



CASE STUDY

Sight & Sound Theatres: Operator Connect for Microsoft Teams Savings

Several Years Later: **Adapting, Scaling, and Saving with Operator Connect for Microsoft Teams**

SIGHT & SOUND

Years after replacing on-prem Cisco, Sight & Sound Theatres uses CallTower Operator Connect for Microsoft Teams to save \$1K+/mo, cut desk phones, and boost mobility.



Cost Savings



Improved Mobility



Operational Efficiency

The migration enabled significant cost savings, improved mobility and operational efficiency, and supported future opportunities for the business.

The Highlights

Challenge

- Aging on-prem Cisco system with rising licensing, SIP, and hardware costs created financial strain.
- Increased IT burden for maintenance and updates in a Microsoft-centric environment.
- Need for more flexible, scalable communications due to expansion into filmmaking and evolving operations.

Approach

- Conducted structured vendor evaluation focused on cost reduction, scalability, and Microsoft alignment.
- Selected CallTower Operator Connect to enable cloud-based PSTN calling within Microsoft Teams.
- Seamlessly migrated from on-prem Cisco to Teams with minimal disruption and strong implementation support.

Outcome

- Achieved significant cost savings (including \$1K+ monthly) and reduced long-term infrastructure expenses.
- Decreased reliance on desk phones, improving mobility and supporting hybrid work.
- Reduced IT workload and improved operational efficiency across the organization.

CLIENT PROFILE

Industry: Theatre

Regions Supported: United States

Operating Model: High-touch, guest-centric contact center to manage ticket sales, group bookings, and guest services

The Challenge

As one of the nation's most recognized live theater organizations, **Sight & Sound Theatres** operates large-scale productions across flagship locations in Pennsylvania and Missouri, employing hundreds of staff across production, guest services, security, IT, and administration. Live performances remain central to the organization, but shifting audience behaviors and broader uncertainty in live entertainment created serious operational and financial questions.

At the same time, Sight & Sound was operating on an aging **on-premises Cisco phone system** that, while reliable, had become increasingly burdensome:

- Escalating licensing costs
- Ongoing SIP trunk renewals
- Looming hardware refreshes
- Significant IT time spent on maintenance and updates

According to Director of IT **Rob Taylor**, licensing costs alone had reached “outrageous” levels. For a Microsoft-centric organization facing both economic uncertainty and rising infrastructure costs, the communication platform was no longer sustainable.

Compounding this challenge, leadership made the strategic decision to expand beyond live theater into filmmaking, releasing feature films screened at existing locations and opening discussions about future growth. This evolution increased **the need for a communications platform that could support flexibility, collaboration, and workforce mobility – without increasing cost or complexity.**

The Approach

Facing these pressures, Sight & Sound initiated a structured requirements-gathering and vendor evaluation process. The team sought a solution that could:

- Reduce long-term costs
- Eliminate on-prem hardware dependency
- Align with existing Microsoft investments

- Support remote and hybrid work
- Scale alongside new creative and operational initiatives

As a long-time Microsoft organization, moving voice natively into Microsoft Teams emerged as a logical next step. The evaluation ultimately led Sight & Sound to select CallTower to deliver **Operator Connect for Microsoft Teams, enabling cloud-based PSTN calling without customer-managed voice infrastructure.**

Solution

Sight & Sound successfully migrated from on-prem Cisco to **Operator Connect for Microsoft Teams with CallTower**, modernizing its communications environment while minimizing disruption.

A Gold-Standard Implementation Experience

The deployment was led by **CallTower Implementation Manager Andy Burke** and is now considered Sight & Sound's internal benchmark for external vendor execution:

- Clear communication and project structure
- Proactive guidance throughout the process
- Strong accountability and follow-through

The migration was completed over a holiday weekend, allowing most employees to resume work the following day without issue. Minimal helpdesk impact reflected both strong planning and users' familiarity with Microsoft Teams developed through earlier collaboration efforts.

Immediate and Ongoing Financial Impact

The move delivered tangible savings within the first year:

- Monthly telecom costs dropped by several thousand dollars
- **At least \$1,000 per month in recurring savings** compared to the prior on-prem model
- Reduced hardware spending and long-term licensing obligations

These savings compounded over time, freeing budget for other strategic priorities during an uncertain period for live entertainment.

Outcome

Greater Mobility, Fewer Desk Phones

One of the most visible long-term outcomes has been the steady decline in physical desk phones:

- Approximately 200 desk phones at initial deployment
- Fewer than 100 today, with continued reduction

Employees increasingly use Microsoft Teams for calling, meetings, and collaboration, often voluntarily returning desk phones as they realize they no longer need them. For teams like security and guest services, having their “desk phone” wherever they are, has significantly improved coordination and responsiveness – on-site or remote.

Operational and Cultural Benefits

Beyond cost savings, the transition has delivered meaningful organization-wide benefits:

- Reduced IT workload related to telephony maintenance
- Simpler helpdesk requests
- Cleaner desks and reclaimed workspace
- Built-in support for hybrid and remote work

When Rob Taylor unexpectedly needed to work from home, the tools were already in place – demonstrating how the platform supports real-world needs beyond formal strategy.

A Platform Built for What's Next

Several years after implementation, Operator Connect for Microsoft Teams with CallTower remains a quiet but critical enabler of Sight & Sound's evolving mission. What began as a cost-driven decision has become a **long-term foundation for flexibility, scalability, and resilience** – supporting live theater, filmmaking, and future opportunities while keeping technology firmly in the background.

About CallTower

Since 2002, CallTower has grown into a global leader in enterprise-class cloud communications, CCaaS, and customer experience (CX) solutions, empowering businesses to thrive in the digital age.

Leveraging advanced technologies such as Microsoft Teams Operator Connect, Direct Routing and GCC High Teams Direct Routing, Webex by Cisco, Zoom Phone, and leading AI-powered contact center platforms including Genesys, Five9, and Parloa, CallTower delivers secure, scalable, and reliable solutions tailored to the unique needs of enterprises worldwide.

By integrating capabilities such as one-click failover, advanced analytics, seamless CRM integration, and AI-driven CX intelligence, CallTower helps organizations modernize communications and contact center operations while driving greater efficiency and insight.

Let's Connect

