Hutchison Drei Austria GmbH Makes Better Connections with Sonus Session Border Controllers

Sonus

The Challenge

- Drei Austria's legacy 2G/3G network was unable to scale cost-effectively to meet rapid subscriber growth
- TDM-based peer interconnect was costly to maintain and inefficient for large volumes of traffic

The Solution

- Drei Austria selected a more cost-efficient IP/SIP-based foundation for its national and international voice interconnect platform using Sonus session border controllers
- Drei Austria can now easily meet rising demand for SIP-based services and higher traffic volumes using several scalable, high-performance Sonus SBCs instead of TDM-based switches
- Drei Austria estimates that implementing the Sonus SBC solution has saved them as much as €200,000 per year in reduced operating costs.

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It's good to be the number three, especially when it means you're part of the world-leading 3 brand of mobile voice/data service providers owned by Hutchison Whampoa and operated across Europe and Asia. For the Austrian arm of 3, Hutchison Drei Austria GmbH, however, the goal has always been number one—to provide the best mobile communications experience to its approximately 3.5 million subscribers.

The Challenge

As its subscribers and services have grown, Drei Austria—like many communications service providers—has been challenged to cost-effectively scale out its legacy network to meet the growing demand for mobile multimedia services. Recently, Drei Austria made the decision to upgrade its legacy 2G/3G voice network, which is based on the Time-Division Multiplexing (TDM) protocol, to a more cost-efficient and scalable platform based on the Internet Protocol (IP) and the Session Initiation Protocol (SIP). Because a complete network migration from TDM to IP can be a complex, costly and potentially disruptive process, Drei Austria divided their network migration into strategic phases, beginning with the addition of session border controllers (SBCs) to provide IP/SIP interconnection to its vast network of national and international carrier partners and peers.

SBCs provide a secure foundation for SIP-based communications in a powerful and compact IP-based device that supports multimedia sessions, including voice, video and data. SBCs are typically deployed at the edge of a service provider's network, connecting it to external networks such as those operated by other carriers and enterprises. For the initial phase of its IP migration, Drei Austria identified the need for IP-based SBCs using the SIP and SIP-I protocols to support secure, high-quality voice services with peer networks while consolidating its footprint and reducing costs.

The Decision Process

After a careful evaluation to narrow the competitive field, Drei Austria invited Sonus and one other SBC vendor to participate in lab trials at their facilities, where both vendor solutions were put through exhaustive testing. The Sonus solution met every challenge, and Drei Austria selected the Sonus SBC5200 and SBC5100 session border controllers as their new SIP interconnect platform.

"Sonus solved all of the problems on the table and, at the end of the day, offered the best combination of performance and price," said Rico Chemnitz, Head of IT Core Networks and Products at Drei Austria. "The SBC5000 series delivered everything we needed—robust interworking, media transcoding, security, advanced routing and performance—in a compact and scalable design that our IT staff felt comfortable moving forward with as our future interconnect platform."

The Business Impact/Benefit

Today, two pairs of redundant, high-availability Sonus SBC5200s handle all of Drei Austria's international interconnect voice traffic—performing a role that would otherwise require dozens of circuit-based switches. With the highest session capacity in the industry, the SBC5200s are also handling much of Drei Austria's national interconnect voice traffic, including interfaces with enterprise PBXs, voicemail servers and regional MVNOs (Mobile Virtual Network Operators). Drei Austria estimates that implementing the Sonus SBC solution has saved them as much as €200,000 per year in reduced operating costs.

"Our mobile subscriber base is growing at a tremendous rate," said Chemnitz. "The Sonus SBCs help us keep pace with that growth by providing the capacity we need today and supporting the SIP-based services we'll need in the future."

An added benefit of having the Sonus SBCs in place is the ability to quickly provision and launch new peer relationships. With the streamlined provisioning and management of the Sonus Element Management System (EMS), combined with the SBC5000 Series' robust SIP signaling interworking, Drei Austria can expand its market reach with new peer relationships in as little as 48 hours—helping them drive growth quickly to react to new market opportunities.

About Sonus Networks

Sonus Networks, Inc. is a leader in IP networking with proven expertise in delivering secure, reliable and scalable next-generation infrastructure and subscriber solutions. Sonus products include session border controllers, policy/routing servers, and media and signaling gateways. In 2012, Sonus launched its Partner Assure program to provide turnkey sales support and training to authorized resellers around the world. To date, more than 100 companies have joined the Partner Assure program. For more information, visit www.sonus.net.

Sonus Networks North American Headquarters

4 Technology Park Drive
Westford, MA 01886
U.S.A.
Tel: +1-855-GO-SONUS

Sonus Networks APAC Headquarters

1 Fullerton Road #02-01
One Fullerton
Singapore 049213
Singapore
Tel: +65-68325589

Sonus Networks Limited EMEA Headquarters

Edison House
Edison Road
Dorcan, Swindon
Wiltshire
SN3 5JX
Tel: +44-14-0378-8114

To learn more, call Sonus at 855-GO-SONUS or visit us online at www.sonus.net

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