

J.F. Shea Co., Inc.

Company: J.F. Shea Co., Inc.
Website: <http://www.jfshea.com/>
Company Size: Approximately 3,700
Country/Region: USA
Industry: Construction and Real Estate

Company Profile: J.F. Shea was originally founded in 1881 as a family owned plumbing company, and is now diversified across numerous related industries, including material production, residential construction, commercial property development, and venture capital.

Software Solutions & Deployment Enablers:

- [Skype for Business Online](#)
- [PSTN Conferencing](#)
- [Skype Operations Framework](#)

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Jason Gherardini
Vice President of Information Technology, J.F. Shea Co., Inc.

J.F. Shea Co., Inc. is on track to save more than \$88,000 annually by moving to Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing

“Prior to Skype for Business Online, we didn’t have a single, integrated solution to offer employees. We now have a full-rounded solution with all the collaboration and communication capabilities that we need. It saves our employees time, improves efficiency, and saves us money.”

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Shea streamlined communication and collaboration by consolidating on a single, integrated platform with Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing – reducing costs, enabling enhanced mobile scenarios, and transforming IT.

Business Need

Headquartered in Walnut, CA, J.F. Shea Co., Inc. spans industries from home building and commercial development to civil engineering. 3,700 employees in 7 divisions across 168 locations were using various communication and collaboration tools, including costly legacy telephony conferencing services. The decentralized toolset was cumbersome to manage, inefficient, and expensive. Shea decided to standardize on a simplified, streamlined collaboration and communication platform with Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing, enabling new mobile collaboration scenarios, transforming IT, and saving upwards of \$88,000.

Solution and Benefits

Standardizing on a single, integrated collaboration and communication platform simplifies user experience, and enables the mobile worker

Shea had teams across the country using a variety of legacy and standalone solutions for communication and collaboration. Methods of working together were inconsistent, varying from site to site, and the tools were costly and cumbersome to manage. They worked to retire those disparate solutions, and consolidate on a single, integrated platform with Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing.

“Technology used to be commercially driven, with all of the best solutions coming out of IT,” reflected Jason Gherardini, Vice President of Information Technology. “Individuals can now often move to the latest technologies at home faster than an IT department can move a business. We need to be able to keep up, stay on the leading edge, and offer our organization the tools they want so they don’t go out and find them on their own.”

The move to Skype for Business Online brought a simplified, streamlined platform that yielded great benefits. “Prior to Skype for Business Online, we didn’t have a single,

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integrated solution to offer employees. We now have a full-rounded solution with all the collaboration and communication capabilities that we need. It saves our employees time, improves efficiency, and saves us money,” shared Gherardini. “We have 168 locations ranging from small sales offices to larger corporate offices. Prior to Skype for Business Online people would default to email or a phone call if they needed questions answered. Now people ping each other on Skype, get fast, efficient answers, and can immediately move forward with their work,” he added.

In addition to efficiency gains, users are also transforming how they engage, including cross-geography collaboration. “We have employees across the country, many who work remotely conducting meetings from hotels or from the road. Their office may be their vehicle, or a trailer on the job site they’re working from. Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing enables them to dial into meetings when internet access is unavailable by simply using a conference call number and passcode,” highlighted Gherardini.

Gherardini also illustrated how Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing is moving their business along at a faster pace, including new product launches. “We recently launched a new product. Our product lead in Denver, Colorado used Skype for Business Online to address a product issue with the broader team, and the response and resolution was immediate. Rather than waiting to launch new products and training at big, annual, or semi-annual conference events, we’re now able launch much more quickly and efficiently.”

Shea is continuing to push the technology envelope by showcasing the latest solutions, like home automation, in their New Homes Division projects. The Skype for Business Online platform is helping move them toward their goal of being on the leading edge of technology.

Successful Skype for Business Online deployment transforms IT approach to rollouts, realizing increased value from technology investments

The deployment team leveraged the framework, methodology, tools and resources in Microsoft’s Skype Operations Framework (SOF) to guide their rollout. They conducted a network assessment to ensure bandwidth was sufficient, set clear goals and objectives, and executed a set of activities designed to increase awareness, further education, and drive adoption.

Using SOF was key to their success, and was so effective that it’s transformed how Gherardini thinks about IT. He confided, “Our Skype for Business Online rollout changed the way I’ve structured our IT department. We had a host of excellent Microsoft tools that were sitting as shelfware without us realizing their full value. By bringing in a Network Applications Analyst, we plan to replicate the Skype for Business Online rollout methodology across our company, to champion those underutilized tools, drive the value to end users, and increase adoption.”

Shea held in-person training sessions, hosted lunch and learn webinars, and made quick reference cards available to end users. They also folded Skype for Business Online information into new employee orientation. They drove adoption by offering Skype-certified devices, like headsets. “Anyone who attended training was offered a device, and their popularity has taken off,” shared Gherardini. “I love them too! Joining a meeting with a single click a link, and having a full audio experience is awesome.” He added that the availability of the Skype for Business Online client across platforms,

including iOS, has further generated excitement and aided adoption, especially in the field where iPads are frequently used.

Looking to the Future

"Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing is integrated into the Microsoft stack. It is effective, simple, and so easy to use," noted Gherardini. "The gains we've seen from quickly and easily collaborating on shared documents, through screen sharing, instant messaging, and conferencing have made it well worth our investment."

Moving forward, Gherardini plans to rollout Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing to additional parts of the company, retiring more legacy tools. He anticipates growing efficiency and productivity gains, as well as the cost-savings that expansion will bring by sharing an anecdote. "We had a flood at one of our sites, with 3 feet of standing water. While we had other solutions in the cloud, like Office 365, we hadn't yet moved to Skype for Business Online with PSTN Conferencing and incurred lost productivity and downtime as a result. Once fully deployed with Skype for Business Online, scenarios like that will be a thing of the past."