

Evolve IP provides **business continuity, improved phone services** and **boosts cost savings** for The Palm Restaurant Group.

Location
Washington, D.C.

Industry
Restaurant

The Palm Restaurant Group Customer Profile

The Palm Restaurant Group is a fine-dining destination for friends, families, and business colleagues in the U.S., London, and Mexico. Pio Bozzi and John Ganzi opened The Palm's flagship restaurant, The Palm One, in 1926 in New York City. This restaurant is recognized as the oldest restaurant in New York City still owned and operated by the same family. Today, the group is headquartered in Washington, D.C. and serves over 5,000 meals a day at 27 locations.

An overview

The Palm had been experiencing frequent downtime and unreliable hardware. Needing a change, to improve their business situation The Palm chose Evolve IP's hosted communications.

Business Situation

The Palm had been struggling with being able to deliver quality service in three critical areas of their business due to their phone hardware.

Situation

In early 2011, The Palm Restaurant Group's contract for its phone system, T1 line, data, and virtual private network (VPN) was nearing its end with a large, commercial on-premise provider. The Palm struggled with the provider's inability to deliver quality service in three critical areas: customer service; business continuity; and providing reliable and easy-to-use phone hardware.

With this vendor, The Palm experienced frequent downtime, as well as had ongoing issues with the on-premise servers.

Another concern was the handsets themselves. The equipment in both the company headquarters and restaurant locations was low-quality, and as a consequence, couldn't hold up to regular office use. Worse, it had no warranty so The Palm was forced to replace costly, defective handsets one at a time.

And, when the team tried to get support, it took an unacceptably long amount of time

for a trouble ticket to be pushed through the existing provider's team.

Management at several Palm locations became so frustrated with the current phone system and service provider that they began independently entering into contracts with other providers. This forced corporate IT to deal with multiple vendors, and drove up the cost and time required to manage the organization's phone communications.

While it was clear that The Palm had no choice but to abandon its existing provider, the challenge was to figure out solution a replacement solution and whether that solution should be on-premise or cloud. The Palm hired an outside consultant who analyzed the situation and recommended that the company move to the cloud. The consultant provided The Palm with its top three suggestions for cloud services providers, and The Palm selected Evolve IP.

Solution & Benefits >

Products

- The Evolved Call Center.
- The Evolved HPBX.

Benefits

- All the benefits of a virtual private cloud.
- Easy access to all locations.
- One touch features.

Benefits

The Palm was intrigued by Evolve IP's unique approach to telecommunications and voice over IP (VoIP) through a unified, cloud services platform. In addition, The Palm was, quite literally, astonished at the low-cost structure Evolve IP offered. For the price they were previously paying for just T1 lines, The Palm would receive the complete Evolve IP system, including hardware, handsets, and all cloud services.

Working with The Palm's consultant, Evolve IP put together a plan that migrated many of their IT needs to its virtual private cloud. This included: T1 and 10Mb Fiber for access; WAN and virtual data backup for business continuity; and The Evolved Office standard and premium seats for their telecommunications. Services were enabled for its headquarters, as well as 23 restaurant locations. Two additional locations, The Palm London and Orlando, would also take advantage of Evolve IP's Data Backup & Recovery (DBR) VPN, and firewall services.

Some of the key features that The Palm wanted to ensure were programmed into the system included:

- The ability to transfer calls across restaurants
- The ability to intercom staff members
- The ability to upload customized hold music
- The ability to change restaurants' schedules (opening/closing hours) quickly and easily
- One-touch features
- Quick and easy access to other locations with three-digit dial
- Direct transfer mechanism

Once the details were ironed out, The Palm and Evolve IP began implementation. The Palm needed a solution that would work for both its restaurants and headquarters.

To understand and document these unique needs, Evolve IP met with The Palm several times beforehand and made numerous adjustments throughout the process, as needed.

One challenging aspect of The Palm's plan, was that they needed Evolve IP to work with them to implement its solution methodically over a 15-month window across multiple locations. The reason being that The Palm had to honor the other contracts that other business managers had entered into when they were dissatisfied with their earlier provider. That established a 15-month period that had to be dealt with as those contracts expired one at a time. As each contract expired, the Evolve IP team swooped in and quickly migrated that location to the cloud. For over a year, Evolve IP's rapid response team came out and moved location after location to the cloud.

Once the system was in place, to flatten the learning curve, Evolve IP provided webinar training sessions to teach the wait staff and management how to operate the new equipment. These training sessions are available on demand, so staff or management who forget how to operate something can go back to the webinar and find the answers they're looking for.

After 15 months, all of The Palm's old contracts had expired and the organization was entirely on the Evolve IP system. Throughout the process, the Evolve IP system integrated seamlessly with the legacy systems.



Solution

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Solution

An immediate improvement with Evolve IP's solution was its unrivaled business continuity. In fact, since the implementation, there has been no unplanned downtime.

The system was truly tested when a series of thunderstorms knocked out virtually all utilities in the Washington, D.C.; West Virginia; and Virginia areas. During that time The Palm's D.C. headquarters and restaurant experienced no Internet or phone disruptions allowing operations to continue as normal while other businesses ground to a halt.

The Palm has also experienced major cost savings with Evolve IP. For the same price it was previously paying for just T1 lines, The Palm received the complete HPBX implementation and because the entire system operates in the cloud, The Palm does not have hardware to purchase, maintain, repair, or power – a major cost-savings in CAPEX and energy costs. The Palm also reports that having predictable, operational charges with Evolve IP's billing helps corporate finance budget more accurately than ever.

“This summer, major thunderstorms came through our area and mass power outages made national headlines. We lost power, but our systems kept right on running. That's when we knew **we made the right decision to go with Evolve IP.**”

Kelly McCardle, IT Director

The Palm now has Evolve IP's advanced Polycom handsets and speakerphones installed throughout the organization, putting 100 percent of their phone systems in the cloud. The solution not only provides the restaurants and corporate headquarters with great productivity features, it simplifies vendor management – eliminating the need for multiple providers across multiple locations

By switching to Evolve IP, The Palm gained all the benefits of Evolve IP's virtual private cloud, such as scalability and built-in failover of virtualized servers, while still maintaining the high level of privacy and security that it was accustomed to with its on-premise server environment.

Perhaps most important, The Palm is experiencing exceptional customer service, the same kind of service they provide their diners, for the first time in years. Evolve IP's unique integration gives management a single point of contact for all their needs. It also prevents myriad vendors from pointing the finger at each other instead of actually solving The Palm's problems. The Palm is also enjoying Evolve IP's automated tech support and ticketing system, which ensures support requests are documented and processed properly.