



# University of New Haven Chooses ZIRO to Modernize Communication with Microsoft Teams Phone

**ZIRO**



**2,700+**  
**employees**



**6**  
**months**



**\$360,000+**  
**cost savings**

How the University of New Haven replaced its outdated Cisco system with Microsoft Teams Phone—simplifying IT, reducing costs, and supporting hybrid work without disrupting daily operations.



## About the Customer

The University of New Haven is an educational institution committed to student-centered learning. As the university embraced a hybrid work model, leadership saw an opportunity to modernize its phone system. With Microsoft Teams already in use for collaboration, extending it to calling made perfect sense.



## Situation

For years, the university had relied on Cisco Call Manager, but the system was showing its age. Keeping it operational meant costly hardware upgrades and specialized expertise—both of which were in short supply.

With the focus on staff developing Microsoft 365 skills, it made more sense to drive the technical focus away from another technology. Leadership recognized the need for a simpler, scalable solution that fit seamlessly into their existing Microsoft ecosystem.

However, making the transition from Cisco Call Manager to Teams Phone required a solution that minimized disruption, addressed security concerns, and worked within the university's existing IT resources.





## Challenge

The challenge was clear: migrate to Teams Phone without causing major disruptions to day-to-day operations.



**Outdated Infrastructure & Rising Costs:** The Cisco system required costly maintenance and IT resources, making it increasingly unsustainable. The university was spending over \$110,000 annually on CUCM user licenses alone.



**Paying for two phone systems:** Not taking advantage of their A5 licenses, which already include a phone system—resulting in double the cost.



**CUCM End-of-Life (EOL):** The university's Cisco Unified Communications Manager (CUCM) was reaching EOL, requiring an expensive upgrade and renewal of over 1,000 user licenses.



**Hardware Compatibility Issues:** The university had hundreds of Cisco desk phones that were no longer supported on the latest CUCM versions. Replacing them would have cost an estimated \$250,000+ in hardware expenses.



**Limited IT Resources:** The IT team lacked the bandwidth to handle the migration alone, and installation delays for emergency phones and elevator emergency phones added pressure.



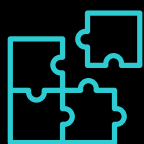
**User Resistance:** Some faculty and staff were hesitant to give up traditional desk phones, worried about workflow disruptions and accessibility concerns.



**Ensuring Safety & Compliance:** Emergency and security phone systems had to remain operational throughout the transition—any lapse in functionality was not an option.

The university needed a partner who could **navigate these challenges with precision** while keeping everything running smoothly. That's where ZIRO stepped in.





## Solution

ZIRO developed a strategic phased rollout that prioritized stability and ease of adoption.

To minimize disruption, ZIRO transitioned staff to Teams-based calling in stages, keeping physical desk phones in critical areas like security offices and reception desks. Since the university had already moved to Microsoft A5 licenses for security reasons—which included Microsoft Teams Phone—they were able to transition without incurring additional licensing costs. While the University of New Haven's IT staff focused on the broader migration and engaged their trusted network cabling specialists to resolve emergency system installation delays, ZIRO provided technical expertise to ensure a smooth transition to Teams Phone.

ZIRO provided end-to-end technical support, ensuring that call flows were properly configured, and that faculty and staff had the training they needed to feel confident using Teams for calling. Their team remained engaged even after implementation, offering ongoing guidance to ensure a smooth adoption process.

“

*ZIRO didn't just sell us a solution—they became an extension of our team. Their patience and responsiveness turned a chaotic transition into a manageable process.*

— Greg Bartholomew, IT Director

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## Results

The university successfully transitioned to Microsoft Teams Phone, achieving significant improvements across the board:



**Cost Savings:** \$110,000+ per year saved on CUCM licensing by transitioning over 1,000 users to Microsoft Teams Phone and \$250,000+ in one-time savings by eliminating the need to purchase new desk phones.



**Hardware Cost Avoidance:** By transitioning to a softphone-first approach, the university avoided purchasing hundreds of Cisco desk phones. Instead, employees were equipped with cost-effective \$10 headsets, while Poly Teams phones were provided only for public spaces and specific use cases.



