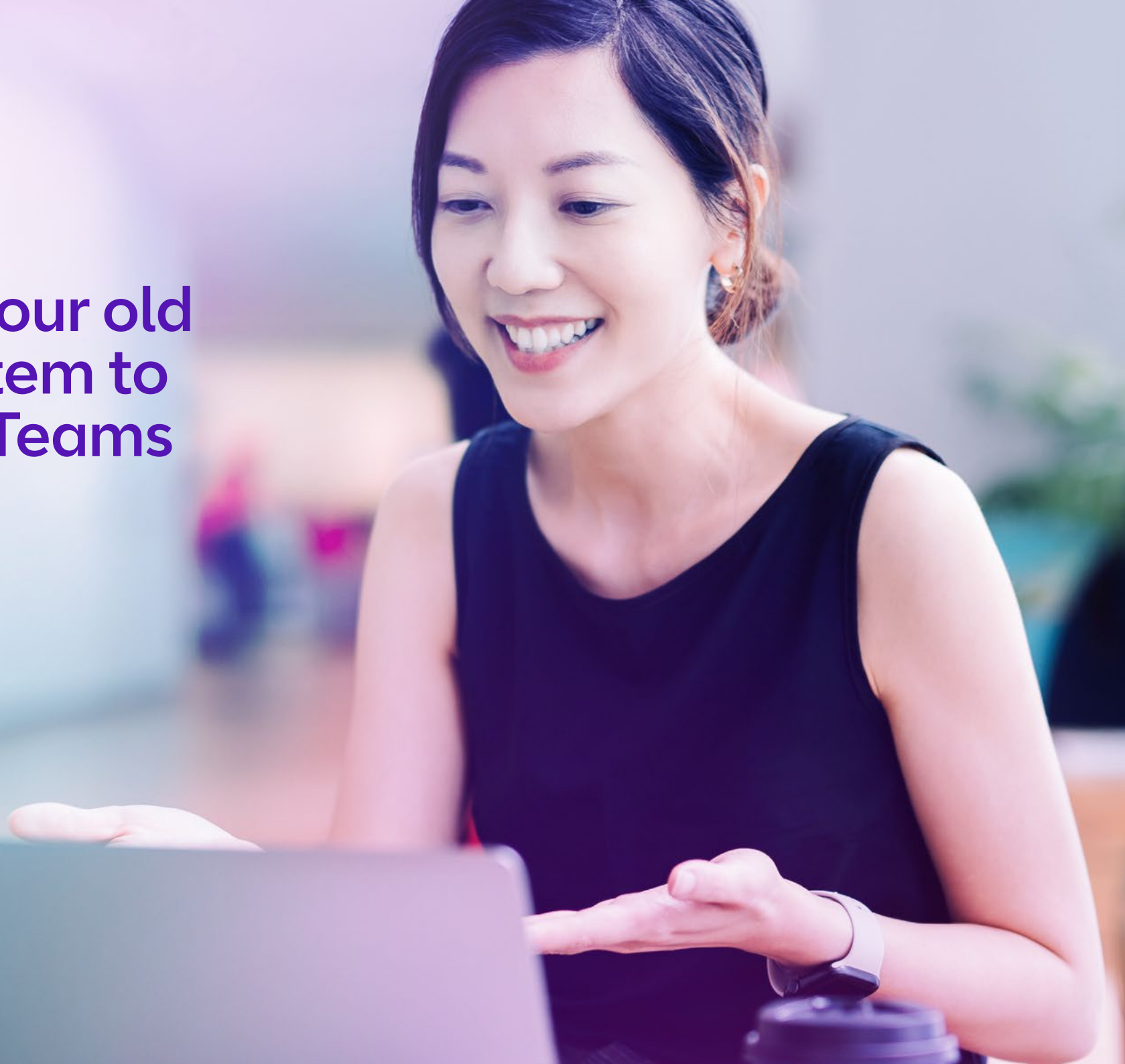**BT**

Upgrade your old phone system to Microsoft Teams from BT

A simple, flexible solution

Professional services firm BDO Ireland recently transitioned their telephony systems to the cloud with Microsoft Teams from BT.

Our solution let them combine Microsoft Teams with our extensive voice network and a fully-integrated Attendant Console. That meant they consolidated all their communication and collaboration needs into one system, streamlining their business, and delivering on cost transformation and continuity objectives.

