

ICON plays trump cards

BUSINESS PROFILE

ICON has set its sights on being 'the solution-based distributor of choice' for comms resellers, and two trump cards in its proposition pack are a strategically selected product set and a staunch support network for channel partners.

ICON's aim is to provide channel partners with the same level of technical and marketing support enjoyed by the direct sales teams of major vendors. Sales Manager Mark Shane commented: "We deliver a total service that starts before the reseller presents the solution to the customer. Sales training, product knowledge and technical training give the reseller the confidence to present the products in a professional, confident way. Sales support continues with assistance for customer meetings, presentations and site visits. And assistance with proposals and quotations complete the sales process. When the order is received, the back office team check the order for errors and anomalies prior to dispatching for delivery. Post-sales support is available via a dedicated technical support team in the event of any questions after the installation."

ICON believes that success for the reseller comes from offering a solution that delivers real ROI in the form of cost savings, increased productivity, employee collaboration and customer service backed up by a first class support programme. The company has assembled a product line which delivers ROI for the end user and which can be the core of the solution or an up-sell proposal. In some cases the up-sell proposal can be made at the time of the original sale or months or even years later. ICON distributes and supports Vertical Communications' Wave

IP-PBX, Polycom wireless mobility products, MESSAGEmanager Fax and SMS messaging solutions, and uMobility, an add-on FMC solution. These products scale from a small business up to enterprise level.

"Wave IP is a highly scaleable and affordable business phone system which combines the features of a VoIP next generation telephone solution with a host of customer service and productivity applications," said Shane. "It has USPs in the SMB market and also in the enterprise/multi-site market."

Shane highlighted that uMobility is an FMC solution which makes the mobile phone 'a true extension of the company telephone system'. "The solution works by seamlessly handing calls between the GSM and Wifi networks," added Shane. "With a uMobility enabled mobile phone an employee can make and receive calls as if they were using an office extension and can be reached by a single phone number no matter where they are. uMobility is vendor and carrier agnostic and can be retrofitted to an IP PBX, meaning it can be sold and supported by the channel."

Polycom wireless mobility solutions include the new IP DECT products which combine the benefits of IP technology with the voice quality



Mark Shane

and security of the established DECT technology. "The latest professional KIRK IP DECT solutions are a far cry from the consumer grade DECT phones you buy in the high street," said Shane. "ICON is often asked to recommend a KIRK IP DECT solution to replace a failing WiFi handset solution. Superior voice quality, reliability and the need for a robust roaming solution are the reasons users increasingly choose IP DECT rather than WiFi."

Shane is aware that taking on a new product is a big commitment for a reseller. There can be hidden costs such as demonstration kits, sales training, technical training and spares. The cost of entry is often a prohibitive factor for the

reseller when it is considering churning or adding vendors. To help overcome this barrier and drive reseller recruitment ICON boasts a strong regional-based high-touch account management team which supports the reseller in the early adoption stages. Shane stated that the main focus is to get the reseller up and running as quickly as possible and at minimal or zero cost.

Shane explained: "Our regional account managers provide channel partners with hands on sales support. All have been trained in our products and are available to support the channel sales teams and technical teams at customer presentations and sales meetings. We encourage our channel partners to arrange for their account manager to accompany them on sales visits and demos. We know that if you take the vendor to the sales demo you have a better chance of winning the bid." ■

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