



From Dealer to Wholesale Partner, the right level of support from Gamma enabled EBT Communications to flourish.



Gamma Dealer Model Empowers The Path To Success For EBT Communications

How do you build a successful £1M plus turnover telecoms business with just 10 people, and not a single salesperson among them? Just ask Steve Hogan, managing director of Nottingham-based EBT Communications, whose customers include some of Europe's largest logistics and freighting companies.

"Specialising, being engineering led, attention to detail, and always putting customer service first," says Hogan. "And joining Gamma's partner programme. Gamma has played a massive part in our success."

Steve Hogan speaks from long experience in the telephony industry. Starting as an apprentice at the then Plessey Company, birthplace of the UK's first digital PBX, he went on to form EBT to support NEC phone systems while growing a loyal customer base of his own.

EBT's partnership journey with Gamma began when it joined Gamma's Partner Programme as a Dealer Partner. The Dealer model offered exactly the right level of support to enable EBT to concentrate on providing core services without the burden and extra responsibilities of dealing with regulatory issues, billing and support.

For EBT it was a turning point and the start of a relationship that has endured for 23 years and counting. The Dealer model was also the launchpad into bigger and better things for the firm, which has since grown to become the £1.5M company it is today.

Due Diligence

It's safe to say that Hogan did his due diligence before he chose to work with Gamma. Company culture clearly matters to him and in Gamma he found a kindred spirit.

"A strong service ethic has always been important to us and Gamma thinks the same way when it comes to its partners. They're always there for us, ready to help with whatever we need and we enjoy a great two-way technical relationship with them," he says.

"We can talk to whoever we need to in Gamma, even at board level. They're always prepared go the extra mile for us. And if we need to share our thoughts with them, they always listen.

"My mantra in business has always been 'whatever you do, specialise in it'. So instead of selling say 50 different systems, we would rather concentrate on five we know very well," says Hogan. That approach rapidly built expertise among his team and built EBT a reputation as trusted experts in the market. Organic growth naturally followed via repeat business and referrals.

As the working relationship between Gamma and EBT strengthened, so did EBT's stature in the market place. With the Dealer model continuing to work well while EBT grew in confidence and built infrastructure and expertise, Hogan and his colleagues could now take the next step with Gamma as a Simplicity Partner.

At this level, Gamma retains responsibility for billing but it is now done under the partner's own brand. Partners also do their own ordering and changes through Gamma's portal, enabling them to provide a truly integrated, first-class service to their customers.

Having grown its customer base more and built further profile in the market, EBT moved to become a Gamma Wholesale Partner. Wholesale Partners are granted access to Gamma's UK-wide network through a self-service portal which puts partners in direct control of provisioning, support and billing.

Into The Big Time

It was around this time that EBT was able to break into the big time. One of the first big deals for the company was with a 20-site UK freight provider. When that company was subsequently taken over by a much larger international logistics player, Hogan's initial thought was EBT would be politely but firmly asked to step aside in favour of a larger incumbent provider.

But much to his surprise, the opposite happened. EBT was invited in to do a demonstration. This impressed sufficiently to win over the Europe-wide parent organisation as yet another customer. Further growth followed, with Hogan and his team migrating three large organisations to hosted telephony, all the time ably supported by Gamma.

By the time the Covid pandemic struck in early 2020, EBT had taken a further step on the partner journey with Gamma and had become a Gold Partner. For many companies Covid signalled the end of business-as-usual but it ushered in a boom time for astute, well-connected telecoms companies.

Steve Hogan explains: "Gamma's hosted services really took off at the start of Covid and it put us and the Horizon phone service firmly on the map," he says.

"At the same time the on-premise PBX business reduced for everyone. With Gamma on board as partner, aided by its profile and reputation in the industry, we were able to sell Horizon and other services like Fibre Ethernet, SIP Trunks, Broadband and legacy calls and lines."

But the Gamma Gold Partner relationship also presented other opportunities to EBT. "Just moving existing customers over from PBX to hosted telephony has grown our business 17% in the last 18 months," says Hogan. "Now we're trying to move even more from a CapEx income model selling hardware towards recurring services revenues," he says.

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Managing Director
EBT Communications



Judging by EBT's success so far, there's no doubting that Hogan and his team - with more than a little help from Gamma - will achieve that goal and more.

Two-Way Street

Hogan is keen to stress that EBT, now also a Gamma Technical Alliance Partner, enjoys a two-way relationship with Gamma, each company involving the other in its technical developments. For example feedback from EBT's on-premise contact centre experience has aided Gamma in developing its own hosted solution, Horizon Contact.

At the same time Gamma's SIP Trunks have been a perfect fit for adding VoIP to EBT's customers still using NEC hardware, and there have been other areas of interworking between products and services along the way.

"Gamma has grown massively over the years and they have always been good at bringing along the products and services we need," says Hogan. He particularly references Gamma's Teams Direct Routing which has been a big hit with his larger customers for whom Teams was a Godsend during Covid.

For their part EBT's engineers have been working on their own project which aims to leverage session border controller technology to integrate telephony with the Zoom conferencing platform, another star of the Covid era.

The Future

After more than 23 successful years in telecoms, Hogan is even more enthusiastic about the future, especially where the Gamma relationship is concerned. "We've seen Gamma constantly innovating and bringing new products and services to market. And we confidently expect more of the same as we too evolve and understand how to deploy and support these new developments," he says.

For now EBT remains committed 100% to the voice telephony market but can foresee a need for delivering its services into an increasingly converged world. He can also see an opportunity in taking EBT's particular mix of business ethics and technical expertise into the wider IT arena, but doesn't intend jumping in anytime soon.

"Those early days as a Dealer partner of Gamma certainly stood us in good stead," says Hogan. "As long as we keep up with technology, continue to provide good service and maintain fair pricing then I am happy. People still value something that works well above something that's cheap to buy," he says.

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Contact us to speak to a member of the team about becoming a Gamma Dealer partner

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