

NEC Software-based Solution Helps Sow Seeds of Success for FlorExpo's Business Communications

Western U.S. floral distributor adopts NEC's UNIVERGE360 approach to integrate its offices and mobile workforce

IRVING, TX, August 5, 2008 — NEC Unified Solutions, Inc. (NEC), a leader in enterprise business communications, today announced the NEC Sphericall® solution has been deployed at FlorExpo, a global fresh floral importer and distributor, to connect mobile employees and help improve critical delivery time.

NEC Sphericall is a 100 percent software-based alternative to traditional telephony that leverages open standards for flexible, pure IP-based unified communications. FlorExpo uses the Sphericall enterprise softswitch to unify its mobile workforce across three independent distribution centers, which formerly ran on outdated, non-networked analog voice systems. The company now provides increased connectivity to both mobile and office-based workers through presence, the ability of employees to see and act on the status and availability of one another through the NEC Sphericall Desktop client. The application provides easy to use features, such as click-to-call, instant messaging and automatic forwarding of employees' voice calls and messages to their mobile phones. Employees now have faster access to critical information needed to allow them to offer improved customer service to buyers seeking a perishable product.

"In our industry, staying in touch and being able to respond at a moment's notice is vital to the company's success," said Keith Richards, chief operating officer, FlorExpo. "We believe that NEC's Sphericall solution has saved us valuable time, as well as helped our business run more smoothly by allowing our mobile sales reps to operate as effectively on the road as they do behind their desks."

NEC Sphericall offers FlorExpo advanced features such as high-quality VoIP, presence, unified messaging, instant messaging and conference bridging, providing the company scalability, low cost of ownership and integrated communications. Employees can work from a delivery truck, manufacturing facility, farm, office or anywhere they have connectivity just as if they were in the office, creating a cohesive face for FlorExpo. The solution's advanced failover capability helps ensure FlorExpo has continuity of service and allows employees to provide reliable, responsive customer service.

"FlorExpo needed a solution that could accommodate its growing business and lower the total cost of ownership without locking the company into a single vendor," said Don Fiorentino, vice president of western regional sales, NEC Unified Solutions. "NEC Sphericall, as part of our UNIVERGE®360 approach, brought FlorExpo employees specific tools that can make doing their job easier, faster and more cost effective."

Developing solutions that can help improve organizational efficiency is part of NEC's UNIVERGE360 vision to unify business communications. The approach enabled FlorExpo to recognize the roles within the company, including salespeople, supermarket account managers, account representatives and administrative staff, and then provide each staff member with the tools they need to communicate effectively.

To learn more about the latest version of NEC Spherical, visit us on the Web at www.necunified.com/spherical.

About NEC Unified Solutions

NEC Unified Solutions helps companies unify their business communications through innovative software, applications, development tools, and services. NEC offers a complete portfolio for unified communications, wireless, voice, data and managed services, as well as systems integration and application development. NEC Unified Solutions serves as the North American communications integration arm of global giant NEC Corporation for Fortune 1000, as well as small to mid-sized businesses in vertical markets such as hospitality, education, government, and healthcare. For more information, visit www.necunified.com

About FlorExpo

FlorExpo is one of the largest fresh-cut flower suppliers in the United States, producing more than 600 million stems annually. It sources product from more than 100 western U.S. growers along with 34 farms in Columbia, South America. As a principle supplier of cut flowers to western U.S. retail customers, the company includes Kendal Floral Supply as its wholly-owned distribution subsidiary.