

sunrise

a success story from hp



myzone builds market share
by letting mobile customers
talk at landline rates

challenge

In the intensely competitive Swiss mobile communications market, sunrise wanted to build its market share by attracting customers away from competitive service providers, while decreasing churn and increasing “stickiness” within its existing customer base.

solution

sunrise and HP worked together to define and deploy myzone, a new service that enables mobile customers to call landline phones from within a defined zone, paying fixed-line rates instead of significantly higher mobile charges. Technology supporting the service runs on the continuously available, highly scalable HP NonStop™ platform.

impact

The myzone solution has

- Resulted in a smooth, transparent implementation that was completed in just four months and under budget
- Reduced the burden on sunrise’s customer care department because the extremely stable HP system results in very few customer problems
- Helped sunrise become one of the fastest-growing Swiss telecommunications corporations, with 1.2 million mobile subscribers



In the highly competitive Swiss mobile communications market, sunrise wanted to build its market share by attracting customers away from competitive service providers, while decreasing churn and increasing “stickiness” within its existing customer base. The company quickly realized it would have to offer a unique service to achieve this and came up with the idea of myzone—a service for mobile customers that lets them make a call to a landline phone and get the same connection as a landline, while paying the same (significantly lower) rate as a fixed phone. The catch? Calls had to be made from a customer-selected location. The success of this service led to an increase in mobile subscriber calls, because it allowed subscribers to keep their fixed home lines free and available for fax or Internet use, while habituating them to using their mobiles as their primary voice lines. The service is now moving into phase two and evolving into myzone, which allows users to reconfigure their personal zone to be any location where they’re spending a significant amount of time.

Using their mobile phones, customers can easily change their personal zones whenever they wish by taking advantage of a simple, automated process.

Leveraging platform-independent NonStop servers to drive services

As Switzerland’s second provider of telephony services, which include fixed and mobile networks, as well as the Internet, sunrise is constantly looking for ways to expand its service portfolio. The company’s IT situation was complicated by a recent merger with another Swiss telecommunications company, diAx, which resulted in a complex environment that includes a multitude of different platforms. Managing this diverse environment is tricky enough; introducing a new service into it is a multifaceted and comprehensive project. But sunrise is a long-term HP customer, and it communicated the critical nature of the myzone project in its quest to capture additional market share.

“We got the NonStop technology from our partner SignalSoft two years ago,” explains Bernd Reinemann, senior engineer in Core Network Engineering at sunrise. “We’d been using SignalSoft’s wireless location services for some time without very much success, but from a technical point of view, we had a very good experience with the platform itself because it is reliable and scalable and is just a very good platform.”



Services based on the Wireless Application Protocol (WAP) have not yet been widely adopted by European mobile customers, Reinemann notes, but sunrise engineers heard about a service creation environment (SCE) that some of its partners in Denmark were using. The SCE software enables the flexible creation of customer-tailored services on the NonStop platform.

NonStop servers deliver continuous performance for the most demanding business-critical applications—ones that must be available every second of the day. They detect, isolate, and recover from component failures without affecting applications. Users can add and remove components, as well as reconfigure the system while it’s online with no impact to the end user, providing a uniquely flexible environment to meet the changing needs of telecommunications businesses.

Working with HP and Danish partner, TDC Tele Danmark, sunrise deployed the myzone service using the SCE to create a service that could be optimized according to customer requirements.

A mobile phone as a primary phone

myzone determines a subscriber’s personal “zone” by calculating where the subscriber makes and receives the highest number of mobile phone calls. This zone is used to adjust billing rates, making the identified zone a less expensive zone for the subscriber. sunrise created this technology to encourage subscribers to use their mobile phones as their primary phones. In doing so, subscribers grow accustomed to using the mobile phone and end up using it more—whether they’re in their personal zone or not.

“We put together a risk assessment and asked, Which supplier is more likely to be able to provide the service at the time we need it? Based on the discussions we had, we believed HP could do it.”

Ivan Carrillo, senior product developer, sunrise

myzone also enables subscribers to dedicate their landline phone for Internet or fax purposes. Once the landline phone fulfills this alternative purpose, subscribers use their mobile phones as their primary phones—ensuring use on a regular basis in a home environment. Subscribers don’t necessarily have to establish their home as the zone; in fact, they can change the zone on the fly. For example, if a mobile customer takes a week-long vacation, he can change the zone so that it targets the resort where he is staying. This lets him continue to use his mobile phone freely, knowing that he’s still paying landline prices.

