Broadvoice Case Study

Broadvoice and Metaswitch Build a Geo-Redundant Solution in the Cloud

metaswitch

Executive Summary

Broadvoice is a leading provider of hosted voice and data products to consumers and businesses. Needing a future-proof, geo-redundant network to meet the needs of its demanding business customers and to support its rapid expansion, Broadvoice has deployed a multi-state, geo-redundant configuration of Metaswitch's clustered MetaSphere Multiservice Telephony Application Server (MTAS) in the cloud.

A leader in adopting forward-thinking technologies, Broadvoice believes that the new model of a fully virtualized network from Metaswitch provides them with unmatched scalability, flexibility and cost-efficiency. Building on Metaswitch's leadership in virtual network functions, Broadvoice is offering carrier-grade real time services including Cloud PBX, and Business Unified Communications functions, alongside its residential service offerings, with unparalleled multi-site redundancy and reliability.

Evolution and Growth

Broadvoice is a leading provider of hosted voice and data products. Headquartered in Los Angeles, CA, Broadvoice helps consumers and businesses across the United States and Canada achieve higher call quality and faster internet speeds while reducing their overall costs and improving efficiency. Broadvoice has been ranked in the Deloitte Technology Fast 500 and Inc. 500 Fastest Growing Private Companies in America.

Then known as Phone Power, Broadvoice selected Metaswitch to replace its existing call control and applications platform in 2009 to drive a strategy focused on VoIP solutions to consumers. Through organic growth and M&A, it grew steadily with a value proposition blending competitive pricing, leading-edge features, and an attention to service and support unmatched by its competitors. With the acquisition of Broadvoice in 2013, it not only found a new brand identity, but also a substantial base of business customers. This propelled acceleration of Broadvoice fully into the hosted business services market on a nationwide basis.

When acquired, Broadvoice utilized a different platform for its business solutions and decided to consider all options for future growth. When evaluating its network software provider for the combined larger company, not only did Broadvoice need to deliver the features that its business customers would require now and in the future, but more critically, deliver a truly geo-redundant solution expected by more demanding business customers and sales channels.

Recalls Jim Murphy, CEO, "we reside in the earthquake capital of the world. We needed to be in multiple POPs to ensure necessary geographic redundancy (GR) if disaster strikes. A clear, compelling GR story is now table-stakes for our business customers and channel partners."

Metaswitch Clustered MTAS

Metaswitch's Clustered MTAS (Multiservice Telephony Application Server) architecture was built to meet the current and future needs of Communications Service Providers.

Metaswitch's clustering technology offers service providers the opportunity to reduce the cost of achieving highly reliable multi-site active-active redundancy, enabling them to build multi-site load-balanced geographic redundancy while building out the virtualized network of the future.

"Only Metaswitch provides multiple layers of redundancy – both within the data center and with seamless migration in case there is data center failure."
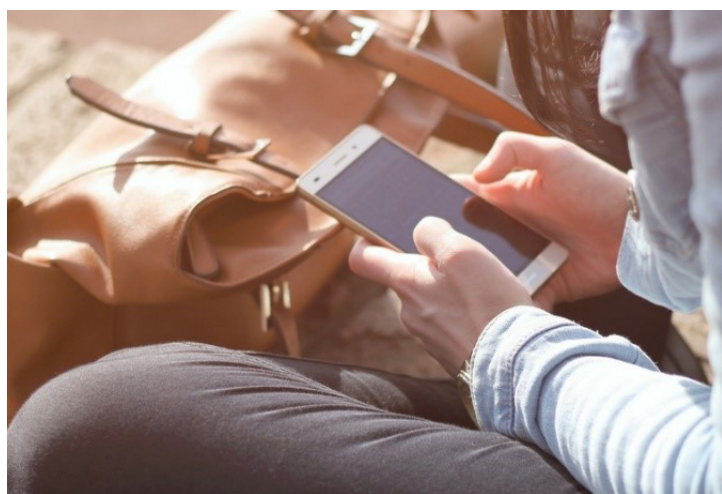
Geographic expansion creates a constant pressure on service providers to increase CAPEX and OPEX as hardware footprints and management costs spiral to meet demand. With MTAS clustering, service providers have a completely flexible solution allowing them to increase their coverage using fewer sites, achieve higher scale for less investment and, through support for virtualized platforms, reduce the amount of essential physical hardware now and in the future.

