ITSPA

Internet Telephony Services Providers' Association

ITSPA Annual Report

2018-2019

Presented to ITSPA Members AGM

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One Park Crescent
International Students House
London
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Chairman's Report

Welcome to the 2019 ITSPA AGM.

This is our fourteenth AGM and, despite the political instability and stagnation, it comes at a pivotal time for our industry with developments related to migration to All IP and reform of number portability progressing rapidly.

In this context, ITSPA has seen another very busy year, with a great deal of work across our three main working group areas: regulatory, operational and events. The past twelve months have been particularly active from a regulatory point of view with much work being carried out by Ofcom on the future of telephony.

As members will no doubt be aware, our **Business Switching Task Force** (which has led our number portability lobbying efforts for the past couple of years), has succeeded in raising the reform of number portability up Ofcom's agenda. In October 2018, the Government announced that it had awarded £700,000 to Ofcom for their blockchain proof of concept project into number portability and number management. Whilst the project is still at an early stage, the progress that has been made has been due to a great amount of work behind the scenes by ITSPA and we remain hopeful that this project, which is exploring whether blockchain is an appropriate technology for a porting solution, will succeed. In April, Ofcom also announced a consultation on plans to implement a database by 2022 to resolve the ongoing problems with business porting. ITSPA continues to be heavily involved in this long-running work of vital importance to our sector. We are delighted that, after years of inaction, Ofcom is finally taking this subject seriously and I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to ITSPA's campaigning in this area.

Another major area of focus for ITSPA over the past twelve months has been **IP migration**. We are continuing to work closely with Ofcom and its numerous workstreams on this subject and we hold a place on Ofcom's All IP steering group which is overseeing all of their work. It is incredibly important that, as we migrate towards 'all IP', the regulatory environment adapts accordingly and that any genuine threats to the current competitive make-up of the telecoms industry are addressed. ITSPA is playing an important role in shaping discussions with Government and the regulator and we will continue to bat for the industry to ensure that our views are heard.

Other than these two key lobbying focus areas, our Industry Developments and Operations Groups have both had very busy years with numerous ongoing initiatives continuing. The Industry Developments Group has focused particularly closely on preparing members for a number of significant regulatory changes including, but not limited to, the introduction of Ofcom's new General Conditions in October 2018. Meanwhile our Operations Group has worked on a number of technical and best practice areas. Fraud has continued to be a key

focus of the group, and one particularly prominent achievement over the past year was the development and launch of our educational video on fraud. 'Telecommunications Cybercrime: The Five Ws' was launched in April of this year and is now being used to educate law enforcement bodies and other stakeholders on the anatomy of a typical telephony fraud. Other major focuses for the Operations Group have included the development of nuisance calls guidance, continued engagement to raise awareness of telephony fraud, and the ongoing development of a network resilience guidance document.

On the promotional side of things, our events programme has really gone from strength to strength, with our Awards and Christmas Lunch now standing out as particular highlights in the industry calendar. We have also held workshops, seminars and dinners, which have enabled members not just to network but also discuss hot topics and emerging industry trends.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank the ITSPA Council and the wider membership for their work over the past year. Particular thanks must go to the chairs of our three working groups: Tracey Wright (Chair of the Industry Developments Group), David Cargill (Chair of the Operations Group) and Trefor Davies (Chair of the Promotions Group.

Finally, at what is such an important and pivotal moment for our industry, I urge members to get involved and support the work of our ongoing campaigns. With your help, we can really shape the future of the industry and support the growth of the sector. The next year certainly promises to be a busy and important one, and I look forward to the challenges ahead!

Best regards,

Eli Katz, ITSPA Chair (XConnect)

Industry Developments Group

The Industry Developments Group, Chaired by Tracey Wright (Magrathea) who took over the chairmanship in summer 2018, has focussed on a number of regulatory issues, consultations and policy developments over the past year. A full list of consultation responses drafted by the group can be found towards the end of this document. Major issues have included:

Business Switching/Number Portability

Following the launch of Ofcom's blockchain proof of concept into number portability and number management in 2018, representatives of the Industry Developments Group have been heavily involved in Ofcom's ongoing work in the area. Tracey Wright (Chair of the Industry Developments Group) sits on the governance board overseeing the blockchain project and has ensured that ITSPA members' views on the project and porting more broadly have been represented. She has also regularly reported back to the Industry Developments Group and the wider membership on progress of the project.

