Digraph

Digraph is driving down costs and
ramping up sales with network
and telephony help from FluidOne

FluidOne

DIGRAPH
TRANSPORT SUPPLIES LTD

Case Study

Digraph's commercial auto parts business was expanding rapidly but the company's progress was at risk of being stifled by legacy technologies. With a high dependence on phone systems and Internet connectivity, the company saw the answer in a fully managed voice and data network. A secure and resilient Internet solution from FluidOne allows Digraph to mitigate cloud risk and include monitoring, failover and 10 more site connections for neutral cost due to reduced operational cost.

Digraph is a leading UK-based auto parts distributor for HGV trucks and trailers. Founded in 1976 by Peter Rawson and later joined by his son James, it has an emphasis on customer service, and the maxim: "Whatever it takes". The company is expanding rapidly across the UK, expecting to own 100 UK sites by the end of 2019 and reach 200 by 2020. In 2017, Sukhpal Singh Ahluwalia became the majority investor, with further substantial investments made by Euro Car Parts Ltd and by Managing Director, James Rawson.

10 Extra Sites + Monitoring + Failover
for cost neutral, reduced operational cost

One-Day site connectivity
with bonded 4G solution

One Bill + One Contact
for all account services

Challenges

Digraph expands rapidly but technology is lagging

Since the investment in 2017, Digraph has virtually doubled in size but its network infrastructure was starting to lag behind the growth demands of the business.

"From the outset, we knew we needed to transform the network," said Ash Chauhan, IT consultant at Digraph. **"Everything was done internally. It wasn't scalable and it was costing a lot of money."**

In addition, as a business dependent on telephone sales, Digraph's legacy phone system also posed a threat to further expansion.

"For telephony, we had a traditional line-based system but what we needed was the mobility an Internet system can offer," said Ash. **"There was no mobility, no monitoring, no intelligent call routing. If the phone system was down for 15 minutes, we could miss a hundred sales. If you wanted to call another branch, you had to know the branch number, you couldn't look it up in a directory. This was just about manageable for Digraph as a small company but it wasn't tenable going forward."**

Company wants fully managed voice and data network

With an aggressive plan to add more than 100 branches, and nearly five times as many employees to the business by 2020, Digraph not only needed future-proof voice and data technology, it also needed a blueprint for rapidly deploying new sites.

"Most of our business works on phone calls and what we're selling we buy on the web," said Ash. **"So, the biggest priority was the phone system. Then the Internet."**

Network monitoring and proactive support were also high on Digraph's list of priorities.

"Previously, we had to do it all ourselves – switch-off, switch-on, call IT manager and so on," said Ash. **"One of the reasons it's so important to have monitoring is that our core software updates happen overnight. If the Internet goes down when there's no one on site, it's a problem because the next day we don't have up-to-date stock and delivery information to give to customers."**

Solution

Automotive experience helps FluidOne secure the project

A fully managed network and telephony solution was the logical way forward.

FluidOne Global Communications was already on Digraph's radar – the company's services had been successfully deployed at Euro Car Parts, and the executive team was impressed by the supplier's capabilities.

"We asked FluidOne to join our team given their experience of working with us at Euro Car Parts" said majority investor Sukhpal Singh Ahluwalia. **"We asked them to look at the IT infrastructure and build a cost effective, scalable and fully managed solution".**

Ash Chauhan added: **"We liked how keen the FluidOne team was to work with us. Their understanding of our industry and how we operate made us confident we would get proactive support. The phone technology was intuitive and with a small amount of configuration by FluidOne we could have all the features we needed."**

DMVPN overlay and network failover help to mitigate cloud dependency

The FluidOne solution was based on a secure and encrypted direct Internet solution with a DMVPN (Dynamic Multipoint Virtual Private Network) overlay by FluidOne, to provide a secure tunnel from each branch site through to HQ.

However, when accessing resources in the cloud, such as the Autoparts MAM catalogue, Internet traffic goes out directly from each branch, enabling a faster connection.

