Ouagadougou Airport

Overview

Ouagadougou Airport is the international airport serving the capital and largest city in Burkino-Faso, West Africa. As with many cities in the region it is in fast expansion. Last year the airport trafficked over 200,000 travellers and yet more in freight to and from around the world.
International telephony traffic was a high priority to the airport and its customers. A variety of telephony systems were already in place both VoIP and Traditional which needed to be integrated with and to add 120 users across four buildings.

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Challenge

Bicom Systems’ partner Ka-Technologies had five days to complete the install before their return of flight to Paris. Hardware would also need to be sourced in a manner that local engineers could easily make reparation should failure take place.

The installation also promised to offer a flagship example throughout the region so failure was simply not an option and an efficient manner of redundancy would be needed.

Many of the Technologies in place were not possible to identify until the arrival of Ka’s Engineer Theo Bidj on location so all attention would be needed.

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Solution

Four HP servers were to be flown from Paris to Ouagadougou each with PBXware Business Edition preloaded. Three of the servers were to be satellites, each supporting 10-20 users, backed up to the main server, itself in RAID.

All servers would be networked to provide a uniform numbering plan and Sangoma cards were added to the central office server to provide access to the T0. Existing traditional handsets were to be connected by and FXS gateway.

International trunks would be configured to provide low cost access to overseas calls in a country where the incumbent provider still charges for international calls by the dollar not the cent.

At least this was the plan ...

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Implementation

“Upon arrival” Theo was able to complete almost all aspects according to plan. Each office was equipped and the PBXware wizard cut through the networking in predictable manner. The sky appeared clear blue.

There was however one slight “alteration to schedule.” The local T0 technology that the Sangoma Card needed to interface with was not of similar standard to other parts of the world. Theo called to Bicom Systems’ Control Tower (Support) who asked if they might take control of the flight command (and SSH into the server). For reasons of security the Airport Authorities refused the right to land (no external SSH would be granted). Time for a blind navigation !
Bicom Systems team worked with Theo in the cockpit and guided an alternative route to get the card interfacing with the trunk.

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Results

All four locations are now networked with the existing handsets. International calls are costing but a small percentage of previous and managers can take full advantage of IP should they travel.

There is considerably more unity to the airport's facilities but also with an interface in local language.

Plans can now begin to consider networking with other airports with whom Ouagadougou has much telephony traffic.

The Airport is now set to take-off into the 21st Century and Theo got back to base on time.

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