In March 2019, ITSPA's 'Porting Vision' was published. This document sets out themes and ideas that have been suggested by ITSPA members on both short and long term improvements that could be made to number porting in the UK. The document was presented to the Number Portability Executive Steering Group (NPESG) ahead of their own submission to Ofcom which fed into the blockchain proof of concept work.

IP Migration

The Industry Developments Group has led ITSPA's work on IP migration as Ofcom and BT's work in this area intensifies. The Group produced a briefing document for DCMS and Ofcom and has begun to reach out to stakeholders to communicate ITSPA's priorities and concerns that the competitive nature of the telecoms industry is maintained throughout transition. Alex Jennings (ITSPA Council member) represents ITSPA on Ofcom's All IP Steering Group.

Related to this, in April 2019, Ofcom launched three consultations on 'the future of telephony' which looked into CLI and number portability; numbering; and interconnection and call termination. The Group consulted members extensively prior to submitting responses to these consultations in June 2019.

Guidance on Uninterrupted Access to Emergency Services for Vulnerable Persons

In February, we launched a guidance document on uninterrupted access to emergency services for vulnerable persons. The production of the document followed publication of guidance by Ofcom on the interpretation of the obligation on providers for uninterrupted access to the emergency services in the event of a power cut and specifically in the context of vulnerable customers. The ITSPA guidance provides an outline of a process that members should follow to ensure they catch the majority of persons in scope of the regulation.

New General Condition Guidance Documents

Prior to the introduction of Ofcom's new regime of General Conditions in October 2018, we launched three guidance documents for members. These were:

- **Complaints Handling Guidance** – This document, produced by Osborne Clarke LLP, includes guidance on the mandatory requirement to have a complaints handling procedure and to implement a complaints handling code of practice; a model complaints handling code, and a model ADR letter.
- **Caller Line Identity (CLI) Best Practice** – This sets out ITSPA's interpretation of the new Ofcom rules concerning CLI presentation. These require communications providers to provide CLI facilities by default wherever technically feasible and economically viable.
- **Draft Accessibility Statement** – ITSPA's draft accessibility statement was updated in line with the new requirements included under the new General Condition C5.

Operations Group

Fraud Educational Video

In April, the Operations Group launched ITSPA's educational video on telecoms fraud. The video 'Telecommunications Cybercrime: The Five Ws' provides an overview of the anatomy of a typical instance of telephony fraud and is being used to educate law enforcement and other stakeholders on the nature of this often overlooked crime. The video explores the what, when, why, who and where of telecoms cybercrime and is available at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WgR-Y1DKf-A

Engagement with law enforcement on fraud

The Operations Group has continued to lead our stakeholder engagement work in the area of telephony fraud. In March, representatives of the Group met with law enforcement representatives from the Home Office and various police forces to discuss ITSPA' priorities in this area. These include: educating law enforcement to increase prosecutions; the current problems facing the industry related to reporting fraud; streamlining and improving communications channels between Government, law enforcement bodies and industry; and collaborating at an international level to block outpayments.

Number Blocking and Nuisance Call Guidance

The Operations Group worked with the Ofcom Nuisance Call Working Group in order to be able to contact CPs directly to unblock number ranges that had been incorrectly blocked. In April, ITSPA launched an updated list of CP Blocking Dispute Process Links to enable members to go straight to the CP regarding the issue of number blocking and nuisance calls.

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The document provides a list of appropriate points of contact for major CPs to assist in the resolution of any issues.

Network Resilience Best Practice Document

The Operations Group has been working on producing a best practice document on the subject of network resilience. The aim of the document is to provide a series of network resilience best practice measures to assist members in complying with Ofcom General Condition 3 (which relates to network resilience). The draft document includes sections on 999 redundancy and monitoring, DDoS, transit weakness, DNS and more. The document is expected to be launched in autumn 2019.

Promotions Group

ITSPA Events

ITSPA's events programme has continued to grow and develop over the past twelve months with our events having grown in scale and now forming a prominent part of the industry calendar. A list of all the events we have held since the previous AGM can be found in the Secretariat Report. The nine events have come in a range of formats, including seminars, panel discussions, presence at trade shows and dinner discussions. Topics discussed included complaints handling, IP migration, number portability, Microsoft Teams, how members can differentiate themselves and many more.

ITSPA was delighted to again be present at a number of trade shows and large scale industry events such as Channel Live in Birmingham and the Cavell Group Cloud Comms Summit.

The 2019 ITSPA Awards, the eleventh edition of this event, again proved to be a highlight of the events calendar, held at the Glaziers Hall in central London, overlooking the River Thames. The categories decided on at the revamp (which took place prior to the 2018 Awards) were maintained. These categories brought together a strong list of candidates from across the industry, and was our biggest and most successful awards to date!

