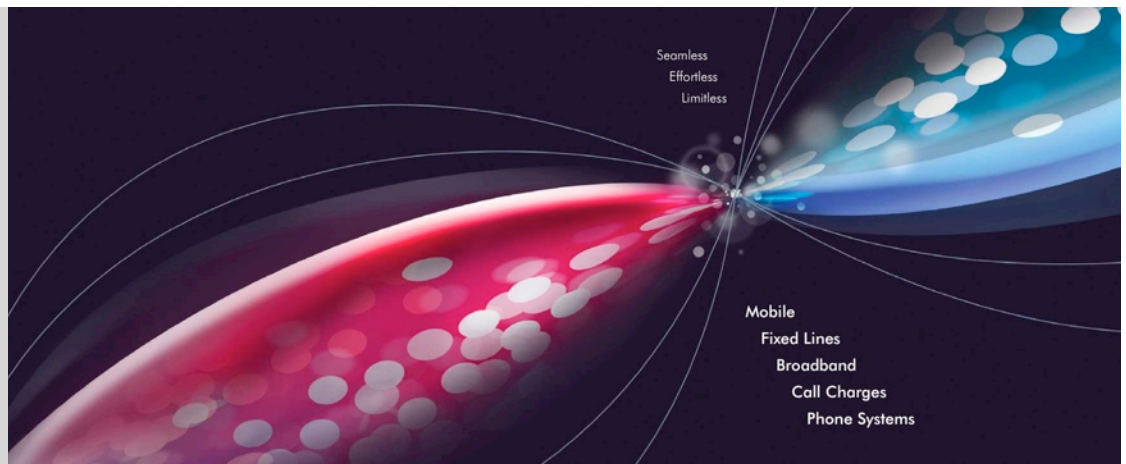


# CASESTUDY

Alpha Plus Group



## Southern Communications help Alpha Plus reduce costs and improve infrastructure

Sovereign Housing Group use **Southern Communications** for calls and lines together with the SpliceCom Maximiser system to deliver reduced telecoms costs and an improved group infrastructure.



**The Alpha Plus Group was founded in 1931 and comprises eighteen independent educational establishments catering for over 3,000 pupils. The schools and colleges within the group have developed a long-standing reputation for delivering premium quality education.**

Each centre retains its own identity, with the Heads and Principals afforded significant management authority, but with the benefits of financial security, camaraderie and opportunities for sharing best practice by belonging to one of the country's leading educational groups.

Alpha Plus uses Southern Communications for all of its calls and lines in conjunction with the SpliceCom Maximiser phone system. The result has seen

telecom costs reduced whilst delivering an improved group infrastructure.

### Background

The last five years has seen the group grow considerably, doubling in size through organic expansion and through the acquisition of other educational centres. The group structure enables a core team to provide essential support and infrastructure management, leaving the individual Heads and Principals free to concentrate on delivering the group's educational services.

### The issues

Numerous issues caused Alpha to begin researching alternatives to the Group's ageing telecoms systems. Firstly, the steady growth of the group meant there was over 100 different lines that were "costing a fortune and difficult to manage" says Facilities Manager, Alan Holden. This, coupled with the surge in mobile ownership by parents had caused

an increase in the amount of telecoms activity and spend. Individual schools and colleges were increasingly communicating with Head Office and other centres as well as responding to the need from parents to keep in better contact regarding the pupils. Many of the schools within the Group were also using systems that were not only old but in some cases, completely obsolete - causing issues as repairs were either costly or simply not possible. In addition, the growth of Alpha's own data network and the trend for convergence between data and telecoms systems provided the opportunity to switch to a modern solution that would allow Alpha to take advantage of technologies such as VoIP to create a low cost group-wide telecom/data network. Finally, the ongoing frustration in dealing with the existing telecom provider was enough for Alan to begin seeking a more cost effective and reliable phone system that was easier to manage.



# CASESTUDY



Image: Pupils from The Falcons Pre-Prep School

“We found them to be very positive, flexible, adaptable and patient”

Alan Holden, Alpha Plus Group

## The answer

Having made the decision to use IP technology within the phone system, a period of initial research enabled Alan to identify possible solutions, with the SpliceCom Maximiser system provided by Southern Communications quickly emerging as best suited to their needs. “Other systems proved to be too expensive and unsuited to the level of traffic we required” says Alan, “we’re not a commercial business that’s making calls all the time - the SpliceCom system would allow us to cost effectively install a system that would deliver the same benefits but on a smaller scale.” Alan then began following up references to test the company’s credentials. “We were pleased to see that Southern Communications had a proven track record in dealing with schools meaning they were used

to the peculiarities of working in this sector!” says Alan.

Following initial discussions, Alan quickly made the decision to move forward with Southern Communications. “We found them to be very positive, flexible, adaptable and patient” says Alan. “Everything was handled smoothly and quickly and their fault handling and customer service is very good.”

## The benefits

Since using the SpliceCom Maximiser system, Alpha have begun to enjoy numerous benefits. From a management viewpoint, the system allows problems to be identified and fixed remotely meaning downtime and costs are reduced. “Even if an engineer needs to call - they come prepared with the correct part because the problem has

already been identified.” says Alan. Not only this but the system is also incredibly flexible with the whole system working together. “If a line fails we can simply divert calls through other lines across the network and back onto the public network - there’s no downtime or loss in service.” Best of all however, are the cost savings the group have been able to make. “By using the IP network for calls made across the group we don’t incur any costs at all” says Alan.

Since introducing the SpliceCom Maximiser system, Alpha Plus have also switched all of the Groups calls and lines to Southern Communications - helping to realise cost savings of 20-30% across the board together with a system which is able to grow and adjust to the changing needs of the group.



Glebe Farm, Down Street  
Dummer, Hampshire  
RG25 2AD

tel: 08450 567 765  
fax: 08450 567 700

[www.southern-comms.co.uk](http://www.southern-comms.co.uk)