

Spoke Interactive

June 2019



Spoke are one of our top customers. They're consumer engagement experts, specialising in marketing and interactive solutions for brands, agencies, media owners and charities. They offer a broad range of mobile, voice and interactive services, as well as donation and payment services. They support large scale donations events (like telethons) through their innovation, reliability, interactive technology expertise, unparalleled experience and outstanding creativity with clients including the Disasters Emergency Committee (DEC), Channel 5, BBC and Capita.



The Challenge

Spoke needed to stay at the top of their sector and grow their business. They wanted to scale, advance and diversify their service as well as develop a platform from which they could innovate. They understood that doing so would require an upgrade from their existing technology, as well as investment. For example, if they were going to support a live broadcast with members of the public dialling in to donate, they'd need a flexible system that allowed them to scale in real-time depending on their needs.

While they knew what support they needed, they didn't want to lose any functionality during the transfer from their legacy technology to IP, and they were keen to develop the solution in partnership with us.

The Solution

Spoke Interactive was the first company to use our new product, Wholesale SIP trunking, so this was a learning curve for both of us. There was very little process in place. So we've now used what we learned with Spoke to introduce flexible processes and enhance all our customer support. Working through things together helped us develop an excellent relationship with Spoke who were a collaborative and eager launch customer.

Damon Russell, CEO of Spoke Interactive, said, "trust is a key element of any relationship. BT Wholesale have the experience and there is no bigger network. They understand how you deal with big projects and how to work with customers."

Developing a mutual understanding, knowledge and finding clarity around the tech was a very collaborative exercise. To future proof Spoke, we moved them from an old legacy network to a SIP based network while they developed an Interactive Voice Response (IVR) tool. Together, we knew we'd be able to achieve a capacity of SIP-based call handling that would make charity payment processing easy. As the solution was IP-based, we both recognised it would be very flexible in terms of bandwidth, but also with compatibility to third party products.

Security and guaranteeing revenue were the key drivers in developing new technology with Spoke. For example, we had to re-think how a SIP product would give them all the secure and complete Dialed Number Identification Service (DNIS) information so they could steer a call to the right place.

Gurmail Singh, Head of Development Services at Spoke, commented, "BT Wholesale introduced SIP technology that meant we had to upgrade our servers. We went from eight individual servers to two.

This not only meant lower hardware costs, but it also enabled us to handle thousands of concurrent calls. We also didn't have to rely on additional hardware to scale for challenging projects, we could do that with ease."

Andrew Keil of Visytel Pty Ltd, Spoke's platform partner, believes, "The implementation of SIP technology allows us to develop bespoke products more than ever before. It future proofs our capability, gives us flexibility and the opportunity to innovate for our customers."

The Result

As Damon Russell describes the feeling across the team when the system went live. "You never know whether it's going to work until the ultimate test around a live project. Not until those first minutes do you know that all effort hasn't been in vain. As soon as we saw it working, we knew we could build on the success."

Reflecting on the results of the first use with a customer, Gurmail was delighted with the performance. "All worked perfectly well on the night. We were able to deal with very large number of calls simultaneously on the SIP network and not one call was lost. The quality was fantastic. With the old system we would have experienced delays and the audio would have suffered too but it was flawless".

We were proud to showcase an industry innovator and be the first to market with a customer's core projects. With the collaborative approach to developing and delivering the technology they are able to reach their vision for their business. As Tom Hines, Spoke's Media Services Director says, "the first push of the technology was focused on one vertical, but we're now confident that we can apply it to lots of other sectors and replicate the success".

Damon is very clear, "Working with BT Wholesale gave us the confidence to invest in our technology platform and make it state of the art. We've taken the functionality far beyond that of our old platforms and avoided an expensive upgrade. Not only have we been able to greenlight investment, we've also future proofed our capabilities and are able to consider opportunities that we would never have had on the old tech because it was too prohibitive and lacked functionality. Now, we can go after business that we couldn't have typically reached in the past and meet specific requirements from clients because we have far more flexibility".

He concludes, "Having identified a gap in the market and building on our long standing relationship, BT and Spoke collaborated to create an exciting new platform. This offers our customers a seamless multi-channel payment gateway solution using BT's SIP architecture which has already delivered impressive results".

Paul Barter, Media & Broadcast Head of Sales, added, "it's great to collaborate with Damon, Gurmail and the Spoke team in helping to guide their success. Through making it easy to move from legacy systems to our Managed SIP service, this allows Spoke access to more scalable and flexible bandwidth, and offers them new apps and lower cost of ownership. It enables Spoke to innovate with new services and keep their position as a market leading service provider with their media customers."



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