Press and Social Media

Having joined Twitter in March 2015, @ITSPA_Tweets now has 588 followers, and the ITSPA LinkedIn group, which is open to members and non-members, has grown to over 230 members. ITSPA also remains active on Facebook.

ITSPA has seen good press coverage over the past twelve months on a range of issues – including the launch of guidance documents (such as our documents which were launched ahead of the changes to Ofcom's General Conditions) and regulatory issues such as number portability and IP migration. The 2019 ITSPA Awards also received extensive coverage.

Coverage has been received across the trade press including in: Comms Dealer, Comms Business, CommsTrader, SC Magazine UK, ISP Review, IT Pro, Computing.co.uk, Telecom TV, Telecompaper, TechWeekEurope, broadbandchoices, thinkbroadband.com, Computer Business Review, ChannelWeb.co.uk and others.

Ombudsman Services

Since late 2015 ITSPA members (with a turnover of under £20 million) have been entitled to free membership of the Alternative Dispute Resolution scheme Ombudsman Services (OS) as a benefit of ITSPA membership. It is a regulatory requirement that communications service providers are members of either OS or the other Ofcom approved ADR scheme (CISAS).

Members should be aware that if their company turnover is over £20 million they must have their own separate arrangement with either Ombudsman Services or CISAS.

Since the previous AGM, 11 cases came before Ombudsman Services which were taken on as a dispute.

Membership

The membership base continues to remain solid, despite some natural churn occurring when membership subscriptions are up for renewal and when members merge or acquire each other. Total numbers currently stand at 104 members. This is up from 99 members in June 2018. Council and the Secretariat continue to work on prospective members who have expressed an interest in joining and all members are urged to encourage their industry contacts to join. Future membership prospects continue to look bright with a number of companies in the process of joining. A full list of members can be found on the ITSPA website.

Treasurer's Report

The 2018 accounts show a net profit for the year of £30,373 compared to a profit of £31,911 in 2017. Membership fees have slightly increased from £137,580 to 138,822. Events income was £43,718 which was slightly less than £45,281 in 2017 whilst the associated costs decreased from £33,423 in 2017 to £22,982 in 2018 which was due to reduced venue costs. The slightly lower profit was due to our higher spending on professional fees to produce guidance for our members related to our fraud work and PSD2 advice.

The Balance Sheet at 31 December 2018 shows current assets of £322,950, including cash at bank of £158,958 and trade debtors of £163,992. The creditors at that date amounted to £192,931 which is due to early membership invoicing for 2019.

The following Income and Expenditure shows the last five years results:

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	2018	**2017**	**2016**	**2015**	**2014**
Turnover	182,540	182,861	162,224	165,344	154,000
Costs	152,167	150,950	140,795	154,330	136,000
Profit	30,373	31,911	21,429	11,014	18,000
Cumulative Result	130,000	99,000	67,000	46,000	36,000

The figures above depict a cumulative profit of £130,000 from 2010 to 2018. The actual ITSPA balance as of 31 December 2018 was £158,958.

The solid financial picture over recent years has enabled ITSPA to slowly attribute additional expenditure around specific working group initiatives, whilst also building up a necessary reserve (of circa ten months worth of costs) agreed prudent by Council to help deal with any future headwinds. Further project opportunities to support the industry should be more forthcoming, should the financial projection remain steady.

Colin Duffy – ITSPA Treasurer (iNet Telecoms – Voipfone)

Secretariat Report

ITSPA has worked on a wide range of issues over the course of the year. Outlined below is a listed summary of Secretariat and member activity:

Consultation Responses/Briefings & Best Practice Documents since the 2018 AGM

The Industry Developments and Operations Working Groups have worked on the following consultations, research briefings and Best Practice Documents. All documents can be requested by contacting the ITSPA Secretariat. These documents can also be viewed on the ITSPA website.

