TeamMate

CASE STUDY

PortaOne

Helping Partners Ride the Teams Wave with a Great Telephony Experience

www.teammatetechnology.com

PortaOne, is a well-established telecom software platform developer, primarily for billing and softswitch platforms - not just for VoIP, but also UCaaS and CPaaS. The company serves a global customer base of VoIP providers, CSPs, CLECs and MVNOs, with a strong focus on supporting Tier 2 and Tier 1 providers. While well-positioned to help their customers succeed with VoIP – along with providing APIs for them to develop customized applications – they must contend with the rising adoption of Teams by many of their customers.

While the pandemic has largely passed, its impact on how we work is still being felt. Many businesses accelerated their cloud adoption plans, as this was the best way to support home-based workers. Enabled by cloud solutions like UCaaS, the hybrid model has emerged as the best long-term option to support the both office and home-based workers.

This development has turned out to be good news for Microsoft, as Teams is a seamless complement to their portfolio of applications that have long dominated the desktop. While mobility is playing a larger role for workplace communications, the desktop remains the hub, both in the office and at home.

Microsoft's market position only seems to be getting stronger in this space, and PortaOne is not alone among independents trying to support service provider partners trying to provide the best value. Competing directly against Microsoft is sure to be a losing battle, and PortaOne lacked a complete solution to help partners keep growing their telephony business as their end customers continue adopting Teams.

TeamMate

We empower organizations to maximize the value of existing communications platforms by leveraging the capabilities of Microsoft Teams.

THE OPPORTUNITY

PARTNERING WITH TEAMMATE

For end customers going with Teams, the path of least resistance for telephony is to incorporate Phone System within their Microsoft environment. Integration would be seamless, there would just be one vendor to deal with, and end user familiarity with all things Microsoft will make for an intuitive user experience. This would be easy on the channel as well, since this wouldn't require any new expertise for deployment.

While PortaOne could still provide value-added capabilities to partners in these cases via their PortaSwitch platform, they weren't able to support them technology-wise with a full alternative to Microsoft Phone System. These customers may have had a smooth solution staying with Microsoft, but this would effectively shift the telephony piece away from partners and into the Teams fold. Aside from this impacting the business opportunity for partners, PortaOne recognizes the shortcomings of Phone System, and how it does not really serve the interests of end customers for telephony when using Teams.

PortaOne

PortaOne is a global telecommunication software platform developer.

This is where the PBX Connector from TeamMate comes into play, but there was also a bigger opportunity that PortaOne was responding to. Helping the customers of partners integrate telephony with Teams is purely a technology solution, but these customers are also adapting to bigger challenges pertaining to hybrid work. Home-based work has become normalized now, and this is a different workplace environment, not just for supporting telephony, but also new ways of working.

In this setting, workers won't have a PBX at their side for calling, and mobile phones are not a practical proxy for ongoing telephony needs. This puts the onus on PC-based softphones, which to date have had limited features and functionality compared to the PBX. Beyond telephony, home-based workers need a rich set of communications capabilities to remain productive; otherwise, they can become easily distracted by all the home life going on around them.

This is where partners can provide add-on value to telephony in the form of new features and customized applications that make home-based work more engaging. Rather just offering better solutions for telephony with Teams, partners can now help their customers re-think workplace communications, along with the technologies that best allow them to adapt to changing expectations among workers in the context of the hybrid model.

TeamMate

With TeamMate, Service Providers can build a customized and branded Teams Application to integrate call control, end user portals, PBX notifications, and PBX soft keys directly into Teams.

To address both this bigger opportunity - along with the telephony issues when going to Teams - PortaOne has created Add-on Mart, which serves as a cloud-based marketplace for partners. PortaOne's developers work with a wide range of third-party applications to create "modules" that partners can use to enhance their offerings, and make it easier for their customers to migrate to the cloud.

The marketplace has a wide range of offerings, including auto-provisioning, payments, SIP trunking, and cloud PBX onboarding. With over 50 modules to choose from, PortaOne provides value-added options for every type of partner, but perhaps the most notable is Teams Integration. This would be the PBX Connector offering from TeamMate, and it represents the missing piece PortaOne needed for partners to give their customers options beyond Microsoft for telephony when deploying Teams.

HOW PARTNERS ARE BENEFITING FROM THE TEAMMATE PARTNERSHIP WITH PORTAONE

PortaOne

Allows operators, telecommunication service providers, and carriers to launch and monetize a diverse range of retail, enterprise, SME, and wholesale services on a single platform.

When end customers choose to deploy Teams, they may not fully understand the options available for supporting telephony, both with and without using Microsoft. As Teams adoption keeps growing, partners need better solutions to maintain control over the telephony business, and this is precisely why the TeamMate partnership is so important. Just to be clear, PortaOne isn't setting up partners to compete directly against Microsoft – rather, it's to enable their customers to have the best of both worlds – all the great capabilities Teams provides, along with PBX-like features for the softphone that integrates with Teams.

Without this, customers will end up with a scaled-down feature set when using Microsoft Phone System. This may be a convenient option in some ways when deploying Teams, but in terms of delivering a great telephony experience, this has never been a strong suit for Microsoft. For businesses looking to maintain productivity from home-based workers, this is an important consideration, since none of the current options for telephony can match the feature set of the PBX that workers would normally have in the office.

TeamMate has developed proprietary algorithms to address this shortcoming, and with PBX Connector, PortaOne provides partners with a solution to provide workers with a PBX-like experience on their softphone. For end customers who are standardizing around Teams, they can now have a seamless integration with a full-featured softphone, and with that, a high-performing collaboration solution built around their Microsoft-based infrastructure.

TeamMate

The TeamMate connector makes the complex integration to Microsoft much easier to deploy and manage.

Aside from the richer calling features that Phone System lacks – such as PBX hunt groups and accessing a wider range of global toll-free numbers - partners can now offer more extensive and flexible call recording options, which is a key value-add for businesses with compliance requirements.

In addition to providing a better calling experience, there are two other important benefits once telephony is integrated with Teams, and calls are routed through the PortaOne platform. First is getting lower calling rates than if telephony is routed through Microsoft, especially for overseas calls. Second would be providing better service reliability, as Microsoft cannot natively provide five 9s uptime.

Finally, in terms of the bigger picture, integrating telephony with Teams via TeamMate means that partners don't need to compete directly against Microsoft or try to dissuade customers from adopting Teams. Instead, partners can now offer a way for customers to enhance their Teams experience without being disruptive, but also providing a better telephony solution.

Furthermore, TeamMate provides a bridge for PortaOne to develop and offer new services that tie into the broader Microsoft ecosystem. Given PortaOne's expertise with both traditional telephony and cloud communications, partners can now tap into new revenues with their Microsoft-centric customers.

"Teams is everywhere now, and our partners must find new ways of adding value with their customers. PortaOne's partnership with TeamMate provides that for telephony, especially for supporting home workers who must rely on their softphone while using Teams. Not only does this provide a great user experience for workers, but it allows partners to ride the wave with Teams and be on the right side of the growth curve."

Klaus Haertel, Director for Global Channel and Alliances, PortaOne

WE ARE YOUR TEAMMATES

If you have any questions, reach out to us.

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