

CASE STUDY: CIVILSERVE

Civilserve is the exclusive distribution partner for GGU software. GGU software is a suite of software products that contains 50 programs for Windows operating systems in various fields including geotechnical calculations, groundwater flow models, borehole analyses and soil mechanics laboratory and field experiments.

In addition to the marketing and sale of GGU software, the company regularly organises practical seminars and online conferences in which participants are given training in how to use the programs professionally. Over 3,500 companies and institutions with thousands of users are already successfully using Civilserve's software solutions for their projects.

EXCEL WITH GOTOCONNECT

The Challenge

Civilserve is a small business with only five employees but with two locations. And, according to Thomas Walkemeyer, co-founder and managing director of Civilserve, this was precisely where the greatest challenge lay at the beginning.

"It meant we had two servers and two telephone systems in place. We were able to come up with a good solution for the software using database replication to send our data back and forth between the two servers," Walkemeyer explained but added, *"things were a little different with the telephone system."*

The telephone system aged with the company. For Walkemeyer, hardware's days were numbered, *"If you wanted to close the company for 2-3 days at Christmas, for example, you had to set up various redirections; these solutions more often failed than succeeded,"* Walkemeyer recalled.

A decision was made that Civilserve needed to introduce a Voice-over-IP telephone system i.e. a telecommunications system that does not require a conventional telephone connection; one through which all communication takes place via the internet.

"Even if you find yourself disappointed from time to time with telecommunications service providers in Germany there is, nonetheless, a certain degree of trust. But this was not necessarily the case with VoIP providers," Walkemeyer explained. *"We found it difficult to put our company's fate in the hands of a service provider that was unfamiliar to us,"* said Walkemeyer, getting to the heart of the matter.

Fortunately, Civilserve had already been using GoToWebinar (LogMeIn's webinar software) as a webinar tool for online conferences since 2007 and had always had positive experiences with it.

That initiative was also thanks Daniel Holzinger from the management consultancy firm, Colited, who supported Civilserve in setting up professional webinars. *"We knew early on that, when it came to webinars, we had to improve. And that's when we met Mr. Holzinger. We hit it off immediately,"* said Walkemeyer and added, *"Mr. Holzinger showed us what factors are important in a webinar and how to do them with a degree of confidence."*

LogMeIn was well positioned and it became immediately clear that there could only be one solution to the telephone system issue too. *"When we then heard that LogMeIn had a VoIP telephone system in its portfolio i.e. **GoToConnect**. It was immediately clear that we would of course switch to a provider we knew – and that was the right thing to do,"* Walkemeyer recalled.

The Solution

Civilserve has increasingly relied on GoToWebinar webinars and GoToMeeting training courses in the form of workshops since the beginning of the crisis. But **GoToConnect's integration has also made many other things much easier for Civilserve.**

"GoToConnect gave us the opportunity to incorporate our freelancers. We simply made GoToConnect available to them and they became instantly integrated into our telephone system," said Walkemeyer happily and added, *"In this way, they were able to hold online training courses directly with our customers. This meant the customers didn't have to travel anywhere and instead just received the help they needed with their project via the online workshop. That was, of course, a huge relief."*

It was also important for Walkemeyer that a telephone system would enable callers to see, at a glance, who was engaged and who was available at any one time. This saves

an enormous amount of time; after all, very few people enjoy speaking to an answering machine.

"What got me immediately excited about GoToConnect were the dial plans. *It's like a flowchart that you work out – and with that, the engineer can get started doing something again,"* said Walkemeyer (who happens to be a trained engineer) with a smile.

"And with a little support from the GoToConnect team, we were able to set up a dial plan in under an hour that we haven't changed since. It was so good and well worked-out that there was little that could be improved upon," said Walkemeyer.

On the subject of implementation, Walkemeyer commented, *"I've never come across an unfriendly person at LogMeIn. People want to talk to actual people and want people to listen to their problems – with LogMeIn, you're never left alone to deal with your problems,"* and he went on to add, *"I feel like there's always someone I can turn to at any time, even if this sometimes means dealing with a different person (which is understandable due to the size of the company)."*

Civilserve was also able to ensure, using GoToConnect (and an office service), that an actual person always answers the calls. *"Even if we were on a call, and the telephone was ringing for a long time, a person always answered it and our customers very much appreciate that,"* Walkemeyer confirmed.

The Result

The change from a conventional telephone system to a VoIP system was a complete success. *"We wanted to move away from standard telephone systems and we managed to achieve that. We became more flexible immediately thanks to the fact we were able to easily integrate freelancers. Whether working from home or on the go – people can now work remotely without any problems. We have also been rated as having excellent availability and always have a contact person on the phone. And it's all thanks to GoToConnect,"* Walkemeyer emphasised.

Civilserve had always asked itself how it could become more pioneering. That wasn't easy and it still isn't now. *"The construction industry doesn't have a reputation for being pioneering in the digital realm – in general, more emphasis is placed on the tangible. The industry focuses on preserving what already exists, new things need staying power to come to the fore,"* Walkemeyer explained.

Civilserve quickly realised that you can help your customers with tools like GoToConnect and, in doing so, break boundaries. In this way, you could also show that things could be done more easily with new technology.

It was important to Civilserve to provide a mobile office, people wanted to be able to work from trade fairs, for example. **"We switched to GoToConnect and that was the right decision,"** said Walkemeyer, who then added, *"as a small business, we didn't want to be stuck somewhere and have to say, 'now that we've installed a telephone system here, we'll always have to work from this location' – that wouldn't have been ideal. Despite the fact that we're a company with only a few employees, we still need to be flexible. And we have now achieved that goal."*

Civilserve has not only been able to increase the number of satisfied customers, but also its flexibility. With the integration of **GoToConnect**, Civilserve, the IT company and exclusive distribution partner for GGU software, has taken the leap into the 'world of work 2.0' both quickly and easily.

"Whether working from home or on the go – people can now work remotely without any problems. We have also been rated as having excellent availability and always have a contact person on the phone. And it's all thanks to GoToConnect" said Walkemeyer.

Thomas Walkemeyer
Managing Director and Co-Founder of Civilserve GmbH

Would you like to learn more about GoToConnect?
Then visit us at www.goto.com/connect.