Bleach of Lavant

Horticultural and palletised haulage specialist

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The customer

Established in 1921, Sussex-based Bleach of Lavant is one of the UK's largest horticultural haulage specialists. With a fleet of over 100 vehicles, the family-run firm also has a substantial and growing palletised goods delivery business.

The need

Bleach of Lavant uses the Palletforce Network's cloud app to upload proof of delivery images and download pallet label images. The labels are affixed to loaded pallets, allowing them to be scanned at various points on their journeys, providing real-time tracking information for customers.

The company's main customer service centre, depot and warehouse facility, near Arundel, with some thirty employees, relied on a single ADSL line delivering just 10Mbps download and 0.5Mbps upload, with no redundancy or failover.

Poor internet connectivity performance and reliability were delaying Palletforce Network app uploads and pallet label printing, and holding up the implementation of a new transportation system to allow drivers to upload real-time information via mobile devices. Even straightforward email and web access were problematic.

An unreliable VPN link between the Arundel office and the company's second site in Chichester was causing further difficulties. Poor performance and resilience frequently resulted in users being disconnected from the network when colleagues were attempting to access files and services at the other site. Issues with the VPN were also consuming significant IT resource.

Bleach of Lavant needed reliable connectivity with sufficient bandwidth to support existing usage and the new transportation system, and to replace the problematic VPN with reliable, seamless data sharing capability between the two sites. Leased lines had been ruled out on grounds of expense, always a problem and particularly so in the light of the Arundel site's remote location.

Quick facts

- Family-run specialist haulage firm based in the south of England
- Two sites
- Single ADSL line to the Internet
- Site interconnection via VPN

Challenges

- Inadequate bandwidth
- Poor flexibility and scalability
- Unreliable VPN
- No traffic management capability
- Low resilience

The solution

Evolving Networks created a multipath solution running over multiple ADSL lines. This gives the Arundel office robust, reliable, high quality, QoS enabled connectivity with significant download capacity.

The VPN linking the Arundel office to the Chichester site was replaced by a true software-defined WAN (SD-WAN) with bandwidth management, running over the multipath connection.

The methodology

To address the core need at Arundel for enhanced bandwidth, resilience and traffic management, Evolving Networks delivered a multipath connection running over three ADSL lines, by taking ownership of one existing circuit and delivering two new ADSL services.

The Evolving Networks Intelligent Network Fabric presents the combined bandwidth of the multiple ADSL circuits as a single high-bandwidth connection. Intelligently routing data around any issues, the multipath connection delivers not only enhanced bandwidth but also markedly improved resilience. Meanwhile, traffic management capabilities allow email traffic to be given reduced priority ensuring sufficient bandwidth is always available for the new cloud-based transportation system.

Bleach of Lavant were also keen to eliminate the Chichester office's troublesome VPN. Evolving Networks therefore incorporated a further existing ADSL circuit, which had previously been dedicated to the VPN, into the company's new multipath Ethernet solution. The resulting four-ADSL multipath connection now supports the Arundel office and extends the Arundel LAN, via a Layer 2 LAN extension over an SD-WAN, to the Chichester office. Chichester staff can now access Arundel LAN resources exactly as if they were in the Arundel office.

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The results

The SD-WAN allows Bleach of Lavant to manage network traffic between its two sites, giving the company, for the first time, the ability to prioritise specific types of traffic via bidirectional QoS, a standard feature on all Evolving Networks connectivity. Bandwidth and network resilience have improved dramatically, while service outages, even when network traffic is high, have become a thing of the past.

Palletforce Network data is now uploading and downloading in a fraction of the time previously required, smoothing and accelerating workflow. Pallet labels are printed without delay, and drivers can easily upload information supporting real-time parcel tracking. The multipath network architecture also provides the necessary scalability for the company to expand both capabilities and headcount.

Evolving Networks informs Bleach of Lavant about any issues that arise with any constituent links within the company's multipath connections. In almost all cases, such issues are resolved before the company even notices them.

Critically, the retiring of the VPN previously in place to connect the Chichester facility to the main Arundel site has released Bleach of Lavant's IT team from the significant effort involved in keeping it up and running. As well as providing markedly improved service to users, the new LAN extension is freeing up significant amounts of IT time which can be much more usefully deployed on core business projects.

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Over-all, the new connectivity has freed Bleach of Lavant's staff to do their jobs more efficiently and effectively, boosting productivity and staff morale, as well as relieving the IT team from the significant complexity they previously had to manage.

Why Evolving Networks?

Evolving Networks are the only company in the UK able to offer true SD-WAN over multipath connectivity. The alternative would have been an MPLS based architecture – highly inflexible and, particularly in the light of the Arundel office's remote location, punitively expensive.

Bleach of Lavant were attracted by the significant flexibility and scalability of the solution: additional capacity can be added in no longer than the time it takes to take delivery of new ADSL lines, in a simple plug-and-play operation.

- Cross-carrier, multi-VNO solution
- Highly resilient connectivity
- Layer 2 LAN extension via SD-WAN enables easy data sharing between sites
- QoS and traffic management ensure continuity of high-quality service to users
- One supplier for all connectivity and SDWAN functionality
- Proactive issue reporting with exceedingly rapid resolution

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