Connecting and collaborating: Avanade uses enterprise-grade voice solution to get more done

- **Business needs** - Powerful, flexible global telephony to support digital and cloud service innovator
- **Networking solution** - Optimized network delivers scalable voice services that help Avanade drive value for its global customers and supports its worldwide workforce
- **Business value** - Simplified network management, reduced costs
- **Industry focus** - Digital, cloud, and business services
- **Size** - 39,000 Employees

About Avanade

Avanade is the leading provider of innovative digital and cloud services, business solutions, and design-led experiences that help fuel transformation and growth for its clients and their customers. The company's vision is to be the leading digital innovator, creating great experiences as it realizes results through the power of people and the Microsoft ecosystem. Majority owned by Accenture, Avanade was founded in 2000 by Accenture LLP and Microsoft Corporation.

The situation

Avanade's current network architecture for voice presented management, maintenance, and administrative challenges. It also had trouble supporting Microsoft Teams. And it was costly to operate. Avanade deploys solutions with a cloud-first approach, and they wanted a turnkey solution hosted on the provider side with minimal configuration. This would reduce maintenance and capital expenditures while freeing Avanade IT staff to focus on their core responsibilities. Whatever solution they chose, it would also need strong network security and a vendor with expertise in managing call quality issues.

Solution

Avanade chose AT&T Cloud Voice for Microsoft Teams to provide a high-quality voice solution while at the same time reducing the need for complex on-premises equipment. The service provides a cloud-based managed session border controller and transports voice and data traffic over a single IP platform. This simplifies network management and reduces costs. Avanade and its clients also benefit from increased call quality and security.

Transforming for the digital world

Avanade steers businesses through—and helps them succeed in—a changing world. Its staff across 25 countries bring clients the best thinking through a collaborative culture that honors diversity and reflects the communities in which it operates.

The company has more than 1,200 client partners worldwide. They are typically mid- to large-scale enterprises and government agencies. Nearly half (46%) of Global 500 companies are Avanade clients.

Through thousands of projects, Avanade has transformed businesses for the digital world. It has helped them create compelling experiences for their customers and employees, reduce costs, and enhance agility to ultimately improve performance.

Supporting remote worker productivity

Some Avanade employees had always worked from home. The arrival of the pandemic, however, required the organization to move everyone to a remote work environment. This was a major undertaking, involving thousands of employees. Avanade needed a way to support workers' productivity and provide the necessary security to protect the company and its clients.

The company had been using software-based telephony that included 32 Private Branch Exchange (PBX) systems to handle the calls. It wanted to simplify. And it wanted to update the system to ensure that it could deploy Microsoft Teams-based direct routing in all regions where Avanade and its employees operate.

The good news? Avanade reduced the number of PBXs. The frustrating news? It still had to deal with five or six providers. "This resulted in challenges in managing service, maintenance and administration, as well as rising telecommunications costs," said Sachin Desai, Avanade Modern Workplace Architecture Director.

Avanade needed a highly reliable and easy-to-manage phone service to enable its employees to continue to support their global clients.

A single provider with global reach

Avanade issued a request for proposal (RFP) to many vendors. After assessing each RFP, it narrowed the field to four. "We were looking for a solution that reduced IT administration and complexity for the Microsoft Teams telephony infrastructure and provided easy integration with the cloud," Desai said. "Our main goal was to work with one provider with global reach and a cloud-first approach."

The company chose AT&T Cloud Voice for Microsoft Teams. This SIP trunking solution delivers outbound, inbound, local, and long-distance calling—all with advanced features. The solution enables integrated access for multiple communications environments and eliminates the need for on-premises session border controllers (SBCs) to integrate the telephony with the Microsoft Teams cloud. In other words, Avanade got what they wanted: a turnkey solution with one provider that has global reach and a cloud-first approach.

"AT&T Business allowed us to host the SBCs virtually in their network, and they have a presence in all the locations we need to reach," Desai said.

Better call quality globally

It was a quick and easy process to roll out the cost-effective solution. Avanade appreciated that agility, especially during a pandemic. "The solution from AT&T Business meets all our requirements," Desai said. "It allows us flexible calling plans as well as very cost-effective rates for international and national calls."

