

# **Manches case study**

## **Converging services on to one, easily managed, cost effective and scalable network**

### **Background**

Manches LLP is a full service law firm with offices in London, Reading and Oxford. Established in 1937, the legal services provided by the firm range from complex litigation, all aspects of commercial and real estate law through to discreet private client and family law advice. The Firm's clients are drawn from four major sectors; technology (life sciences, IT and publishing), retailers, property and construction companies and wealthy individuals.

The firm's success has been built on providing clients with specialist support from lawyers with proven sector expertise and experience. This track record means that legal advice can be provided quickly, clearly and in a reasonable cost-effective way; a key feature of which is being closely aligned with clients, their business needs and their way of working.

### **The need for change**

Manches' network had served the Firm well but it was felt that an upgrade would enhance the client experience, boost partner productivity and potentially produce new efficiencies in terms of overall cost of ownership.

"Our typical working patterns involve considerable telecommuting and remote working. It was vital that we moved to a communications platform that could provide support for that level of mobility. We also needed access to a lot more bandwidth" explained Derek Brookes, IT Director at Manches LLP. "We had a mix of suppliers and wanted to rationalise for consistency. New applications, such as virtualisation, could have potential for our business but would be difficult to deploy with our existing platform".

### **The converged solution**

Manches LLP turned to their business communications provider, Reeves Lund, to begin scoping out a new approach. . Reeves Lund is a voice and data systems integrator with strategic partner alliances with leading industry players. Reeves

Lund suggested a Virtual Private LAN Service (VPLS) Wide-Area Network from Exponential-e to set the foundation for improved operational efficiency. This powerful, multisite corporate network employs Ethernet to support the services running over it and would be ideal for converging Manches LLP's VoIP, three site Internet access and fully meshed any-to-any communications platform. VPLS in effect, would deliver all Manches' business-critical services on one single Ethernet pipe. Installing 100mbps access circuits provided ample bandwidth for the required services, and has paved the way for future virtualisation and disaster recovery programs.

The use of VPLS required those same Ethernet networking skills as those used in a LAN, so no additional training was required by Manches, neither was there any need to appoint new WAN specialists for the day to day administration of the network.

VPLS effectively created a single bridged domain across different sites. Multiple VPLS bridges or instances could be created within a converged network with each one dedicated to a type of service. Two secure VPLS instances were created in order to converge Manches LLP's new solution, each with very different objectives:

#### *The VPLS voice instance*

Business class IP telephony with QoS was installed using SIP trunks to replace the existing inflexible ISDN30 lines and analogue extensions. The voice service included 3Mbps of QoS protected bandwidth to support the use of toll-quality voice codecs such as G.711. This not only reduced the number of physical lines, and removed single points of failure, but also provided significant cost savings. Key benefits such as command control in a disaster recovery scenario were also provided with the new voice system, meaning that in the event of failure, calls could be routed to another Manches office with ease and simplicity. Users would now be able to work remotely, or in the unlikely event of an outage, operate from the disaster recovery location, minimising any potential down time, thus further improving efficiency.

#### *The network data VPLS instance*

This was created specifically for efficient and secure data transfer and communications between Manches' offices. Increased bandwidth combined with the layer 2 characteristics of a VPLS network, enabled each site to communicate as though on the same local area network (LAN). The ability to easily scale the bandwidth was added to allow for future data usage increasing.

Derek Brookes, IT Director at Manches LLP explained, "Converging our services on to one easily manageable connection was always on my wish list for improved operational efficiency. Working closely with Exponential-e, Reeves Lund was able to provide this. We now have our own any-to-any wide-area network where all our essential services converge. We also have the additional benefit of seeing a cost reduction on what we were previously paying".

### **The personal approach**

Manches wanted to use just one supplier for all their business communications needs. They needed this partner to work closely with them and personally manage the entire process. Reeves Lund was particularly well placed to fulfil this requirement and, through its close relationship with Exponential-e, was able to walk through the new integration step by step and at Manches' convenience.

### **Conclusion**

A new WAN solution is usually commissioned to significantly enhance a company's data communications, business responsiveness and to simplify their communications administration and this was Manches' aim. They now have a multi-site any-to-any network which, in effect, hosts all three sites on the same LAN and has allowed them to converge their business critical communications.

Manches were able to realise significant cost-savings. The solution they commissioned not only improved their overall operational efficiency, but also provided a significant reduction in ICT spend by consolidating their various ICT providers by converging voice and data services onto one single unified service-supporting platform. The entire new solution will save money in the first year, and over 3 years will be half the cost of their previous communications network.