

Smart Care Helps Improve Security, Productivity and Remote Access for Welsh Housing Association



Customer Overview

The United Welsh Housing Association has 4000 properties spread across Wales. Its main office in Caerphilly has around 100 employees, and there are three remote offices each with a small number of employees

Increasing numbers of staff are now working from home. Additional network use comes from the Managers of various housing schemes, who access applications remotely. Clients use the United Welsh Website to pay bills and report any issues with their homes and their community.

United Welsh contractors can also access the network to obtain works orders and consequently speed up service delivery.

Business Challenge

Cisco partner Capital Network Solutions Ltd, a small, successful network design company, was briefed to transfer United Welsh onto a secure, reliable all-Cisco networking environment in preparation for moving to a new head office.

It's particular focus was on security and mobility. Sarah Edwards, Capital Network's business development director explains: "Up to that point in time, they had been using Microsoft solutions, but were concerned about security and reliability.

"With more and more people accessing their network, many remotely, they needed to ensure that all system access was secure.

Additionally, the network needed to be ready to adopt a unified communications solution after the forthcoming change of head office. Previously the customer had no technical support agreement at all.

Business Results

An ASA5510 firewall was installed in May 08 and over the following months additional technology was added to the network in a staged approach, including a Smart Care contract to cover the entire Cisco network.

The network now has a full complement of ASA 5505 firewall devices to replace its aging PIX 501's for security and the whole network is now fully voice-over-IP-ready.

According to Craig Williams, the United Welsh information systems officer, the more reliable network allowed the organisation to build stronger relationships with customers and peruse a wider range of development opportunities.

With the network now making such a major contribution to the organisation, Smart Care has a significant role to play. The system ensures that the location and condition of all devices are known at any time. If a device fails, it will be replaced within the next working day.

And auditing the network is no longer a time-consuming manual chore, so Smart Care also frees up IT staff from long, routine admin tasks, to do more productive customer focused projects.

Benefits

Edwards comments: "Everything is at your fingertips with Smart Care, so a big plus-point is it allows us to concentrate on more pro-active activities for our clients, and makes our overall offer a lot more attractive."

Summary

Customer Name	United Welsh Housing Association
Location	Head Office in Caerphilly, Wales. Four remote offices, other remote staff
Business Challenge	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Security upgrade required • Secure remote network access required by all 120 staff • No technical support or replacement agreement • Requirement for VoIP readiness • Increasing reliance of customers, suppliers and staff on network
Business Results	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable network has led to opportunities to expand our development programme. • Zero downtime since installation • Greater productivity from reduced admin
Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competitive point of difference • More time for higher profit activities • Greater customer satisfaction and repeat business

“Simply being able to offer Smart Care is itself a major selling point that adds value and differentiates Capital Network Solutions from its competition.”

Sarah Edwards
Business Development Director
Capital Network Solutions, Ltd