For telephony, the FluidOne Voice solution is based on the Cisco Broadsoft platform. Broadsoft operates as a SIP trunk, removing the need for an additional phone line and delivering a unified comms experience for anyone using the Digraph phone system.

"The new system has capabilities like call recording, listening and analytics," said Ash. **"It also has features like intelligent call routing so even if I take the phone to my house, it will work; in fact, I can take the phone anywhere in the world and it will appear that I am at the office."**

With an increased dependency on external data, having a robust failover solution becomes essential. In the new FluidOne design, primary connectivity is provided by a fibre ethernet circuit and secondary, best-available EFM, delivers the back-up.

FluidOne now takes responsibility for the physical infrastructure design, termination, testing and cabinet installation at each new branch and, when required, provides same-day connectivity via its bonded 4G multi-sim solution for urgent deployments.

"One of our Manchester sites was opening in a week," said Ash. **"FluidOne was able to provide connectivity in time. It's happening again at the moment with our Slough site – we need to open sooner than TalkTalk can deliver the fibre so FluidOne is providing rapid site deployment again using bonded mobile sims."**

Results

Digraph adds 10 new sites plus failover and 24/7 monitoring for neutral cost

The initial deployment to 23 sites was completed in December 2018 so it's still early days. All the same Ash Chauhan thinks the benefits of working with FluidOne are already apparent.

"The biggest frustration we had was no monitoring from the carrier's side. If the Internet dropped off, we'd have to figure out what was wrong and contact the supplier. With FluidOne, anytime the Internet drops, FluidOne contacts us immediately and is already working on the solution," said Ash. **"The knock-on effect is we're getting fewer complaints from our store managers. I know this because I get copied on tickets going into and out of FluidOne."**

According to Ash, FluidOne's monitoring service is providing value to Digraph's sales team as well.

"Previously, we didn't know how many calls we were making. Now we know the number of inbound and outbound calls at a branch. It really helps us a lot – we can see which sites need improving, where we're losing business and where we can make more sales. For a company relying on phones to make sales, this is a real solution," said Ash.

Ash believes that Digraph is also getting significantly better value for money with the FluidOne solution.

Results

"We've gone from 13 branches to 23, and added FluidOne monitoring and added failover, yet the cost per month is the same," said Ash.

In addition to value for money, Ash likes the fact that he has one point of contact and one bill with FluidOne.

"It's really easy for accounts to see what's happening and if they need to speak to someone at FluidOne, anyone in the company can help," said Ash. **"With the old supplier it was so frustrating when you had a problem because no one would take responsibility."**

Sukhpal concluded: **"Our objective has been achieved under a challenging timescale and has transformed the way our IT and Telephony functions work. The design, project management and deployment have been of the highest standard, as we have come to expect of FluidOne".**

Company expects FluidOne network and relationship to scale in tandem

"We now have a scalable, cost-efficient network template for opening new branches," said Ash. **"We've also got a service partner that can give us advice and practical solutions and provide skills we don't have inhouse so for me, in the future, the way we work with FluidOne today should remain the same."**

FluidOne

We design, deploy and manage the networks on which our customers run their businesses in an increasingly digital world.

Our hybrid networks will help customers digitalise their businesses

The best price possible
Our hybrid networks, enhanced by SD-WAN, blend carriers and technologies to optimise the price of every site, and minimise installation cost with zero touch deployment. We offer transparent pricing for peace of mind.

The fastest deployment
Our hybrid networks let you choose circuits that deliver fastest for each site, and our 4G WAN circuits offer 2 day delivery with seamless transition to permanent circuits.

The easiest migration
We can phase your migrations to suit you, minimising cost and hassle.

The best performance and uptime
Our advanced monitoring shows the whole application path, raise 95% of key issues proactively and allows detailed reporting and drill-down to show issues and long-term trends.

The most enjoyable and pain free experience
Our end to end digital systems and processes deliver Right first time with clear, accurate bills.

FluidOne