The price was an added bonus. "We had wanted to consolidate in this area to reduce the cost," Desai noted. "We were able to trim data center costs by condensing three racks of servers and telephone equipment to a single rack."

"The big advantage is working with a provider with a global network," Desai said. "AT&T can provide a better call quality and reach any country at very cost-effective rates."

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Sachin Desai
Avanade Modern Workplace Architecture Director

Enterprise-grade security

Cybersecurity was another advantage of AT&T Cloud Voice for Microsoft Teams. "We wanted to make sure that the new direct routing solution had enterprise-grade network security and virtually eliminated publicly routed endpoints," Desai said.

The solution from AT&T Business makes it easier for Avanade to focus on its employees' and clients' user experience. The company can provide quick support without having to manage and maintain direct routing hardware and configurations. "And there's better call fraud and security management and enterprise-level security," Desai said. "We also wanted to leverage vendor expertise in managing call quality from end to end, in addition to a quicker resolution to call path issues," Desai said.

Savings and reliability

The cloud-based system helps Avanade drive productivity and support internal and external collaboration. "It also resulted in immediate cost savings," Desai said. "On top of all that, it greatly enhanced our flexibility to scale up and down, which is something we wanted from the beginning."

Avanade and its clients need strong reliability in the phone and collaboration solution. AT&T Cloud Voice for Microsoft Teams delivers. "As a business, our phone system must be running 100% of time, whenever a user is ready to make a call," Desai said.

Joseph Paradi, Avanade Enterprise Services Executive, agrees the solution delivers the scalability and reliability the organization needs. "AT&T Cloud Voice

for Microsoft Teams solution enables Avanade to further embrace our cloud-first model for IT delivery to our employees."

Without the need to directly manage the administration and SBC patching in-house, the solution has allowed Avanade's IT professionals to be more productive. "It gave time back to our engineers to focus on work that can broadly impact Avanade employees," Desai said. Giving Avanade's international workforce the flexibility to direct-dial any country globally was an added convenience.

Streamlined administration

Ease of administration is another advantage of AT&T Cloud Voice for Microsoft Teams. "One of the biggest benefits is that Avanade's IT staff can focus on a single administration console to manage the enterprise voice telephony for more than 8,000 employees in 16 countries," Desai said.

Porting numbers from many cities in so many different countries can be difficult and time consuming. The solution from AT&T Business makes things easier for Avanade in this regard, too. "The solution removes the complexity in managing and troubleshooting session border controllers, certificates, and firewall rules to manage direct routing on-premises," Desai said. "It provides flexibility that shifts the focus from a complex telephony setup to an easier one."

Maintaining premises-based telephony can create redundancy and downtime problems. The challenge is magnified if the company has to maintain publicly routed endpoints. "AT&T Cloud Voice for Microsoft Teams removes that hassle and gives time back to our IT teams," Desai said.

Experience and expertise of a global provider

Paradi said Avanade would like to extend its relationship with AT&T Business and roll out the direct routing solution to other countries in Europe, the Middle East and Africa (EMEA), the Far East, and Australia. "The design and implementation of the solution allows Avanade to meet our goals for resiliency and quality in delivering Microsoft Teams as our collaboration platform," Desai said. As a result, Avanade recommends AT&T Business to its clients and other organizations, especially for deploying enterprise-grade voice services.

Avanade also appreciates the skilled professionals who support the solution, Desai said. "The AT&T team brings rich experience in managing complex enterprise voice telephony design and migration projects," he said.

Desai observed that the solution from AT&T Business adopted by Avanade would be equally helpful for organizations looking to use their existing equipment and those implementing complete Software as a Service (Saas) solutions for their direct routing needs. "They also provide competitive national and international Direct Inward Dialing costs," he said.

Desai concluded: "We are highly international, and we have Avanade employees dialing in from all over the world. That is why Microsoft Teams with AT&T Cloud Voice for Microsoft Teams is such a great tool for our productivity."

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> Avanade Modern Workplace Architecture Director