

Case Study

UC Technology Helps Startup Overcome Lack of IT Resources and Capital

Client:

New Riff Distillery



New Riff Distillery is a family-owned business located in northern Kentucky. New Riff has been operational for more than three years and started with a single location that houses distillation equipment and an event space. New Riff expects to produce its first bottle of bourbon in 2018.

New Riff is growing quickly and has plans to open a second campus in northern Kentucky, which will serve as their barrel house with office space and a tasting room. The company has approximately 23 employees.

CBTS serves as an IT partner to New Riff, and primarily provides hosted voice, managed firewall, and Internet service, which are mission-critical applications for the distillery. Hannah Lowen, Vice President of Operations/General Manager at New Riff, manages the CBTS relationship and handles some IT functions as part of her extensive portfolio, but ultimately counts on CBTS to provide always-on connectivity.

"We are a small company that doesn't have time or resources to put toward managing an IT infrastructure," Lowen says. "The CBTS solution is easy to manage, user-friendly, and doesn't break. And a CBTS resource is always available to mitigate any issues that do come up, which allows me to spend my time focusing on building the business." - Hannah Lowen, Vice President of Operations/General Manager at New Riff

Challenges	CBTS Solutions	Results
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Client is a startup and wants to invest capital in growth initiatives, not IT infrastructure Client requires a reliable technology partner and solutions to meet their growing business needs and address lack of IT resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CBTS provided cloud solutions as an OpEx model that are scalable for rapid growth and ease of use CBTS hosted cloud solutions include Hosted Unified Communications and managed firewall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Solutions offer predictable cost and a growth model, and scale to support expansion Solutions allow client to focus on and invest in business initiatives, not IT infrastructure

Business Challenges

The voice and Internet are mission-critical applications for New Riff and often serve as entry points for potential customers who want to schedule a tour of the distillery, use its event space for meetings, or simply find out its hours of operations. New Riff uses cloud-based software to manage internal and external appointments and reservations.

"So much of our communication happens in the cloud," Lowen said. "If our Internet goes down, a large part of our business grinds to a halt until we are connected again."

While voice and Internet connectivity are critical, it's not feasible or efficient for New Riff to invest capital or significant employee hours and resources into managing and maintaining its voice, network, and data solutions. New Riff instead is investing in technology partners like CBTS that allow them to focus on key business initiatives:

- Developing the distillery's flagship product, bourbon.
- Generating revenue through sales of bourbon and by renting out event space for meetings, receptions, and other events.
- Designing and building the company's new campus, tasting room, and barrel house.

When New Riff launched, Lowen was tasked with finding a trusted IT partner and communications solution that would meet the company's existing voice, network, and data needs, scale as the company grew, and ultimately support a multi-site structure with multiple locations throughout northern Kentucky. It was equally imperative that Lowen find an IT partner that would give her the bandwidth to focus on strategic initiatives that ultimately create value for New Riff.

"I do a little bit of everything, including operations, HR, and marketing," Lowen says. "Phones and Internet fall under my purview, but I need to spend my time on strategic planning, systems building, and staff training ... and not spend my time trying to figure out why the phones or Internet don't work."

CBTS Solutions

CBTS recommended New Riff use a cloud-based Hosted Unified Communications (UC) solution to meet its communications needs. The CBTS Hosted UC solution has delivered the following benefits to New Riff:

- Flexible and scalable—The solution will grow with New Riff as it brings on additional employees and opens additional locations.
- Enterprise-class features and applications including location-to-location extension dialing and single number reach.
- Exceptional support—Lowen works with a CBTS account executive and is supported 24x7x365 by our Enterprise Network Operations Center.
- In addition CBTS manages and supports the client's PoE switches and their firewalls as part of the holistic solution.

The CBTS Hosted UC solution also supports New Riff's expansion into its second location and provides point-to-point connectivity and extension dialing between the sites.

CBTS Solutions (Continued)

"The fact that everything will still be connected with a unified system is awesome," Lowen says. "We'll be able to extension dial between properties and continue to use a single external-facing number for customers, who will then be efficiently routed to the right resource within New Riff."

Results

The CBTS Hosted Unified Communications (UC) solution is delivering the following results to New Riff.

- Predictable cost and growth model – New Riff enjoys an OpEx model for their communications and networking infrastructure that allows them to pay a predictable fee every month based on usage. This frees capital to invest in business growth initiatives.
- The scale to support New Riff's continued location and employee growth with a predictable cost structure and short implementation times.
- The necessary bandwidth to support New Riff's cloud-based applications that support its internal and external communications needs.
- The necessary personal bandwidth for Lowen to spend her time on driving business outcomes as the company's Vice President of Operations/General Manager.

"We're a business where every employee wears a lot of hats. We are lean and scrappy," Lowen says. "And the fact that I don't have to worry about our IT infrastructure because CBTS is helping me manage our voice, network, and Internet applications day-to-day gives me piece of mind, which is worth a lot."



Hannah Lowen
VP of Operations & GM,
New Riff