**Simplified IT Operations:** Freed up IT staff by removing the need for specialized telecom expertise.



**Hybrid Work Enablement:** Staff can now take calls from anywhere, whether on campus or remote.



**Increased Efficiency:** The transition is expected to reduce help desk tickets by 80% as adoption stabilizes.

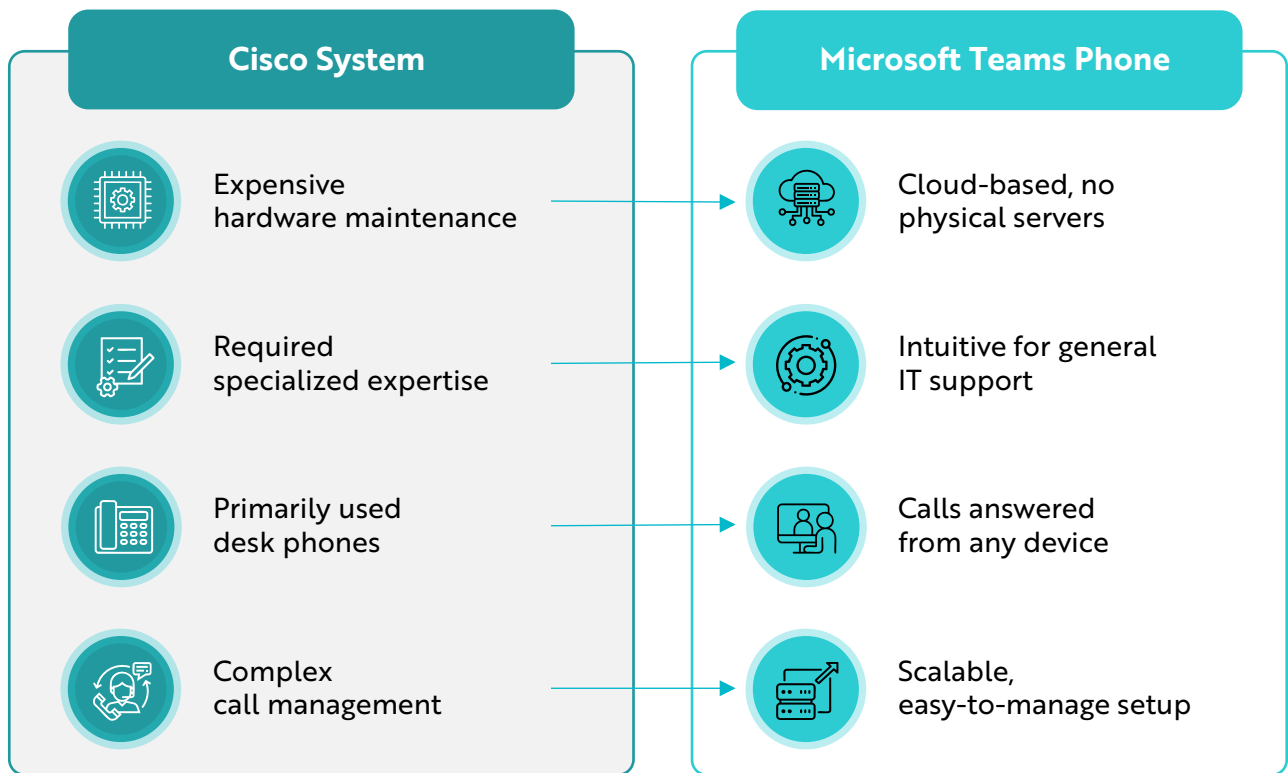


**Security & Compliance:** Emergency phones and campus safety systems remained fully operational throughout the migration.

With these improvements in place, IT leadership can now focus on **long-term digital transformation initiatives** instead of troubleshooting phone system issues.



# OLD vs. New Configuration



## Looking Ahead

With the migration complete, the university is now exploring ways to further optimize its Teams environment, including Microsoft Co-Pilot for automation and enhanced call analytics.

Thanks to ZIRO, the University of New Haven has future-proofed its communications—reducing costs, streamlining IT, and ensuring a seamless experience for staff and faculty.