



Case Study

Ufone Increases Customer Satisfaction while Saving Almost 1,000% with netElastic vBNG

Ufone was seeking a broadband network gateway solution as part of a network refresh. They wanted a solution with excellent functionality, reliability, and support. Ufone found netElastic to be the best fit to take their network and customer support to the next level.

A LEADING VOIP PROVIDER

Ufone has grown to become one of New Zealand's leading Business VoIP service providers. This growth has been driven by Ufone's commitment to provide customers with great support, more functionality than traditional phone systems, and lower costs. To maintain end-to-end quality control and dependability, Ufone owns and manages its own VoIP infrastructure.

With a mission to constantly keep their services fast and reliable, Ufone began to plan their next network refresh. As part of the network refresh, Ufone was looking for a broadband network gateway (BNG), or BRAS. In evaluating vendors, Ufone was looking for a BNG solution that could deliver on Ufone's key priorities:

- Lower costs
- More functionality
- Expert support

Ufone began their BNG search by looking at the traditional large router manufacturers, such as Juniper and Nokia. They also looked at newer Virtual BNG vendors, such as netElastic. Below is a recap of Ufone's search for the best BNG solution, the reasons they chose netElastic, and the results to date, along with commentary from Nigel Rayneau, Ufone's CEO.

A SOLUTION THAT LOWERS NETWORK COSTS

Large router manufacturers bring excellent brand names and years of experience selling hardware-based equipment. They also usually bring high costs. These legacy BNGs are "closed systems" that lock carriers into proprietary hardware and software, which are expensive and difficult to scale.

On the other hand, virtual BNGs run on white box servers, saving significant CapEx and OpEx.

“The big router manufacturers required close to 1,000% more investment dollars for a single BNG (compared to netElastic), since we were expected to purchase a larger number of licenses up-front than we actually needed,” according to Ufone’s CEO Nigel Rayneau. “The cost savings by using the netElastic vBNG on the provider edge allowed us to invest more in our core and backbone infrastructure, not only allowing us to provide all the benefits and features that our larger competitors provide, but also to strengthen our overall network for less cost.”

FUNCTIONALITY

Ufone deploys only “state-of-the-art” VoIP systems with extensive functionality. When it came to their broadband network gateways, Ufone was also looking for BNG vendors that could bring extensive functionality and innovation to Ufone and their customers.

According to Ufone’s Rayneau, “The feature set of the netElastic vBNG has allowed us to become more competitive and offer products and services for our clients that were previously not feasible due to either technical or cost constraints, and has given us complete control of our network end-to-end for a much lower operational cost than initially anticipated.”

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– Nigel Rayneau, Ufone

UNEXPECTED BENEFITS

In addition to vBNG’s functionality, netElastic has also developed new vBNG features based on input from Ufone.

“The ability to have certain features developed based on our use case is otherwise unheard of. I have yet to find another vendor who will implement a fully tested and supported feature into their product in a number of weeks in order to add new functionality or improve existing functionality, and to do so at no additional cost,” said Rayneau. “This alone has saved us hundreds of hours on integrating to our existing backend systems as well as allowing us to easily improve our customer facing systems, giving our personnel more control and visibility.”

A FOCUS ON SUPPORT

Delivering great customer support has always been one of the main pillars of Ufone's business, and it's no surprise that Ufone was looking for the same support from their BNG provider. A deep expertise and focus on VoIP enable Ufone to provide expert support, and they liked that netElastic is totally dedicated to vBNG. As a testament to their experience and expertise, netElastic has over 40 engineers dedicated to vBNG.

"netElastic support has been nothing but excellent. Any issues or queries are taken seriously and response times have been a fraction of what we're used to with our other vendors," said Ufone's Rayneau.

Ufone has also benefited from netElastic's BNG Manager, a user-friendly web-based management application that makes it easy and intuitive for service providers to quickly configure their vBNGs and monitor how the network and vBNG are performing.

"BNG Manager provides detailed customer information that has improved and simplified our customer issue troubleshooting, which has resulted in a better customer experience and lower support costs," stated Ufone's CEO. "Troubleshooting with the BNG Manager has been exceptional and has given us insights to telemetry data which otherwise would have been unavailable."

Since deploying two netElastic vBNGs, Ufone's customer satisfaction levels have increased due to reduced downtime, their engineers have dealt with fewer network issues due to increased reliability at the edge, and they've been able to invest in and strengthen their backbone network due to the lower TCO with netElastic vBNG.

“ The feature set of vBNG has given us complete control of our network end-to-end. ”

– Nigel Rayneau, Ufone