



Powering a successful technology partnership

F1 racing team choose best-in-class communications engine from Samsung

“With the Samsung System we have been able to transform our remote communication capabilities whilst also reducing costs and improving reliability. Every pound saved is an extra pound that can be spent on car development, which in turn equals better results, and it’s great to know that our communications technology is one thing that I don’t have to worry about.”

Adrian Collinson – Head of IT, Spyker F1 Team

The engine is certainly the heart of a Formula One racing car, and Spyker F1 Team believe that communication is the heart of their business. Both internally and externally, the ability to interact effectively and efficiently with suppliers, colleagues, partners or sponsors is key. It is very important that they keep up with the latest in communications technology as well as the latest in engine technology. So when a new system was required, Spyker turned to leading technology provider, Samsung, for the solution.

Driving communications change

A Samsung OfficeServ 500 was subsequently installed at the head office in Silverstone, supported by a smaller OfficeServ 7200 at the wind tunnel in Brackley. The initial implementation was a hybrid VoIP solution, with a mix of 200 digital and IP handsets, designed to meet individual requirements throughout the business. More recently, the head office system has been upgraded to the latest Samsung OfficeServ system, the 7400, as Adrian Collinson, Head of IT for the Spyker F1 team, explains:

“We always planned to upgrade as soon as the 7400 became available, but we have been really pleased with both systems. A key requirement for us was the ability to use IP handsets during testing and also at race locations, something which we trialled initially at the Brazilian Grand Prix. We took two IP phones with us and were amazed when we plugged them in and they ran off the main switch immediately.

We have a team of 95 people who travel to each Grand Prix or testing location and all of these have benefited from using the IP phones, and also IP Softphones at ‘fly away’ races which we cannot travel to overland. We were able to use this technology in all remote locations during the next season and it has made a huge difference for us.”



Spyker Formula One Team

Solving a logistical nightmare

Historically, Adrian needed to liaise with each local telecoms provider to rent a number of analogue and ISDN lines for each event. This was an administrative headache and meant that a full directory of contact numbers had to be issued for all of the people at each location, making the whole process very costly and time-consuming. On top of this, there were costs involved for the lines themselves and for calls made to and from each country. The IP phones can simply be plugged in on arrival and will run in exactly the same way as phones which are located at head office. This means that staff can simply log in and use the phone as if they were in the office and can be called on their normal office number. Adrian continues:

"It's so much easier now as everyone retains their office extension number, so from an administration perspective and in terms of productivity, it's a huge improvement all round. We just arrange a single quality-of-service (QoS) enabled SDSL connection at each location and we can run all of our voice and data communications over the one link, with no requirement for analogue lines from local providers. The IP phones are also extremely simple to set up, meaning that the one engineer we have on site and even he has far less work to do."

The new Samsung system also includes 30 wi-fi handsets to support office-based staff who are mobile around the premises. With the new system, Spyker have also been able to remove the 2Mb link which they used to have for voice traffic between Silverstone and Brackley, as all voice and data communications now run over their single 100Mb LES circuit.

Planning for the future

Spyker have recently upgraded their wind tunnel in Brackley, which meant that they had to use alternative premises for four months. With the OfficeServ 7400 they were able to simply set up a remote office at the temporary site, for all of the staff who were normally based at Brackley, and everyone could carry on using their usual office extension numbers as usual. Adrian is also looking at the possibility of adding Samsung video-conferencing phones to the system, which is something that would add a huge advantage for the business, especially when communicating with trackside personnel.

The solution which Spyker F1 Team now have supports their business effectively and will continue to do so for many years to come, as Adrian concludes:

"What we are doing is very 'bleeding edge' and we are constantly doing new things with technology. One of my IT assistants is about to go on maternity leave and in the past this would have been a real nightmare. But the system is so easy to maintain that I know this will not now be an issue. We are always looking to be better and to do things more efficiently, and it's great to know that our communications technology is one thing that I don't have to worry about."

For me, the three key system benefits are ease of management, reliability and cost-efficiency. From my perspective it is the Samsung technology which supports and underpins these other benefits and makes them possible. I have been extremely pleased with the whole implementation and with the new system."



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