



TELUS Business Solutions Success Stories
Business. Backed by TELUS.

Sonora Resort

Allowing guests to get away from it all without cutting their ties

“Improvements to the resort’s facilities have helped us deliver on the promise to offer guests every comfort and every communication facility during their adventure at Sonora. The partnership with TELUS was instrumental in attaining this goal.”

— Nick Curalli, General Manager of Information Technology, London Drugs.

Situation

- Sonora Resort, on Sonora Island, B.C., is a renowned luxury outdoor adventure resort
- The resort is accessible only by air or water
- When the resort was purchased by new owners in 2002, Sonora had no phones or Internet access
- In keeping with the new owners’ philosophy of exceeding guest expectations, the goal was to maintain the resort as an escape from everyday life, but still provide all modern conveniences and communications

Approach

- Sonora Resort chose to work with TELUS, the long-time telecommunications provider to London Drugs
- TELUS installed a digital cellular tower on Sonora Island, providing cellular coverage to the entire resort
- TELUS then created the equivalent of a T1 MPLS line between the mainland and the tower, over the TELUS EVDO wireless high-speed network
- The tower is connected by fibre cable to the resort’s LAN network and fibre cables connect guest rooms to the LAN
- Sonora’s technical resources installed wireless access points that provide guests with WiFi connectivity anywhere on the resort

- Sonora Resort and TELUS teamed up with Cisco Systems to install more than 200 Cisco Unified IP phones in guest rooms and common areas
- A Cisco Unified Communications Manager Express PBX connects the phones to the T1 MPLS line, which carries all voice traffic to a similar Cisco PBX at London Drugs’ headquarters in Richmond, B.C.
- This Voice over IP traffic is then routed to the main PBX at London Drugs, where it is switched to the public telephone network in the same way as any other voice traffic

Business benefits

- Guests at Sonora Resort have access to the latest technology, even though it would be impossible to provide landline communications to the resort
- The resort is able to attract a wider client base as it now offers far more services for its guests
- Employees can reach head office by dialing just four numbers, saving both time and long distance costs
- Thanks to the flexibility and scalability of the system, Sonora can add phones and access points by adding new switches, instead of paying for new phone systems in every building

Sonora Resort

Solution details

Located on Sonora Island off the northeast coast of British Columbia's Vancouver Island, Sonora Resort has long been known as a salmon fishing and wildlife paradise. The island and the resort are accessible only by air or water and, until recently, had only a limited capacity to produce electricity. With no way to provide landline communications, the resort also had no phones or Internet access.

In 2002, the resort was sold and the new owners aimed to transform it from a small fishing getaway into a world-class destination catering to a high-end sporting, tourist and business clientele. That meant maintaining the resort as a peaceful retreat, while still offering guests a wide range of conveniences, including access to all modern communications.

The first order of business was to increase the power generating capacity and provide cell phone coverage to the resort. Working with TELUS, the long-time communications provider to London Drugs, Sonora Resort decided on installing a digital cellular tower on the island. TELUS then created the equivalent of a T1 MPLS line between the island and the mainland by connecting the tower to the TELUS wireless high speed EVDO network. The resort's LAN is connected to the tower via a 500-metre fibre line and other fibre lines connect guest rooms and resort areas to the LAN. Sonora has also installed WiFi hotspots to provide Internet connectivity anywhere on the site.

To provide guests with the quality of voice service they would expect to find at a world-class resort, Sonora and TELUS teamed up with Cisco Systems to install more than 200 Cisco Unified IP phones in guest rooms and throughout the resort. "We try to exceed our guest's wildest expectations," says Nick Curalli, General Manager of Information Technology for London Drugs and Sonora Resort. "Introducing the latest technology to the resort helps us achieve that."

The phones are connected by Ethernet cable to wall jacks, and by fibre cable to the resort's Cisco Unified Communications Manager Express Private Branch Exchange (PBX). Voice traffic travels out of the resort over the T1 MPLS line to a similar Cisco PBX at London Drugs headquarters in Richmond B.C. This PBX links into the main London Drugs PBX, which treats the Voice over IP traffic from the resort in the same way as all regular voice traffic.

To ensure the quality of every call made to or from the resort, voice traffic receives priority over all other communications – and guests are clearly satisfied. "After the first season, the phones were very well used and the satisfaction level is very high," says Sean Ross, General Manager of Sonora Resort. "User behaviour gives you an idea of how good a solution really is – and the behaviour we've seen thus far is that people will reach for the VoIP phone before they reach for their cell phone. They've made local, national and international calls, all with no problems."

Employees have benefited too. Because all calls travel over a private network, employees at headquarters and at the resort simply use four-digit extensions to reach each other, rather than having to dial 10-digit numbers. This saves both time and long distance charges.

"Improvements to the resort's facilities have helped us deliver on the promise to offer guests every comfort and every communication facility during their adventure at Sonora", says Curalli. "The partnership with TELUS was instrumental in attaining this goal."

GET THE BEST FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

Do more with TELUS solutions. Connect with us today and we'll show you how.
Contact your TELUS Account Executive, call **1-866-GO-TELUS** or visit **telus.com**

 **TELUS**
the future is friendly®