

Major Customer Service Enhancements Delivered with A Unified Communications Solution

An IComm Case Study



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BAW BAW SHIRE COUNCIL

BAW BAW SHIRE STATS

Baw Baw Shire is a gorgeous rural municipality/LGA in heart of the West Gippsland region of Victoria. As it is only 100km east from the Melbourne CBD, the Shire is seeing a great deal of population growth to accommodate for the growth of metro Melbourne. The Council was formed in December 1994 from an amalgamation of the former Shires of Buln Buln and Narracan, Rural City of Warragul and parts of the Shire of Upper Yarra. The Council includes the towns of Drouin, Longwarry, Neerim South, Trafalgar, Warragul and Yarragon.

52,015

TOTAL RESIDENTS

As of 30 June 2018, Baw Baw Shire's official ERP (Estimated Resident Population) is 52,015 residents.

402,536 ha

TOTAL LAND SIZE

Baw Baw Shire covers a large land span which means that their population density is low, which can bring challenges in how far spread their resources need to be in order to meet the needs of their residents.

61.8%

POPULATION GROWTH

Based on census data gathered in 2016, and forecast projections, Baw Baw Shire is forecasted to grow in population by 61.8% from the 2016 census numbers to a population of 84,150 by 2041.

TIME TO UPDATE

An ageing system was hindering customer service efforts.

Baw Baw Shire Council was previously using an outdated PABX phone system for communications but found that the system was not allowing the organisation to provide its customers with the service they needed and was causing operational inefficiencies.

A key challenge the Council was facing with its existing system was that its customers were having to wait, sometimes up to five minutes, before getting through to speak with someone, which resulted in one in five calls hanging up on average.

"We are a rapidly growing council with a lot of people coming in to buy their first homes in Drouin and

Warragul, which means our population is increasing," said Alison Leighton, Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Baw Baw Shire Council. "This also means that the expectations on our service delivery was increasing, but the system we had in place was not allowing us to provide the best customer service."

Another key challenge was that while Baw Baw Shire Council had implemented some mobile technology to support mobile work, such as laptops with mobile data SIMs and mobile phones, staff still had to be at their desk to answer the phone.

These challenges, as well as the fact that the PABX phone system was reaching end of life and no further support was available for the system, led to the Council looking into options for switching to a new system.

Finding the Right Solution

In its search for a new communications solution, Baw Baw Shire Council prioritised the ability to have one unified system that could be used by all staff, regardless of their location, and that also had video conferencing capabilities and the option to scale up when necessary.

“Rather than upgrade to something similar to the previous PABX system, we wanted to look at a full unified communication system that would give Baw Baw Shire Council the depth and breadth of video conferencing, audio conferencing, video collaboration, and all those tools that would allow for easier communication between staff, and also with customers,” said Stuart Callaghan, Account Director, IComm.



THE COUNCIL CHOSE ICOMM AS ITS INTEGRATION PARTNER WHEN SEARCHING FOR ITS NEW UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS SOLUTION.



Following an assessment of all the options, Baw Baw Shire Council selected Microsoft's Skype for Business as its unified communications platform.

Skype for Business was integrated with Jabra headsets for all staff, with an additional software solution from Enghouse Interactive for Baw Baw Shire's customer service staff. Enghouse's customer experience platform, TouchPoint Attendant, is a contact centre solution that natively integrates with Skype for Business. It provides in-depth call analytics and reporting, call recording, and many other features.



HALCYON CHANGE MANAGEMENT

Assisting with a staged roll-out to ensure a smooth transition

Baw Baw Shire Council was committed to moving its 250 staff over to Skype for Business in a gradual, staged roll-out to ensure everyone was prepared and ready. This migration from the old system to the new system was a success with the support of IComm's Halcyon change management.

Halcyon helped the Council and all staff at every stage along the integration journey, including preparing, getting set up and hitting the ground running with Skype for Business.

The Halcyon program also included choosing adoption champions, who were users across the business that IComm engaged with to help support the Skype for Business rollout. IComm trained them and spent a lot of time with them to be able to give them context around what the change actually meant for the business and the various departments. The adoption champions were used to help with the implementation and rollout of the new system, which included talking to other team members, helping them use

the system, as well as going through and setting up a process for them to make it easier.

"It's really important to ensure staff are continually supported when it comes to Skype for Business, and it was vital that all Baw Baw Shire Council staff felt completely comfortable when they moved from the old handset on the desk to the new headset and the features of a full collaborative solution like Skype for Business," said Dale Reeves, Training Manager, IComm.

"Organisations constantly have new staff starting and staff that just want to learn a bit more, so we run continued analysis on how people are using the technology and we can also support that by doing ongoing training for Baw Baw Shire Council staff," added Dale.

Skype for Business

S4B and Enghouse bring big benefits

Staff at Baw Baw Shire Council found the implementation of the new solution gave them numerous benefits straight away, such as the ability to easily find out if people were available to speak, finding contact details quicker, being able to divert work phone numbers to mobile phones so staff could still receive calls when away from desk or when working from home.

“The headset makes calls easier. It’s also easier to transfer calls, as well as send and receive new messages. And the feature of video conferencing meant that staff could still attend meetings even if they weren’t in the office,” said Martin Hopley, Chief Information Officer (CIO), Baw Baw Shire Council.

On the customer-facing side of things, Baw Baw Shire Council is also now able to provide a better customer experience, with the Skype for Business and Enghouse solutions allowing staff to have better information around how many calls are in the queue, how many calls have been missed, as well as seeing statistics around call backs.

“The new unified communications solution allows staff to be better informed on what’s going on with the calls,” said Martin. “This means our staff are not getting as stressed during the day even if we’re taking more calls.”

Baw Baw Shire Council has reduced call waiting times to about 60 seconds, and want to see if they can get them down even more to about 30 seconds. The Council is also now seeing a much lower call abandon rate, at 3 percent, which is below the industry average of 5 percent.

“One of our key priorities was improving our customer service, and with Skype for Business and Enghouse we’ve been able to do that,” added Martin. “We’re very happy with the results we’re seeing so far.”

**60
sec****CALL WAIT TIME AVERAGE**

Compared to old wait time average of 5 minutes, the residents of Baw Baw Shire are being served far quicker, and the staff, despite taking more calls, are feeling less stressed.

250**USERS MIGRATED OVER**

Using a staged, gradual roll-out, we ensured that all users were prepared to make the change when their department was moved across.

3%**CALL ABANDONMENT RATE**

Compared to their old rate of 20%, and the industry average of 5%, Baw Baw Shire Council is hitting targets!

“One of our key priorities was improving our customer service, and with Skype for Business and Enghouse we’ve been able to do that. We’re very happy with the results we’re seeing so far.”

~ Martin Hopley, CIO, Baw Baw Shire Council

