

Case Study

retail

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Sama Eyewear

Luxury Brand Sama Eyewear Makes a Bold Statement with Transformed Communications Systems and Information Mobility

"The process of working with Ricoh was seamless. Installation and configuration was quick and thorough, and the Ricoh team was very professional."

– Cyrus Khavari
Business Development Manager
Sama Eyewear
Los Angeles, CA

Sama

ABOUT THE CUSTOMER

Sama Eyewear began more than two decades ago to elevate fashion eyewear to a whole new level. Now worn by celebrities, a must-have for international jetsetters, and coveted swag included in Academy Awards ceremony gift bags, Sama Eyewear has become one of the world's finest and most exclusive luxury fashion eyewear brands. With two boutiques in Beverly Hills and West Hollywood, California, an online store and a presence in fine optical shops and boutiques in more than forty countries, Sama Eyewear has built a distinctive empire known for both affluence and charitable giving.

A portion of the profits from Sama Eyewear fund its non-profit organization, the Sam Vance Foundation. The foundation strives to prevent drug use among teens and young adults, and helps young addicts recover.

While Sama Eyewear has made an indelible mark on the fashion eyewear world, the new world of work was having a profound affect on Sama Eyewear. Its communications with the outside world—as well as internally—were severely obstructed by outdated telecom and Internet technology. In mid 2013, Sama Eyewear had enough. They contacted Ricoh to recommend solutions and implement new technology to make the retailer's communications processes as fluid and flawless as its signature accessories.

CHALLENGE

- Aging, costly PBX phone system
- Inability to transfer calls or identify person using phone line
- Lack of mobile support
- Sluggish satellite Internet connectivity

SOLUTION

- Current and future-state roadmap
- In-depth analysis of phone bills
- Installation of personalized, hybrid VoIP phone system
- Find Me/Follow Me capability for on-premise and remote calls
- Heads Up Display (HUD) unified communication software
- IT infrastructure work
- Recommendations for third party cloud-based Internet data service

RESULTS

- Modern, cost-effective business phone system that supports internal communications and mobility
- Switchboard functionality to identify users, transfer calls, leave and check voicemail, text, review call statistics and more
- Ultra-fast Internet capabilities to access and share information with customers and colleagues

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CHALLENGE

The statement Sama Eyewear's antiquated communications technology made to its customers and employees didn't match its dedication to one-of-a-kind styles, meticulous craftsmanship, the finest materials and high-end prices. In a world of information mobility, everyone expects anytime, anywhere access to people and information, from any device. It's necessary to service customers, grow business and collaborate effectively with colleagues.

But Sama Eyewear just wasn't equipped. It had an old PBX phone system used by approximately 25 employees, with no ability to transfer calls or identify the person who was using the phone line—and no integrated mobility whatsoever. Outside the office, Sama Eyewear owners who are always on the go around the globe had to rely on cell phones, giving out multiple phone numbers to important contacts to be reachable in different time zones.

"Our previous phone system was unreliable for our staff. Repair and maintenance costs kept increasing and it was affecting our day-to-day activities," said Cyrus Khavari, Business Development Manager for Sama Eyewear. "That system was older, cost too much and had too many features we never used."

The retailer's Internet capabilities were equally anachronous. Sama Eyewear was using a satellite dish—with speeds slower than ISDN—for Internet access. Something had to be done.

Sama Eyewear's previous phone system was old, cost too much and had too many features the retailer never used. Plus, information management and customer communications were slowed by the use of a satellite dish for Internet access.

It just so happened Khavari was a former Ricoh employee. He knew precisely who to call for the right solutions and recommendations to equip Sama Eyewear for the new world of work, where streamlined communication and anywhere, anytime access to people and business information is key.

SOLUTION

Ricoh came into the engagement with the trust of Khavari, but the team still had to convince Sama Eyewear's owners they could recommend solutions to dramatically improve their telecom system and Internet access—at an affordable cost. Ricoh began by creating a roadmap of Sama Eyewear's current state. From there, the Ricoh team presented solutions showing Sama Eyewear what a modern, state-of-the-art business communication system could look like.

Ricoh also examined the retailer's phone bills—assessing its cell phone, long distance and phone line costs—and determined it could help the retailer achieve significant savings. By providing the roadmap, analyzing the retailer's phone bills and recommending more cost-effective alternative solutions, Ricoh demonstrated to Sama Eyewear that it was invested in the retailer's success.

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“Ricoh worked very diligently to make sure that we understood the solution before we purchased it,” said Khavari. “They helped us navigate through our particular IT needs to come up with a personalized system that had only the bells and whistles we would use—nothing extra.”

Ricoh helped Sama Eyewear navigate through its IT needs and recommended a personalized system that had only the features the retailer would use—nothing extra.

Enthusiastic about the possibilities, Sama Eyewear signed on with Ricoh to begin the transformation. Ricoh installed a digital VoIP telecom system, including a firewall, which would cost less than what Sama Eyewear was currently paying for its outdated phone system. After some initial

rewiring and IT infrastructure work, a hybrid on-premise, third-party VoIP business phone system was installed consisting of a server in its Los Angeles shop and phones in both of its locations that accessed the on-premise server.

To display the Sama Eyewear office number on all outgoing calls—made on premise or remotely anywhere in the world—the Ricoh team implemented the Find Me/Follow Me feature. A Heads Up Display (HUD) unified communication software application was also installed to give Sama Eyewear employees the capabilities of a traditional operator switchboard right on their computers.

To enable the VoIP telecom system, the Ricoh team also coordinated and provided consulting services to help the retailer overhaul its Internet technology. Ricoh presented various options for Sama Eyewear to acquire internet connectivity and telecom services through various third party service providers. The retailer opted for cloud-based data service from a third party and Ricoh coordinated with the provider to help ensure a smooth transition.

“The process of working with Ricoh was seamless. Installation and configuration was very quick and thorough, and the Ricoh team was very professional,” said Khavari.



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RESULTS

Sama Eyewear now has a modern business phone system and ultra-fast Internet capabilities that allow the retailer to communicate with customers and colleagues anywhere, anytime, from any device. The updated phone and Internet systems also reflect the high standards that the retailer's luxury eyewear brand conveys.

A Modern, Unified Phone System

With the HUD software in place, all Sama Eyewear employees—and the owners who travel extensively—are on the same phone network. The system enables transparency. Employees now know exactly where their owners are in the world and are able to get ahold of them right away. Employees can identify whether other employees or the owners are on the phone, transfer calls via drag-and-drop, leave and check voicemail, send texts, view call queue statistics and more.

"We consistently see our staff using the phone system seamlessly with no frustration," said Khavari. "HUD has been very simple to work with and the overall system has been very reliable."

Seamless Internet Connectivity

The new cloud-based Internet service selected by Sama Eyewear puts it among a class of top tier Internet users—just as its eyewear signifies elite fashion. Not only does the retailer now have more reliable Internet service, its communications with Sama Eyewear employees and the outside world is as flawless as its luxury products.

Sama Eyewear's modern business phone system and ultra-fast Internet capabilities allows the retailer to communicate with its customers and colleagues anywhere, anytime, from any device.

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