



Manufacturing

► Daily Use

- Team collaboration
- Headquarters- site communications
- Corporate communications
- Customer/client interactions

► Solution

- Polycom® SoundPoint® IP330 and Polycom SoundPoint IP550 desktop phones
- Digium-Asterix IP/PBX communications platform

► Results and Benefits

- A clear, static-free and effective telephony link between company sites
- Enhanced co-ordination and increased breadth of communication between sites

► Polycom IP Telephony Solutions Deliver Concrete Benefits to Arabian Cement Company

Wanted: An Integrated Communication Network

For the Arabian Cement Company (ACC), effective communications with isolated and geographically dispersed sites is an important issue. With a growing network of factories and offices throughout the Arab world as well as headquarters in mainland Europe, the need for an integrated communications network that worked in all environments was paramount. When a new cement-making factory was planned in the Egyptian desert, 100km east of Cairo, it seemed a perfect opportunity to create the ideal communications model with the Cairo management headquarters.

ACC is a Spanish/Egyptian joint venture between Cementos La Union (CLU), a leading and independent Spanish cement grinding company located in Valencia, and Egyptian shareholders. They are set up in Egypt to build and operate, together, a 4.2 MT cement plant near Suez.

ACC IT Manager, Sherif Salib explained: "We wanted an immediate communication solution integrated into this isolated greenfield site so that it was up and running from day one. With no land line telephony infrastructure, the obvious answer was an IP [Internet Protocol] solution via a wireless broadband connection."

Choosing a Polycom IP Solution

In 2007, Mr. Salib liaised with Arkan Integrated Solutions, to review the situation and come up with a suitable communications solution.

"After an analysis of all the options available, we decided on a network based on a Polycom VoIP [voice over IP] solution," Mr. Salib recounted. "This provided the best fit and integration for our growing international requirements."

FVC, a leading provider of solutions for rich media and networking solutions in the Middle East and North Africa, was brought in to provide a second line of support, and provide their expertise in Polycom hardware. ARKAN Integrated Solutions implemented a Polycom IP telephony system at the company's Cairo office.

Arkan Solution Designer, Hussam Fawzy, takes up the story: "We chose the Polycom Soundpoint IP330 and SoundPoint IP550 handsets operating on a Digium-Asterix IP/PBX communications platform as the most suitable telephony model. We initially integrated 40 handsets into the Cairo headquarters in 2008 while the cement factory was still taking shape out in the desert"

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Sherif Salib, IT Manager, Arabian Cement Company



“Users are benefiting from better communication and the company can expand its operations knowing that there are no limits on the telephony infrastructure.”

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HD Audio and Much More

The Polycom SoundPoint IP330 and Sound Point IP550 VoIP phones are fully interoperable with leading IP PBX and softswitch platforms and deliver Polycom HD Voice™ quality with a choice of two and four-line functionality. They also offer advanced functionality including shared lines, busy lamp field, presence, and HTML application as well as a back-lit LCD display with support for Asian characters.

In the latter part of 2008, once the factory had been built and was undergoing internal refurbishment, Arkan set about integrating 100 Polycom phones into the factory.

“It was a major factory environment in the middle of the desert,” Mr. Fawzy recalls. “The heat and sand, combined with the very intensive building going on around us, created difficult conditions for our engineers to work under.”

Once both sites were operational, managerial and administrative staff in Cairo had a clear, secure communication link with the new factory. Likewise, factory personnel had convenient, reliable communications from their desktops to the outside world. Arkan then set about training IT staff at ACC to maintain the system.

By mid 2008, 120 Polycom SoundPoint IP330 and 20 Polycom SoundPoint IP550 phones were operating across the network. The system has the capacity to effectively support up to 400 users, so there is a lot of room for growth for ACC, should they need to add more locations.

The Resulting Improvements

By adopting the Polycom VoIP telephony solution, ACC has utilized the internet to amplify the size and efficacy of its communications system—improving coordination between locations in Egypt and increasing the breadth of communications by linking isolated locations such as the new Suez factory.

According to Mr. Salib, the sound quality over the IP telephones is extremely good and enables clear, static-free conversations. “The system has achieved what we set out to do by integrating our land line network with remote unwired locations,” Salib said. “Now, many hundreds of users are benefiting from better communication and the company can continue to expand its operations secure in the knowledge that there are no limits on the telephony infrastructure.”

What's in the Future?

Mr. Fawzy is pleased to announce that ACC will be continuing the relationship with his company and Polycom by discussing the possibility of introducing mobility into the network.

“We are currently looking at the Polycom SpectraLink® Wi-Fi telephony solutions for those cement company sites where mobility is a critical part of the workforce lifestyle,” Mr. Fawzy concluded. “Once we establish a pilot scheme that meets their requirements and get it operational, we will work with ACC to identify suitable locations that will benefit from the solution. It's true to say that together, Polycom and Arkan are opening up new frontiers for ACC.”

The Polycom SpectraLink Wireless Telephony solution is a cost-effective, enterprise-grade Wi-Fi infrastructure solution. SpectraLink solutions offer enterprise-level security and voice quality without having to install and maintain additional hardware.

Polycom is the global leader in telepresence, video, and voice solutions and a visionary in communications that empower people to connect and collaborate everywhere.

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Polycom Worldwide Headquarters
4750 Willow Road, Pleasanton, CA 94588
1.800.POLYCOM or +1.925.924.6000
www.polycom.com

Polycom EMEA
270 Bath Road, Slough, Berkshire SL1 4DX, UK
+44 (0)1753 723000
www.polycom.eu