The solution was quick and easy to set up and use, and has given staff the flexibility they need and customers the experience they expect.

Background

Once pandemic-related home working had led their employees to make more use of Microsoft Teams, there was no going back for BDO Ireland. When it was time to return to the office, they knew they needed to find a Microsoft Teams solution that could replace their old phone system, while maintaining its benefits and functionality.

The challenge

The pandemic prompted BDO Ireland to make significant technological changes. When lockdown initially struck and they had to close their offices in Dublin, Limerick and Cork, MS Teams provided the means for them to work remotely.

By the time their employees returned to the office, the way they communicated had drastically shifted. It was apparent that Microsoft Teams was here to stay, and that it made sense to transform the application into their primary telephony system.

To do this they needed a partner who could integrate voice calls and attendant console functions with Microsoft Teams, letting their employees switch from phones to headsets. But they didn't want to give up on their client care culture, where receptionists routed customer calls to the right people.

The solution

We've been providing network services to BDO for over a decade, so we spent a lot of time exploring their best options with them. They decided to take Microsoft Teams with an integrated attendant console, delivered over our industry-leading voice network.

It's run via a Global SIP trunk, which can transmit voice, text, video and other communications via the internet, making business phone systems much simpler, more flexible and scalable – both in terms of equipment and pricing. Cost is based on consumption, and the solution also includes PowerSuite. Among other things, this application lets them monitor call quality, and allows phone number management, so they can assign or remove numbers in Teams themselves.

Cost and simplicity were the main reasons we were selected as preferred supplier, according to Hugh Gallagher, Director of IT at BDO.

"We went out to three vendors, and they all came back with different solutions. BDO liked BT's the best; it made it simple, with a pay-as-you-go service that was better value than the others."

The new solution needed to be delivered and operational in less than a month – but we were able to rise to the challenge, providing the solution both on time and in budget.

"It was a very aggressive timeline, and I did worry," admits Gallagher. "There were a lot of moving parts, but BT was very quick and got it done."

450 users in BDO Dublin headquarters were moved over to the new solution first, with another 175 following in the Cork and Limerick offices. We completed a lot of technical work in the background, such as configuring the Global SIP, and setting up the Attendant Console – with this, receptionists can see diaries and check a person's availability, route or re-route calls with single-click transfer, or get callers to leave a voicemail, all within Teams.

BDO also appreciated the quality-of-service protocols that we wrapped around the solution. A Session Border Controller (SBC) was used to protect and control the IP sessions that run over the SIP trunk. This effectively gives users a secure voice channel, and reduces the risk of cyber threats such as DDoS (distributed denial of service) attacks, which aim to take over a victim's server or network.

Another reason why BDO chose us was that they trusted the expertise of our engineers.

"You need that middle man, someone from the vendor side who's also on your side, making sure the job gets done," says Gallagher. "There are a lot of niggly technical bits on a project like this; I'd praise BT for taking care of them in the background, from organising the Microsoft licenses to working with configuration management scripts."

The result

Cost-saving wasn't the only objective in providing this new solution, as BDO were already benefitting from our highly competitive call rates - it was more about adapting to a culture change in the way the company worked, and advancing the move to digital. That said, the simplicity of using the solution and its advanced management capabilities have led to huge time savings around system updates, as well as adding, moving and changing users on the system.

"We no longer have to assign phone numbers and connect desk phones – it makes a huge difference, especially in November when around 30 trainees all started at the same time," says Gallagher. "It's just a press of a button to get it all done now, which has freed up a lot of time for the IT department."

Hugh Gallagher talks about more possibilities and capabilities with the integrated solution, helping future-proof BDO's communication needs. He gave the example of the PowerSuite application, a tool bundled in with the solution that makes it

easier to manage MS Teams accounts and add guests, something he would otherwise have had to buy separately.

He credits us not just for making call routing simple in Teams, but also for enabling more flexible working using headsets rather than desk phones. Our solution has made it simple for BDO to advance on its digital journey. They're already planning to integrate a Customer Relationship Management platform into the system, that'll be able to log which customers call and when.

Throughout the process, we've continued to support Hugh and his team in getting to know the solution, and preventing any issues during and after its set-up.

"From my perspective with BT, it's all about the relationship," said Hugh Gallagher, "knowing you have someone there who is proactive, that you can trust."

"It's just a press of a button to get it all done now, which has freed up a lot of time..."

Hugh Gallagher
Director of IT, BDO

How to get in touch

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