20/06/19 – Response to Ofcom consultation on the future of telephone numbers
06/06/19 – Response to Ofcom consultation on future of interconnection and call termination
06/06/19 – Response to Ofcom consultation on promoting trust in telephone numbers
29/05/19 – IP Migration briefing paper for Ofcom and DCMS
19/03/19 – Response to DCMS Statement of Strategic Priorities
05/03/19 – ITSPA Porting Vision 2019
21/02/19 – Guidance on Uninterrupted Access to Emergency Services for Vulnerable Persons
08/02/19 – Response to Ofcom consultation on end-of-contract and annual best tariff notifications
29/01/19 – Response to Ofcom Physical Infrastructure Market Review
16/01/19 – Response to Ofcom Business Connectivity Market Review
05/11/18 – Response to Ofcom consultation on mobile handsets
26/09/18 – CLI Best Practice Guidance

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26/09/18 – Osborne Clarke Guidance on Complaints Handling
26/09/18 – Draft Accessibility Statement
19/09/18 – Response to Ofcom on end-of-contract and out-of-contract notifications
31/07/18 – Response to Openreach WLR consultation

ITSPA Updates

One of the Secretariat's tasks since the inception of ITSPA has been to keep the membership informed of developments at Government and industry levels as well as to provide details of ITSPA's latest activities and events. The Secretariat have sent twenty four membership updates via email to members in the past year along with numerous other mailshots outlining other issues and to keep members informed of developments and upcoming events. Members can request further information on particular issues where appropriate and also have the opportunity to make member announcements on the communication. Members are encouraged to ensure as many relevant people within their organisation are signed up to the various ITSPA mailing lists to ensure they are aware of new initiatives being undertaken by ITSPA's working groups and industry news that is relevant to all concerned.

ITSPA Events since 2018 AGM

4th July 2018 - ITSPA Summer Forum at BDO, Marylebone, London
11th September 2018 - ITSPA at Channel Live - NEC, Birmingham
17th October 2018 – ITSPA/Cavell Group Dinner on how to differentiate yourself in a maturing market – The Mercer Restaurant, London
8th November 2018 – ADR/Complaints Handling Workshop with Osborne Clarke, Osborne Clarke LLP, London
6th December 2018 - ITSPA Christmas Lunch – Hotel Indigo, Leicester Square, London
7th March 2019 – ITSPA at Cavell Cloud Comms Summit – Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London
1st May 2019 – ITSPA Awards 2019 – Glaziers Hall, London
15th May 2019 – Microsoft Teams Workshop – Devonshire Square, London
15th May 2019 – ITSPA Curry Club – Tayyabs, London

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ITSPA Awards 2019

Award Winners:
- Best Business ITSP (up to £2m): **Fuse2 Communications**
- Best Business ITSP (£2m-£10m): **Voipfone**
- Best Business ITSP (over £10m): **Vonage**
- Best SOHO ITSP: **TTNC**
- Best Multi-national Solution: **RingCentral**
- Best VoIP Infrastructure: **SIP Trunk Call Manager – Gamma**
- Best VoIP Device: **Conference Phone Series - Yealink**
- Best VoIP Software: **Session Routing Engine – Netaxis Solutions**
- Best VoIP Innovation: **Session Routing Engine – Netaxis Solutions**
- Best Vertical Solution: **Contrex – Hello Telecom**
- Best VoIP Wholesaler: **Gamma**
- ITSPA Hero: **Jim Reilly, OTA (Office of the Telecoms Adjudicator)**

Highly Commended:
- Best Business ITSP (up to £2m): **PBX Hosting**
- Best Business ITSP (£2m-£10m): **Foehn**
- Best SOHO ITSP: **Dial 9 Communications**
- Best Multi-national Solution: **VoIPLine Telecom**
- Best VoIP Infrastructure: **NEMO Suite – Netaxis Solutions**
- Best VoIP Device: **Trio 8800 Solution - Polycom**
- Best VoIP Software: **Voxivo Cloud Phone - Foehn**
- Best VoIP Innovation: **MaX UC - Metaswitch**
- Best VoIP Vertical Solution: **Aeriandi Archive - Aeriandi**
- Best VoIP Wholesaler: **TelcoSwitch**

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List of Council Members – June 2018 -June 2019

Name	Company	
Colin Duffy	Voipfone	Elected 2018
Eli Katz	XConnect	Elected 2018
Dan Winfield	Voxhub	Elected 2018
David Cargill	Vonage	Elected 2018
Trefor Davies	Babelisk	Elected 2018
Guy Miller	TalkTalk Business	Elected 2018
Jolyon Parsons	Ciptex	Elected 2018
Tracey Wright	Magrathea	Elected 2018
Nik Middleton	Antheus	Elected 2018
Alex Jennings	Gradwell	Elected 2018
Lee Turner	Gamma	Elected 2018
Alex Kinch	Ziron	Elected 2017
Nick Holland	8x8	Appointed 2019

List of Working Group Chairs – June 2018 -June 2019

Industry Developments Working Group: Tracey Wright (Magrathea)
Operations Working Group: David Cargill (Vonage)
Promotions Working Group: Trefor Davies (Babelisk)