

8x8 Lowers Costs and Simplifies Phone System Administration for International School

Yew Chung International School



The Yew Chung Educational Foundation established its first bilingual school in Hong Kong in 1932. Over the next 70 years more Yew Chung schools were founded throughout China, and in 2002, Yew Chung International School of Silicon Valley (YCIS) opened its doors in Mountain View, California.

YCIS prepares students to become citizens of the world by providing a bilingual, co-cultural environment that promotes fluency in both English and Mandarin.

Currently there are 175 students enrolled at the Mountain View, California campus, which has one location for K through 5 and another for preschool.

But while YCIS is internationally recognized for its unique educational model, the school's antiquated telephone system was a major problem for IT Systems Manager Tom Huynh, an outside consultant who contracts with the school through Taos, an IT consulting and services company.

"We had 27 phones running on an old, on-site PBX, which was managed by a vendor. Service charges were high and response time was sub-par."

Cloud-based Services Make Relocation Painless

In 2011, the administrators of YCIS decided to switch campuses with the neighboring German bilingual school. Faced with the costly prospect of having to physically relocate the YCIS phone system, Huynh began looking for less expensive alternatives.

"Cost was the primary driver, but we also wanted better phone features and better service," he says. Adds YCIS parent volunteer Diana Hsien, "We need to call our Hong Kong office a lot, and we wanted to find a more cost-effective way to do that, too."

Word soon got out that the school needed a new phone system, and one of the parents suggested Huynh try 8x8 cloud-based business phone service. Huynh contacted 8x8, and the company quickly replaced the school's ancient on-premises PBX with a virtual one, and then ported the school's telephone numbers over to 8x8. When the time came to switch campuses, Huynh had no problem relocating the school's phone system.



Customer:

Yew Chung International School

Industry: Education

Locations:

- Hong Kong
- Shanghai
- Beijing
- Mountain View, California

Product: 8x8 Virtual Office

Favorite Feature:

Ring groups ensure calls are answered efficiently during school hours

Website: www.ycef.com



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—**Tom Huynh Taos** IT
Systems Manager
Yew Chung International
School of Silicon Valley

“With 8x8, everything’s in the cloud—so all you need is an Internet connection. When we got to the new location, all we had to do was plug in our phones! 8x8 saved us a substantial sum just on the move alone.”

Better Math

Once YCIS settled in to the new campus, the savings from their 8x8 phone system continued to grow.

8x8 offers a global calling plan that includes unlimited calling for a flat monthly fee to 40 international locations—including the locations YCIS calls the most: Hong Kong, Shanghai and Beijing. “We save about \$150 a month on international calls,” says Hsien.

Honor Roll Features

8x8’s enhanced phone features have also been a hit with YCIS users. For example, the school can now use simple 4-digit extension dialing to stay in touch with the preschool location.

YCIS Principal Kevin Reimer likes the flexibility and control 8x8 provides in handling both outbound and inbound calls appropriately. Although teachers and staff have their own individual phones, the outbound caller ID on all phones displays the school’s main number. That way, parents immediately recognize that the call is coming from the school, and if they call back using the stored number, they reach the school’s main office instead of interrupting a teacher during class time.

Two ring groups are enabled so that YCIS staff can answer calls efficiently during school hours. If one staff member is busy, calls automatically roll over to a second phone where another staff member answers them.

YCIS uses call forwarding to provide convenient call coverage during the school’s after-school program from 5 to 6 p.m. When the school secretary leaves the main office at 5, she forwards calls to the business manager’s office. The business manager can then answer calls from her own desk during the after-school program instead of having to go to the main office every time the phone rings.

Hsien notes that the 8x8 Auto Attendant’s night greeting is another very convenient feature.

“We used to have to set the night greeting manually on our old system. If we forgot and a call came in after hours, the phone just rang and rang, and the call wasn’t answered. With 8x8, you just need to configure the Auto Attendant once, and the night greeting comes on automatically at whatever time you set. It gives us one less thing to worry about at the end of a long day.”

For Principal Reimer, email notification of voicemail messages makes his job easier.

“Instead of calling in to check whether I have voicemail, I can see that I have messages and listen to them right from my computer. It’s a great time-saver because I can check email and voicemail at the same time.”

In addition to phone service, YCIS uses 8x8 fax service. The YCIS fax machine is plugged into an analog adapter connected to the Internet. School administrators use the fax service to send signed business documents to Hong Kong, and the school’s accounting department uses it to receive quotes from vendors.



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—**Tom Huynh Taos** IT Systems Manager
Yew Chung International School of Silicon Valley

Easy as ABC

Tom Huynh completely agrees with his YCIS colleagues about the many advantages of 8x8 phone features, but the system's ease of administration is what won him over.

"Because our 8x8 phone system runs on a virtual PBX, I don't have to house a physical PBX on site," he says. "Our school isn't large, so saving that space is a benefit in itself. The system is also very easy to administer. I can log in to the administrator portal and make whatever changes I want right away. All it takes is an Internet connection."

High Scores for Support

8x8's excellent customer support is another key selling point for Huynh.

"Our technical account manager is very responsive whenever I call for support. For example, when we needed some help with our phones, 8x8 responded almost instantly. Our former provider used to take a couple of days to get back to me."

Diana Hsien concurs: "No matter what we need, 8x8 always comes through for us."

Find out how 8x8 can help your business. Call **1.866.862.2811** or visit **www.8x8.com**