Access devices and adjacent equipment recognize the clustered MetaSphere MTAS as a single managed entity. A MetaView Server manages all of the elements in the cluster through a mixture of shared and non-shared configurations, allowing for changes to be made to multiple elements at once through a single logical management interface. Service providers can use MetaSphere MTAS functionality at high scale without complicating their network or increasing their network management overhead. According to Murphy, the redundancy offered by the clustered model is "absolutely unparalleled."
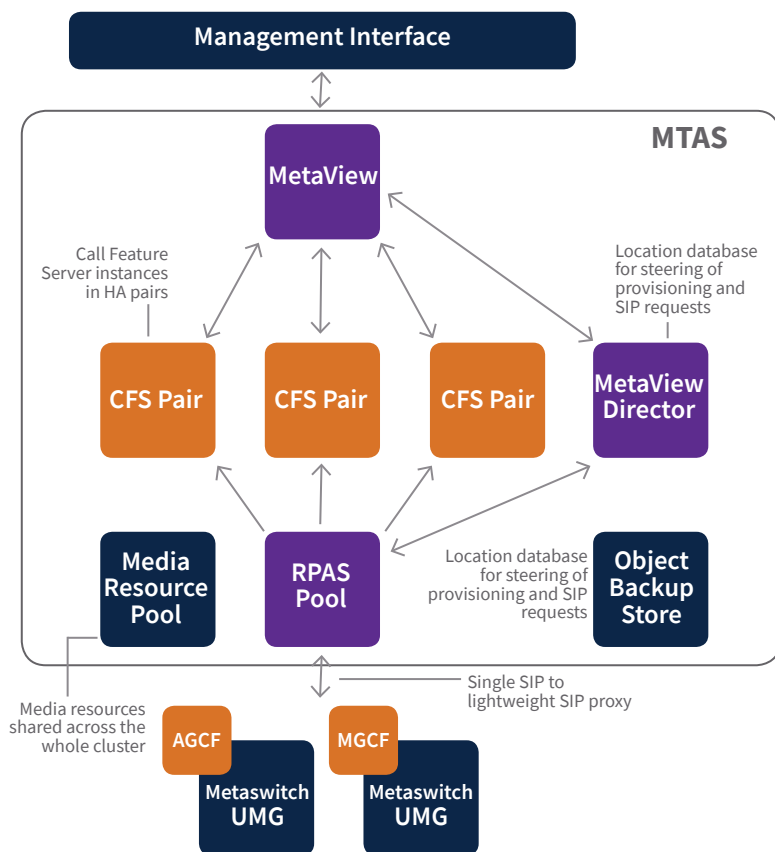
Virtualizing a Platform Built for the Future

In a dynamic marketplace, a fast-growing provider like Broadvoice needed the flexibility to quickly respond to changing market and technology demands. It recognized that only a virtualized infrastructure would provide the necessary agility. With its network functions virtualized, turning up new Points of Presence (POPs) would not require any new hardware from its vendor. Broadvoice could maintain its own COTS hardware, typically at a lower cost, and nimbly instantiate software in VMWare – which was already utilized for other IT services in Broadvoice's datacenters.

"What appealed to us about NFV is that we could leverage our existing relationships for COTS hardware – which meant faster supply times and sparing flexibility," reflects Broadvoice CTO Ryan DelGrosso. We are also better able to reliably support global expansion – reducing latency with in-region POPs."

"Metaswitch demonstrated its ability to easily flex and scale our services to our customers' demands and capitalize on cost-savings from using standard hardware, at any location."

"With Metaswitch running on VMWare, we had a completely elastic infrastructure with a common fabric at our data centers that could be centrally managed by our Operations team," adds Delgrosso. "We are now quickly able to 'size-to-scale', increasing the efficiency of managing our network and applying our CapEx spend on a success-basis." With the move to virtualization, Broadvoice is well poised to pursue Software Defined WAN (SD-WAN) technologies to improve its level of service – providing MPLS-grade quality even when provisioning services Over-The-Top (OTT).

DelGrosso concludes, "Metaswitch demonstrated its ability to easily flex and scale our services to our customers' demands and capitalize on cost-savings from using standard hardware, at any location."

Not a Vendor Relationship, But a True Partnership

Knowing that its network software provider was its most critical supplier, Broadvoice needed a true partner, who could enable it to deliver on its value proposition. Through its experience with Metaswitch since 2009, Broadvoice was very familiar with the quality of its R&D and level of support. However, following its acquisitions, it also came to know other vendors. In the end, Metaswitch stood head and shoulders above the rest.

"The Metaswitch level of support is unmatched relative to its competition and is in fact a model for our support," Delgrosso explains. "The Metaswitch team listens to us and its support is very knowledgeable of our network – dramatically improving responsiveness when issues arise."

Adds Murphy, "We're doubling-down on Metaswitch quite simply because the relationship is working. Our success is based not just on price, or technology, or deployment ease, individually, but the totality of the experience we deliver. With Metaswitch, we are better equipped to deliver a winning experience."

Results and Outlook

Broadvoice is experiencing a great deal of success with Business Services and sees a huge opportunity for growth, even in a highly competitive market.

In contrast to market leaders whose growth, according to Murphy, is driven primarily through costly acquisition and mass marketing, Broadvoice offers a high-touch model with a nationwide network of regional channel managers and installers deploying QoS-enabled services over leased circuits and OTT.

Testament to the superiority of its approach is that 25% of Broadvoice's sales are generated from word-of-mouth with an industry-low churn rate – even among its residential customer base. It has also experienced very positive response from its channel partners, where increasingly large master agents are entrusting Broadvoice as its preferred partner.

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"We took a look at Broadvoice at the request of our sales partners who said their customers were pleased by Broadvoice's excellent provisioning and overall customer service," said Alan Sandler, managing partner at Sandler Partners, with a nationwide network of 3,000 technology and sales partners. "After meeting with Broadvoice's management team, we discovered that both companies shared a passion for taking care of our partners and clients. This, in addition to their market-tested UC solution, made it an easy decision to add Broadvoice to our portfolio."

Concludes Murphy, "With this further investment in Metaswitch's world-class technology and support services, we are ensuring that we are best positioned for taking advantage of NFV while securing our network against potential disasters. We are committed to providing a best-in-class communication platform to our channel partners and customers. Now all of our hosted voice customers have been seamlessly migrated to the new platform, affording them unrivalled redundancy and reliability while giving us the ability to easily flex and scale our services to our customers' demands, at any location."