“We saw that HP had experience with this kind of service, and its project plans seemed clearer than those of the other vendor we evaluated,” says Ivan Carrillo, senior product developer at sunrise. “We did a risk assessment and asked ourselves, ‘Which supplier is more likely to provide the service by the time we need it?’ Based on that, we decided to go with HP.”

quick time to market for rapid ROI

The team at HP quickly developed an implementation plan using well-founded methodology based on best practices. This proved key to a rapid implementation, and the project was executed within a four-month period—an exceedingly quick time to market in the telecommunications industry.

“The project management for the application installation was handled by HP Denmark,” notes Carrillo, “and it was done so well and so efficiently that I haven’t had to do much from my end. Of course, there’s always some work involved in interfacing with all the different departments

in a company when implementing a service like this, but on the service platform itself I had very little work. Everything was well planned and well done by HP.

“Being the owner of the budget, I must say that HP was very transparent with the cost,” adds Reinemann. “The completed project actually came in at a lower figure than HP originally estimated—which was a new experience for us, because normally it’s the other way around.”

locking in customers

The myzone service represents a first in the Swiss mobile communications market—the first time the residential market has seen the creative use of the mobile network. The service doesn’t track where the customer is; rather, the customer tells the service where he or she is and sets up a personal zone. It’s not a tracking device—it’s a service tool.

“Other operators don’t offer similar services,” notes Reinemann. “It’s a good differentiator at the time of sale because customers can see the difference between operators. That’s a good argument. sunrise is realizing a net positive in subscribers relative to its main competitor, and I don’t know if it’s due to myzone or not, but at least we’re trending the right way.”

At this early stage in its implementation, myzone gives all indications of accomplishing its main objectives: to attract customers away from the competition, to increase the “binding mechanism” with existing customers (decrease churn), and to increase the number of mobile minutes. The average length of calls has gone up by more than a minute—from 2.5 to 3.8 minutes—as compared to the period before myzone’s introduction in February 2002.

“A shift in calling behavior is happening,” observes Carrillo.

proven scalability for future growth

myzone was launched with the residential market in mind, but sunrise is looking to expand the service into other market segments—small- to medium-size enterprises, for example, or contractor enterprises, where people are mobile but also spending significant time within a designated zone.

“With the HP service creation environment, you could easily implement new services inexpensively and quickly. It’s a means of creating new services for us, and it’s one of the most flexible I know of,” says Reinemann.

what makes it work:

The myzone solution from sunrise includes

- HP NonStop Service Control Point (SCP) platform, providing unprecedented scalability with high availability and high-speed performance at peak loads

"Prior to February, the average length of a call was 2.5 minutes. Now it's 3.8. That's more than a one-minute increase for each call handled by myzone. The shift in behavior is happening."

Ivan Carrillo, senior product developer, sunrise

The proven scalability of the NonStop platform means sunrise has all the room it needs to expand its services. A single 16-processor node can support up to 25.3 terabytes of internal disk capacity, and NonStop servers can scale from two to more than 4,000 processors, providing virtually unlimited disk and I/O capacity.

the hp advantage

sunrise's myzone solution on the NonStop platform enabled the company to achieve tremendous innovation in a highly competitive marketplace, while the SCE allowed the speedy implementation of the new service for rapid time to market and faster ROI. None of this would have been possible without HP's wide-ranging expertise and technology, as exemplified in its 500-company-strong partner alliances. In such a broad, focused context, the opportunities for invention increase dramatically, leading to accelerated innovation for customers.

HP's extraordinary range of communications solutions, technologies, services, and partners creates an unrivaled breadth and depth of customer possibilities, and HP's global reach gives customers a single point of accountability—no matter where in the world a service is deployed. The reduced complexity of working within the HP universe translates to lower risks, faster time to market, and superior ROI.

"We were very clear with HP people," emphasizes Carrillo. "When we asked them a question, they didn't drown the issue. They gave us a risk if there was a risk; if there was no risk, they would give us the green light. And we could rely on that risk assessment. Everything was tailored to us, and when we needed something, it was done. It was all about finding the most economical, least burdensome way to accomplish our objectives—and I think that was one of the reasons we came in under budget."



For more information, go to www.hp.com/communications

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