminated more ONI has helped NHF to implement speech recognition technology from Telephonetics VIP for routing calls through

the NHF contact portal. The automated agent recognises employee names and will route the call to their desk phone or mobile number. The technology can also be used to contact any of the 1200 Housing Association members and various other partners, as it is integrated with the NHF's CRM software. Over 60% of incoming calls are now routed this way, significantly reducing the repetitive workload of reception and enabling them to focus on other tasks such as dealing with face to face enquiries and visitors. The Federation are now exploring the use of this technology to deliver further benefits such as reminders to NHF conference delegates and customer feedback surveys.

Wireless gives users flexibility and NHF new revenue stream. At NHF's London office ONI installed a wireless network which gives 3 access methods to cater for different needs. One is specifically for staff use, giving visiting workers and local staff the flexibility to log on wherever they are in the building. Another network is a 'charged for' service within the conference suites, providing internet access for conference attendees and giving the NHF extra revenue stream. The third wireless network, together with video conferencing facilities, is a free service to Housing Association members and is placed within the Leadership Lounge, an area designated for visiting members and partners, who can book meeting rooms or use the offices to carry on working whilst in London.



## BENEFITS

- Increased stakeholder collaboration
- Automatic call routing
- Chargable wireless increases revenue



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