



Designing and delivering a sustainable, resilient and scalable data network



Known as the “green heart of Staffordshire”, Cannock Chase is the smallest mainland Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) in England and Wales. First becoming a council in 1984, Cannock Chase Council delivers a wide range of services to approximately 90,000 residents. ICT also actively encourages national and international companies to bring job opportunities to the area, enabling future generations to train and work in the district.

Whilst Cannock Chase Council is proud of its heritage, it is also forward thinking and has embraced technology with more than 550 users including the council head office, local theatre, museum and leisure centre relying upon its ICT systems. With a close eye on the future needs of local residents, work force and the many visitors the district attracts the council recognised that its existing ICT infrastructure was unable to meet its increasing demands.

For expertise on how to create a high performance, resilient and reliable ICT network that would be capable of running new technologies including Voice over IP (VoIP) telephony, video and multimedia applications and unified communications the council turned to Extreme Networks Partner, IP Integration.

“We recognised that our existing ICT infrastructure would require upgrading due to the pressures, expectations and additional services that we were planning to introduce,” explains Cannock Chase District Council’s ICT Services Manager, Tan Ali. “Any performance and reliability problems would have a negative effect on the entire network, so we took the decision to redesign our new network that could provide the necessary bandwidth and reliability to our new and existing services.”

IP Integration conducted a network audit review of the council’s existing infrastructure and based on additional requirements, specified a solution from Extreme Networks that would provide the necessary resilience, bandwidth support and quality-of-service (QoS) the council required. Business Development Manager at IP Integration, John Bacon, explains: “We knew that by recommending Extreme Networks, the council would benefit from the best solution available at an attractive total cost of ownership.”

The council chose Extreme Networks’ technologies for its ability to deliver a future-proof network as well as its stacking capability, upward scaling and ability to deliver 10 Gigabit networking solutions.

IP Integration deployed a selection of Extreme Networks’ Summit® X450a and X450e switches across the council’s eight sites and from start to finish, including the design and planning of the network, the whole implementation took approximately three months. “The transition was seamless,” comments Ali. “We have a good, longstanding relationship with IP Integration, as they provide support and maintenance to our existing telephony infrastructure.

Since implementation and migration to the new network infrastructure, Cannock Chase District Council has benefitted from improved reliability, meanwhile the increased resiliency means that the council can successfully host and derive the operational benefits of VoIP telephony and unified communications. The higher performance also means that operational efficiency won’t be affected, should any network device fail.

The new infrastructure also allows for segregated voice, video and data traffic to ease congestion in the network and also provides security against cyber and internal attacks by ensuring that any malicious content is restricted to the area in which it is detected and not spread to the entire system.

In addition to the network switches, the council is also experimenting with Extreme Networks’ EPICenter, a scalable, fully featured network management tool that simplifies configuration, troubleshooting and status monitoring of

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IP-based networks. Using EPICenter, the council can determine where the majority of traffic is generated in order to optimise the availability of the network.

Ali adds: "Everyone has benefitted from the new network and has experienced a real improvement in network operations. IP Integration and Extreme Networks has provided impeccable onsite training with an open and honest approach that has enabled all council technical staff to upskill during working hours."

With a sustainable, resilient and scalable network in place, the council would recommend IP Integration and Extreme Networks to other public sector organisations and departments looking to improve their network infrastructure. Ali concludes: "In comparison to other vendors, Extreme Networks offered a more attractive procurement price point with no compromise on the design and technology of the network. The professionalism and flexible approach from both IP Integration and Extreme Networks has enabled us to benefit from a scalable solution with which we can achieve our long term business goals."

About IP Integration

Our goal is very simple: to help our clients derive the maximum benefit from technology through flexible tailored solutions, and we measure our success on your return on investment with us and on your continued loyalty, won through the excellence of service we guarantee to every one of our clients.

We know that developing the most successful communications infrastructure and managing new telephony, data and application services is a significant challenge facing businesses today. At IP Integration we understand that organisations must evolve their communications strategy, and through proven knowledge, experience and support, we provide complete business communications solutions.

Our voice, data, and systems integration solutions embrace the technology of the converged multi-service network for businesses of all sizes and the partnerships we have developed with the industry's leading players coupled with our in-house bespoke software solutions allow us to offer unparalleled levels of application integration to our customers.

