



Established in 1996, Blast is an award winning design consultancy based in Islington, London. Blast works across all aspects of design, developing brand identities, creating advertising campaigns and producing the full range of marketing communications and websites.

Whilst Blast is a relatively small design consultancy, it has a number of premier accounts including Virgin Media, Logica and the BBC, indeed, Blast has been an approved design consultancy for the BBC for over 6 years.

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**blast:**

# Blast Design Consultancy

Enabling improved service to customers and staff

## The Challenge

The challenge for Blast is to remain at the cutting edge of design, using the latest design technology to deliver creative solutions to clients.

Blast's MD, Colin Gifford "Giff", explains, "As a design company we are constantly sending and receiving very large files via email. Our challenge was to find a voice and data solution that was both reliable and very, very fast".

Giff and the team at Blast had become frustrated with the service received from their previous communications provider. When problems with their telephone and data network occurred, there were a number of departments which had to be contacted in order for the problem to be resolved. Giff recalls that "When anything went wrong, getting it fixed or even getting any maintenance done was a nightmare – incredibly frustrating".

Giff pointed out that "As a relatively small company, it's just not possible for us to have a dedicated IT person; we are all designers, so we were also looking for a system reliable enough to run itself as we don't have either the technical networking skills or the time to deal with systems which do not work".

## The Solution

Blast was looking for a modern communications system to provide their office with an up-to-date digital voice system, enabling them to provide an efficient service and professional image to clients, complimenting their design output. As a design consultancy, Blast also needed the ability to rapidly and securely transfer large data files to clients.

Having considered a number of options, Blast chose an Avaya IP Small Office edition solution from Excell; the system included eight Avaya 5410 digital telephones, high speed broadband and a mobile solution comprised of four phones, including a BlackBerry.

The Avaya 5410 is a digital display telephone with features that include a duplex speakerphone facility, call logging, conference calling and call transfer functionality. It also features a noise cancelling microphone for busy office environments. Blast has eight design consultants but no support staff. It was important that any one of them could answer an incoming call and be able to direct it to the required person. The DDI feature of the system enables existing clients to contact their consultant directly, thus improving customer service levels and reducing the number of calls to the main office number. Each consultant has an individual voicemail facility and there is also an overall voicemail system for the company.



*“Excell has a similar ethos to us, they are innovative and entrepreneurial and as such understand the importance of being responsive”*



## Collaboration: Do something amazing

Giff is delighted with the performance of the new system, he said, “We now have the up-to-date features of the Avaya system plus the excellent service from Excell – we bought our telephone system which wasn’t a great expense – and it has cost us less than leasing our old system. I would say we are enjoying at least a 20% reduction in telephony costs” also, continued Giff “Installation was quick, simple and problem free so there was no down time, a critical factor for us. We all got trained on the day it was installed and Excell programmed in all our frequently used numbers, making life easier still.”

Blast’s investment is protected as the Avaya IP Office system is scalable and can increase its capacity to match the growth of the company. “There is enough scope in the new system to upgrade to support the maximum level of staff for this office” explained Giff.

In summing up, Giff notes, “We have the best of both worlds, in that we have the features of the Avaya IP small office system supplied as part of a total package from Excell. Excell has a similar ethos to us, they are innovative and entrepreneurial and as such understand the importance of being responsive. They are personable and give me the impression that they will do anything they can to help and to make things easier for us”.

## Results

- **Improved customer service:** clients can now get direct access to their Blast design consultant
- **Cost savings:** the investment in the Avaya IP Office system is less than the cost of leasing the old system
- **Voicemail:** latest voicemail facilities enhances the image of Blast. The facility provides both individual and central voicemail functions
- **Scalability:** the scalability of the Avaya IP Office system means that small dynamic companies can expand without incurring additional major telephony investment costs
- **Simplicity:** The Avaya IP small office system does not require any inhouse technical expertise

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