



Quiksilver Distribution Centre Benefits from Wireless Solution

Background

Established in 1969, Quiksilver designs, produces and distributes clothing, and accessories for young-minded people involved in surf, snow and skate lifestyles. Their Distribution Centre workers need to be contactable wherever they are in the warehouse.

The Response Challenge

Quiksilver's products are sold throughout the world, primarily in surf shops, skate shops and other specialty stores. Their only Australasian distribution centre is located in Geelong, Victoria. The two storey warehouse spans 10,000 square metres and takes orders for 1,500 stores throughout Australia, New Zealand and South East Asia.

Staff responsible for Quiksilver's distribution system spend a large part of their time on the warehouse floor. However, in such a large site it's difficult for them to remain in contact with the office should they receive external calls. Previously, staff carried off-the-shelf cordless phones when out on the floor, but found the

coverage range didn't meet their needs.

Dannie Jeppesen, Real-time Distribution Systems (RDS) Project Manager, Quiksilver said, "Coverage with the cordless handsets we were using was limited to the front section of the building, largely because these phones were designed for home usage. This was a problem exacerbated by constantly changing stock levels and the sheer size of the warehouse. If the office had to get in touch with one of us while we were on the floor, often someone would have to physically track us down, which meant we weren't always as responsive to calls as we needed to be.

"The consumer handsets relied on an antenna built into the charging cradle for coverage, but once you were 20 metres away from the cradle you were out of range. We needed something that provided coverage wherever we were in the warehouse. Mobile phones were one consideration, but they're much more expensive in the long term than a professional wireless solution."

A Cordless Solution

Unsatisfied with its existing communication solution, Quiksilver turned to its long-time telecommunications solutions provider, Leader Telephones for advice on a new system. Les Endrei, Director of Leader Telephones had solved similar issues for other clients using professional DECT systems which are specifically designed to carry wireless voice in a secure manner.

On Leader Telephones' recommendation, Quiksilver implemented a professional DECT wireless solution which was integrated with their

Quiksilver

- Location
Corio, Victoria
- Size of Site
2 floors, 1000m²
- Number of Staff
80 fulltime, 30 casuals
- System
NEC IPK Integrated DECT Solution
- 1 x IPK DECT Master Card
- 4 x KIRK DECT base stations
- 4 x KIRK 3040 handsets



existing NEC IPK system. Developed specifically for the NEC IPK by KIRK telecom, the DECT solution delivers a number of telephone system features such as caller ID display and voicemail indication to the cordless handsets which act as fully functioning extensions of the phone system. Upgrading the IPK phone system involved installing a DECT card into the IPK, which was then connected to four DECT radio base stations to provide complete radio coverage over the entire warehouse.

To overcome the challenges presented by changing stock levels, the base stations were strategically placed within the warehouse to ensure that staff can receive calls wherever they are. The IPK DECT solution controls automatic handover of calls between radio base stations, allowing callers on the move to continue talking as they move through the warehouse. In the first stage of implementation, Quiksilver has deployed four KIRK 3040 DECT handsets to key staff.

Benefits

"The IPK DECT system has drastically improved our coverage area in the warehouse," Jeppesen explained. "Coverage is no longer limited to the front section of the warehouse, so distributions system staff are contactable at all times, whether they're in the office or at the other side of the warehouse. This level of communication has improved our responsiveness to external calls.

"Within the next twelve months the distribution centre will be expanding, and based on the quality of cordless communication we've experienced with the IPK DECT system, we'll definitely be expanding the number of cordless handsets we have on the system," said Jeppesen.