UNIVERSITY OF KENT

Combining local and cloud communications with strong support provides ultimate resilience and flexibility.

Britannic

Secure, agile systems mitigate threats

The threat of cyber-attacks is very real but there are ways to mitigate risk and minimise impact. The solution for University of Kent was to ensure the security of their robust, on-premises Mitel platform through a regular update programme, and to add in the highly flexible, cloud-based 8x8 platform. The result is a very agile communications environment for over 3000 staff.

Modern comms supported by strong partnership

The University of Kent is home to over 19,000 students and 3,000 staff across two campuses in Kent and four more sites in Europe. Kent has a modern vision for communications, one that relies upon flexible collaboration and accommodates a hybrid work model. It is achieving its vision with the help of Britannic's support and guidance underpinned by technology from Mitel and 8x8.

Kent has invested in the Mitel MiVoice communications platform for the long term and has benefitted from the support of Britannic, a top-level Mitel Platinum partner who bring innovation and insight.

The partnership commenced following a successful tender submission in 2016 and has gone from strength to strength, building a bond of trust and collaboration between the two organisations. Over this time with Britannic's help Kent has virtualised the Mitel platform into its 2 data centres and moved to SIP. As well as introducing a cloud-based phone system from 8x8 which is completely offsite, offers flexibility for Clearing, and adds further resilience into its communications environment.

Smooth upgrade experience

The upgrades were carefully planned with Kent and Britannic's project team so that when they took place it was as if nothing had changed. Users were unaware that their system had been modified. It was up to date and secure.

"Britannic and the university work as one team. Together we innovate, plan and deliver."

Richard Charley, Telecoms Manager

Technology

ISDN switch off

In 2025 BT has announced that it will be replacing the ISDN and PSTN networks with full fibre. Organisations are taking the opportunity to review their networking infrastructure. "It's crucial to have a modern IT infrastructure. If you don't you will be left behind. Britannic has worked with us to ensure our infrastructure is fit for the future."

SIP Exchange Platform NETX2

Kent made the move to SIP and has benefitted from the flexibility of Britannic's in-house developed SIP exchange platform NETX2.

This gives the university the desired control over the environment. With SIP it is simple to adjust the number of channels as needed and rapid to switch calls across to a different site.

Cloud telephony

The threat of ransomware has raised its head in universities. A cyber-attack could have a major impact on operations at Kent. Britannic made several recommendations to overcome these issues. It was agreed that 8x8 unified communications (UCaaS) and contact centre (CCaaS) platforms would be ideal as a backup service.

Fast, smooth implementation

The decision to move ahead was made very quickly. Planning started in June and the system was in place in July to support Clearing in August. It all happened very smoothly due to the forward planning and well documented onboarding process.

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> **"NETX2 IS BRILLIANT. IT GIVES ME ALL THE CONTROL I NEED TO ROUTE CALLS** by location, time, day shift pattern and so much more. Britannic has a great feedback mechanism, and the product undergoes continuous development."

Richard Charley,
Telecoms Manager,
University of Kent

Licence flexibility

One feature that has been very useful to Kent has been the flexibility of licencing. Licence numbers can be ramped up or scaled back with only a 2 month commitment, ideal for a Clearing environment when it's all hands on deck for a very short period.

Clearing readiness service

Clearing is the busiest and financially most important time for any university. The service relies upon the availability of robust communications platforms. Kent gears up for Clearing in February with testing commencing in April. Britannic provides a Clearing readiness service which provides extensive load testing in advance and on-site support on the day, adding further reassurance.

Modernisation a necessity

Over recent years the importance of keeping systems up to date has become very evident with the impact of security vulnerabilities and data breaches. These reasons are often quoted as justification for moving to the cloud, but Kent sees value in both options. Cloud is perfect if you are looking for a managed service, but if you have the technical expertise in house, then an on-premises, or private cloud solution potentially allows for more control and speed of change. Having a mix of the two gives Kent the best of both worlds.

Going forward

The two systems will be used alongside each other according to user requirements. Integration with Microsoft Teams will also be an important project. Britannic will continue to keep University of Kent abreast of new technologies and work with the team to enhance the communications roadmap.

Talk to the solutions people.

We know a thing or two about solving business problems.

We know a thing or two about solving business problems. Since 1984, we've been matching business problems with the right technology solutions. Creating opportunities for growth, adding value and helping businesses disrupt their market.

BOOK A DEMO WITH A MEMBER OF OUR TEAM TODAY!

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