



# Kathmandu streamlines in-store telephony capabilities with 8x8

Established in 1987, New Zealand-based Kathmandu Holdings has grown to become the leading retailer of outdoor and travel apparel and equipment in the Asia-Pacific region. Its retail store brands include Kathmandu, Rip Curl, and Ozmosis.

With 4,000 staff members and a network of 320 stores, the company has annual revenues of more than NZ\$550 million and is listed on both the New Zealand and Australian stock exchanges.

Kathmandu prides itself on providing customers with a comprehensive range of high-quality products designed to enhance their outdoor experience.

## The Challenge: Reducing costs and complexity

Kathmandu Holdings operates a network of 120 Kathmandu-branded stores in Australia and 60 in New Zealand. In the past, these stores had relied on telephony services delivered over copper wires. While this had worked well for many years, the infrastructure began to encounter problems about three years ago.

"Many of our stores had been relying on a voice-over-IP (VoIP) service for some time. However, our provider told us they were discontinuing this service and could not offer us an alternative," says Aidan O'Connor, IT Infrastructure Manager at Kathmandu. "We also needed to move away from the copper network as it was being replaced by the National Broadband Network (NBN)."



**Industry**  
Retail

**Headquarters**  
Christchurch, New Zealand

**Website**  
[kathmandu.co.nz](http://kathmandu.co.nz)

**8x8 Products**  
8x8 Work

### Primary reason for selecting 8x8

- Ease of installation and configuration
- Ideal replacement for legacy phone systems — no more on-premises equipment
- Ability to deploy auto-attendant in stores and deliver enhanced customer experience
- Eliminated frustrating reliance on Telco Service Desks, RTO delays and expensive MAC costs

**10 Hours**

Reduction in weekly service desk time

**60%**

Reduction in monthly call costs

**85,000+**

Voice calls handled each month

In addition, Kathmandu had added many phone lines to its store network over the years, making it difficult to determine exactly what was being used, resulting in unnecessary complexity and cost.

"Some stores had six or seven phone lines in place, and it had become very challenging to conduct an audit to determine where we could cut costs," says O'Connor. "We realised that the best option was to replace our telephony infrastructure and wipe the slate clean."

### **The Solution: A perfect fit that "ticked all the boxes"**

Once the company decided to find a new telephony platform, Kathmandu's IT team evaluated three industry-leading solutions. 8x8 stood out for its ease of installation and configuration, and looked to be an ideal replacement for their legacy phone system. Additionally, there was no need for on-premise equipment, and there was potential for future expansion and additional features. According to O'Connor, "8x8, was a perfect fit and ticked all the boxes."

Genuine New Zealand and Australia presence for account management and support was a big advantage.

In early 2020, Kathmandu adopted the 8x8 eXperience Communications Platform with 8x8 Work for its entire fleet of stores across Australia and New Zealand.

"We were very impressed with the responsiveness and proactiveness of the 8x8 team," says O'Connor. "They took the time to carefully assess our requirements and were then able to offer a service that suited our operations."

Initially, the deployment plan called for all stores to migrate to the new platform by May 2020, however, the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic brought with it new challenges.

"8x8 was very flexible and allowed us to delay the start of our deployment in Australia, and the entire process took four months. New Zealand then followed a short time later."

Kathmandu made use of 8x8's Professional Services team who assisted with configuration of the back-end components while Kathmandu handled the front-end requirements at each store.

"8x8 Professional Services were fantastic and added significant value to the project. We simply could not have got it done without them," says O'Connor.



The reasonable cost to engage with 8x8 professional services and training services made it an easy decision to utilise 8x8 services.

Each store is now equipped with two 8x8 phone lines which are connected via the call attendant to allow both to ring simultaneously.

Stores are also equipped with two Polycom VVX D230 handsets that allow staff to make and receive calls from anywhere in the store.

This Polycom model phone was a new inclusion onto the 8x8 hardware support list, 8x8 without hesitation completed all the backend work to upgrade their platform to ensure the new phone hardware was fully supported.

"8x8 offers significantly more features than we are currently using," says O'Connor. "But this gives us the potential to expand our telephony capabilities in the future."

## The Result: Monthly call costs dropped by 60%

With 8x8 Work now live across all Kathmandu stores, the company's management and store staff are noticing some significant benefits.

"Previously, we had a multitude of different plans in place, which made budgeting very difficult," says O'Connor. "We now have consistent costs across all locations, and we've reduced our total telecommunications costs by 60%."

"Additionally, since our deployment, we have never experienced an 8x8 outage or service failure. Initially we were apprehensive about moving away from traditional physical telco platforms to the cloud. It turns out that traditional physical platforms is what companies should be most apprehensive about".

Kathmandu also has access to call analytics for the first time. This allows the company to closely monitor call volumes and maintain high standards of customer service at all times.

"The analytics show that we have more than 85,000 inbound and outbound calls across the store network each month," says O'Connor. "Before 8x8, we had no insight into our call volumes."

**"8x8 offers significantly more features than we are currently using. But this gives us the potential to expand our telephony capabilities in the future."**

**Aidan O'Connor**, IT Infrastructure Manager

For store staff, the change has had little impact, thanks to training provided by 8x8. Handsets were also preconfigured, so employees only had to plug them in.

Moving stores or setting up a new location is now much easier for Kathmandu. There is no need to involve a telco as all the required configuration can be completed in-house.

"Our five Rip Curl stores in New Zealand currently have 8x8 phones. Considerations for using 8x8 phones in the Australian Rip Curl and Ozmosis stores is a future decision to be assessed, however, I'm confident that we now have a telephony solution in place that will support our growth well into the future" says O'Connor.

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**Contact 8x8 sales or your 8x8 partner for additional information.**

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