

International Shipping Broker Charters tw telecom VoIP Service to Sink Long Distance Phone Charges



THE COMPANY

Lone Star R.S. Platou Inc.

INDUSTRY

Ship Brokering

BUSINESS RESULTS

- Cut international call rates by about 80 percent to save \$12,000 per year
- Created easier-to-manage integrated voice/data communications network

COMMUNICATIONS APPLICATIONS

- VoIP calling
- Ethernet LAN connectivity

The Challenge

Lone Star is a successful tanker chartering company. Its employees specialize in matching freight customers with the best cargo ship for the task. While workers focus on the Caribbean market the international nature of the shipping business correlates to an international long distance phone bill of over 72,000 minutes.

"We've been very satisfied with **tw telecom's** Ethernet Internet Service [EIS]," said Sophie Williford, office manager for Lone Star in Houston. "So when they came to us to discuss the voice over IP [VoIP] service, we became very excited about the potential cost savings."

TW TELECOM SOLUTIONS ONE SOLUTION CONNECT

- IP Trunk service, 2Mbps capacity
- Ethernet Internet Service (EIS)
- Fully-managed Cisco VoIP gateway

The Solution

IT managers simplified their communications network by converging their voice and data traffic onto a single, scalable multi-service transport connection. They did this by adding **tw telecom's** IP Trunk service to their installed EIS transport. Their existing 10 Mbps EIS service—delivered on a 10 Mbps port—was upgraded to a 100 Mbps port. This gave Lone Star the headroom to accommodate the additional 2 Mbps of bandwidth for the IP Trunks plus more capacity for future company growth.



About tw telecom

tw telecom delivers the most advanced telecommunications solutions on the market to a wide spectrum of businesses and organizations across the United States. Since 1993, we have built a legacy of success through exceptional customer care, remarkable products and powerful networks. These strengths enable us to deliver scalable solutions that help customers improve their business metrics. For more information, please visit www.twtelecom.com.



The incoming EIS bandwidth was delivered to a FastE router (LAN connectivity) and to a managed Cisco Gateway (voice line connectivity). The Gateway linked to the company's Panasonic KXTD A200 PBX. Minor adjustments enabled Lone Star to use its existing PBX — thus sidestepping an expensive IP PBX upgrade. This offered a cost-effective path to implementing a VoIP solution.

The Value to the Business

Significantly Lower Costs

"We project that **tw telecom's** VoIP service will save our company \$36,000 over the next three years," said Williford. "They certainly delivered what our sales representative said they would."

Seamless Quality of Service

tw telecom's VoIP service combats latency and packet loss problems by prioritizing traffic end-to-end over its private IP infrastructure. "The quality of the packet-based service has been so high that no one noticed when we switched over," explained Greg Stringfellow, IT manager for Lone Star in Houston. "Delivering as good or better service to my end users at a lower cost is a win-win for our company."

Minimal Administration

According to Stringfellow, the converged **tw telecom** network connection requires very little day-to-day administration. "The additional VoIP service didn't increase our network management overhead at all. **tw telecom** manages the VoIP Gateway which saves us the time it would take to do that."

Highly Responsive Partner

Regarding the performance of the **tw telecom** team, Stringfellow stated, "The customer service and support was excellent throughout and after the sales cycle."

About Lone Star, R.S.

Lone Star, R.S. Platou Inc. is an international ship brokering company originally established in 1997 as Lone Star Tankers. The original partnership was established to provide quality tanker brokerage service in the U.S. Gulf where, prior to this date, such service was very limited. This vision was quickly realized and Lone Star Tankers developed into an active spot tanker brokerage shop with specialized knowledge of the Caribbean market. Today, Lone Star is considered one of the premier tanker chartering shops in North America. With its wide range of contacts including owners and major oil charterers, Lone Star negotiates voyage, time charter and project contracts for all sizes of vessel from Ultra Large Crude Carriers to small Chemical Carriers, in a highly competitive market. Please visit us at www.platou.com.

"The **tw telecom** voice over IP service allowed us to cut our international calling costs by 80 percent. Down the road, we'll also be able to implement all sorts of productivity-enhancing applications. And by combining it with our Ethernet Internet Service, we now have a simpler, easier-to manage integrated voice and data network."

Greg Stringfellow,

IT Manager,,

Lone Star, R.S. Platou Inc.

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