

PREMIERE MIGRATES ALL ITS CALL CENTERS TO A MANAGED VOICE OVER IP PLATFORM SUPPLIED BY BT AND WICOM

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BT, Wicom and Frings Datacom implement one of Europe's largest IP-based contact centers for Premiere and integrate twelve sites

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HELSINKI /MUNICH, 6 June 2005 – German pay-TV operator Premiere has outsourced the technical operation of its call centers to the networked IT services provider BT. BT is equipping a total of twelve sites with a modern Voice over IP (VoIP) platform. In future, Premiere's customer service agents will be able to deal with enquiries even more quickly and efficiently. The project, which was implemented jointly with the VoIP solution provider Wicom and the system house Frings Datacom, is one of the largest IP-based contact centers in Europe. The contract value is in the double-digit millions.

Premiere chose this innovative concept particularly because of the technical solution, but above all because of the usage based business model. "Rather than having to invest in new technology, we pay a monthly rental which depends on how much we actually use the system", explains Kai Mitterlechner, Project & Distribution Control Director at Premiere. "This means we can respond to seasonal peaks in a very flexible way." Premiere's resources can be better utilized by routing incoming calls on the different service call numbers within a "virtual" call centre.

"The solution, which we developed for Premiere jointly with Wicom and Frings, marks a paradigm shift away from proprietary systems, which are costly to maintain and difficult to upgrade, towards an open, scaleable platform, which can be adapted to future developments in a flexible manner," says Jan Geldmacher, CEO of BT Germany.

For the pay-TV operator Premiere – which has over 3.2 million subscribers – top-class customer service, an efficient customer hotline for technical support and smooth processing of pay-per-view orders are critical success factors for the business. Each year Premiere receives over 10 million telephone calls and 3 million written enquiries; as many as 1300 agents work around the clock at twelve call centers in different locations.

For Premiere viewers, the new solution means that in future they can be served even more quickly and efficiently. Using this innovative technology, the twelve sites which up to now have operated separately will be combined into a single, virtual call centre, leading to more flexible forwarding of enquiries and faster processing.

Call routing was previously based on a relatively rigid system and was handled by separate hardware at each call centre location. The new solution from BT distributes the calls via a centralized platform which is based on the Wicom Communications Server Suite (CSS).

With this system, Premiere opted for a hosted service: the central server components are distributed in fail-safe fashion on two BT computer centers. Thanks to the technical concept, the contact centre can be

scaled in a flexible way without further investments in hardware. The number of sites and staff can be increased without difficulty: As Premiere grows; the customer hotline simply grows with it.

“The industry leaders, like Premiere, know exactly how to execute their business processes most effectively”, says Ilkka Kivimäki, President and CEO, Wicom Communications. “BT’s global service offering based on Wicom IP contact center technology is a perfect match to their needs.”

About BT

BT is one of the world’s leading providers of communications solutions serving customers in Europe, the Americas and Asia Pacific. Its principal activities include networked IT services, local, national and international telecommunications services, and higher-value broadband and internet products and services.

BT consists principally of three lines of business:

- BT Retail, providing a comprehensive range of communications and related services to more than 20m UK consumers and businesses.
- BT Wholesale, providing network services and solutions within the UK to more than 600 fixed and mobile operators and service providers including the provision of broadband and private circuits.
- BT Global Services, providing networked IT services to meet the needs of multi-site organisations globally. BT Global Services operates in more than 130 countries and also offers international carrier services.

In the year ended 31 March 2005, BT Group’s turnover was £18,623 million with profit before goodwill amortisation, exceptional items and taxation of £2,085 million.

BT Group plc is listed on stock exchanges in London and New York. British Telecommunications plc (BT) is a wholly-owned subsidiary of BT Group and encompasses virtually all businesses and assets of the BT Group.

For more information, visit www.bt.com/aboutbt

About Wicom

Wicom Communications is a leading European provider of all-IP contact center and VoIP enterprise telephony software for fixed and wireless network environments. With Wicom software, voice and data traffic, information systems and databases are combined into a centrally managed system that allows unified queuing, prioritizing and routing of all contacts including telephone, e-mail, fax, voicemails, web contacts, co-browsing and SMS. Currently used in 11 countries with 130+ client organizations, Wicom technology is available through selected partners throughout Europe. Gartner Inc. has ranked Wicom in the "visionaries" quadrant of its reports titled "Contact Center Infrastructure Magic Quadrant - EMEA Region" for two consecutive years. For more information, please visit www.wicom.com.

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