



> HIGH QUALITY, LOW COST IP TELEPHONY SUPPORTS GROWTH OF NEW LAW FIRM

NORTEL



Case Study

Astrea

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> **Michaël De Coninck,**
General Manager,
Backoffice Europe

The scenario

Setting up a new business is inherently risky. But one area you don't want to take chances with is your communications system. After all, every lost call could mean a lost business opportunity – and missed revenue.

This holds true for dynamic new Belgian law firm, Astrea, as one of the founding partners, Philippe Van den Broecke explains: “As a business law firm, we're dealing with very high value cases. So our clients expect nothing less than the best service from us, which includes being able to speak to someone whenever they need to. We just can't afford to drop calls.”

Astrea approached reputable ICT specialist, Backoffice Europe, for a professional and highly reliable telephony system for its Antwerp office.

Michaël De Coninck, General Manager for Backoffice, gladly rose to the challenge: “Astrea wanted a cutting-edge telephone communications infrastructure but, being a new business, it needed it at a low cost. It might have seemed like an impossible task but I knew that Nortel's Business Communications Manager 50 would be the perfect solution. It offered all the functionality Astrea needed, at up to 40 per cent lower cost than its main competitor. I see it as a huge PABX in a small box.”

The solution

Backoffice provided combined IP and digital telephony for 35 staff using the Nortel Business Communications Manager (BCM) 50 with Nortel IP Phone 2002s and Nortel Business Series Terminal T7316Es. Two Nortel Business Ethernet Switch 120s with Power over Ethernet route calls internally and to remote workers.

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> **Philippe Van den Broecke,**
Partner,
Astrea



For additional functionality, a Nortel Business Access Point 120 enables highly secure wireless communications for laptops accessing the local area network and Internet.

The entire solution was deployed in under five hours, thanks to Nortel technology's ease of installation and integration.

This solution gave Astrea:

- Telephone communications that the firm and its clients can trust
- The ability to replace a traditional reception with a pool of five secretaries, including one remote worker
- Highly secure mobile and wireless communications
- Scalability to add new users, supporting its rapid growth

The results

Astrea's telephony infrastructure has been a success from day one. According to Philippe, "We needed a system we could trust from the very beginning and I'm pleased to say that's been the case with the Nortel solution. We haven't had any issues with missed calls and the mobility capability is enabling us to work flexibly, as well as strengthen our reputation as being a fresh, innovative law firm."

The firm is unusual in the way that it answers calls. Rather than having a traditional receptionist who puts calls through to a secretary and then a fee earner, it uses a pool of just five secretaries. Thanks to the BCM 50, calls can be routed to the first available person in a hierarchy system. The firm will soon be using the voicemail capability of the BCM 50 for out-of-hours calls, and to take some of the strain as call numbers increase.

Happily, the firm has also been extremely successful and is growing rapidly. "Nortel's technology is very scalable," says Michaël, "It's very easy to add new users and new functionality as the need arises and will help to support Astrea's growth in the future."

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