

Balfour Beatty powers remote work with communications in the cloud

-  Masergy UaaS
-  Masergy Calling for Microsoft Teams

As the leading international infrastructure group, Balfour Beatty is driving transformation in order to meet the challenges of the future. For the Director of IT, Gale Kastanis, that means leveraging the cloud to innovate the company's communications systems, keeping remote collaboration efficient and cost effective for more than 6,000 employees working from home and at construction sites all over the United States.

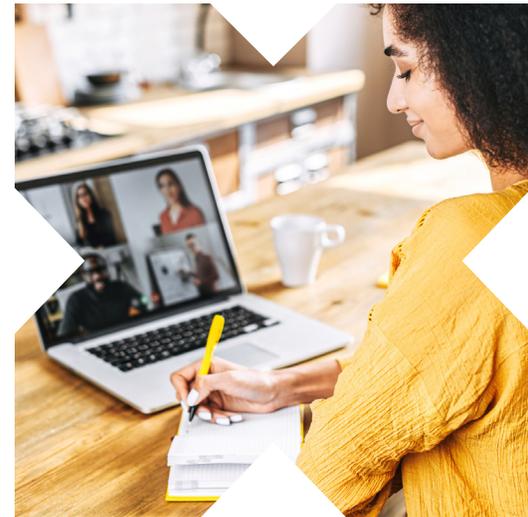
Looking to "get out of the hardware business," Kastanis and her IT team had been transitioning data centers, servers, and job sites to the cloud, and the corporate phone system needed to migrate next. "Our antiquated analog systems were no longer being supported by their manufacturers. So, our existing phone system was a risk factor," explained Kastanis.

Kastanis was eager to both upgrade to VoIP technology but also find a stronger service provider. With a vast array of at-home users, locations, devices, and legacy services, Balfour needed one solution that was flexible enough to go anywhere and offered great with cloud-ready phones to replace their outdated hardware. But Kastanis also needed a fully managed service that would transition without impacting operations and without overburdening her IT team, which needed to stay focused on serving company engineers, builders, and project and facilities managers.

As Kastanis started researching solutions, her IT services partner [Sedexis Consulting](#) brought up Masergy. "I had faith in them bringing the best solution for us, but of course I did reference checks and researched other options. In the end, we went with their recommendation," said Kastanis. "Cost was definitely a factor in our decision, and Masergy really is a good fit."

Seamless transition standardizes service

Standardizing the corporate phone system on Masergy's Unified Communications as a Service (UaaS) required a phased implementation for 70 locations. It started in Dallas, where the Balfour office was in the process of consolidating five floors to two floors. Kastanis and her dedicated Masergy service team thoroughly tested the solution, porting numbers, provisioning phones, enabling features, and designing disaster recovery processes.



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Gale Kastanis
Director of IT

This gave Masergy the proven process needed to install services for all other divisions of the company. Much of the migration had to be done during off hours with precise processes. “Everything had to be spot on. I couldn’t have any downtime, because oftentimes we were migrating the main office number. And if it wasn’t working, we were losing business.”

Kastanis summarized the transition in one word: “easy.” Employees have adapted well, too. More than 200 new phones were assigned in the Dallas office, and many employees never even noticed their cell phone numbers transitioned to the cloud. Since many of the 1700 users are working from home these days, employees are also getting comfortable using the UCaaS softphone to make voice calls.



Better service at a better price

Cloud technology reduced maintenance and upgrade costs while consolidating vendors, helping Balfour recognize a strong return on investment. “We recovered about 10% of our telecommunications costs by going to the VoIP solution from Masergy. We were able to save money as well as put in place a more reliable system, so that was a big win,” she said.

The mobility of the service is also a recognized benefit for remote workers who need their phone service to be as dynamic as the business itself. “As construction sites come up and down, our Masergy UCaaS solution is very flexible,” she said, explaining that employees often work from the office while they wait for their next construction site to open. Transitioning is seamless. Employees bring their desk phone with them and use it wherever they are. “Nothing changes—your number goes with you. Just plug it in and it works wherever you have internet access.”

Masergy modernized communications while freeing their IT resources. “One of the really nice things I like about Masergy is that they offer support with the service. Employee questions don’t go to our help desk, so it

Recognized results

- Enabled remote work and digital collaboration
- Reduced telecommunications costs by 10%
- Modernized voice services while freeing IT resources
- Standardized cloud communications without disrupting operations

doesn’t put an extra burden on us. Masergy supports their product,” said Kastanis. “If we do have any issues, we just call 611 and things are quickly resolved.” Sedexis also procures network services for any new job sites. “It’s all taken care of for us,” she added.

Innovation for the remote workforce

With all the changes spurred by COVID-19, Masergy has continued to anticipate needs with innovative technologies. Kastanis is among the first clients to integrate Masergy UCaaS calling with Microsoft Teams®. As a “Microsoft shop,” Balfour is enhancing remote work using Teams, and with Masergy’s UCaaS integration, users can make and receive phone calls from the public switched telephone network (PSTN) directly from their Teams application.

“We were trying to put a solution in place that was going to service the company for the future—and we did,” Kastanis said, adding that the new integration is further reducing costs by eliminating the need to purchase more phones and calling services from Microsoft. “Now, I won’t even offer hardware. I’ll just say, we’ll just put that calling capability in Teams for you,” said Kastanis. “Everything that Masergy promised, they have come through with. I haven’t had any disappointments.”



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