

## **Oncore IT consolidates and centralises Emprise Services Plc's disparate IT infrastructure bringing multiple offices and remote workers together**

### **Project introduction**

Emprise is a support services company specialising in cleaning and security. With a turnover in excess of £85 million, the company has experienced consistent growth and today employs over 7,400 staff with offices throughout the UK.

However, this expansion was putting a strain on its legacy IT systems and had led to a labyrinth of functional but aging and disparate sets of servers connected to a complicated network infrastructure.

As a result, Emprise was experiencing unreliable communication with multiple points of failure, inducing periods of downtime which cost the business in terms of wasted man hours and expensive license fees for hardware and software.

Opening up a new office or relocating one would involve creating an entirely new set of servers, datacentre and connections at the new location, involving great time and expense.

### **The need for greater efficiency & less downtime**

Emprise therefore wanted to consolidate its IT infrastructure and minimise downtime in order to free up its IT staff to concentrate on business-led application development and to lower costs in terms of server administration, hardware and software licenses, fault detection and resolution. Ultimately centralising its IT system would negate the need to buy new servers and communication links every time a new office was opened.

Backing up the company data on a regular basis was also proving to be inefficient and cumbersome as its existing solution was tape-based and required a different administrator at each office location to manually carry this out on a daily basis.

Retrieving lost data could take days as a tape would need to be transported back to the office and sometimes information would be corrupted and therefore useless. A centralised, online and automated solution was therefore needed to resolve data protection and retrieval issues.

Emprise decided to outsource these IT requirements and selected Oncore IT to renew every part of its IT environment from consolidating servers and centralising the network, to carrying out daily online data backups, as well as providing infrastructure and desktop support.

Mark Mitchell, Emprise's IT manager says, "Oncore IT offered us the most comprehensive IT solution and provided us the reassurance they could deliver based on feedback from existing customers."

### **The solution: consolidation and centralisation**

Oncore IT has refreshed and consolidated all server hardware. Historically there were four geographically dispersed sets of servers around the UK which have now been replaced with a

centralised solution which all staff access for shared files, Microsoft Office, business applications and email.

Oncore IT has provided Emprise with a corporate BlackBerry solution to enable more effective communication on the move. Mitchell continues: "With the introduction of a central terminal server solution and BlackBerry handsets, our communications have improved significantly and the ease of access to information has increased considerably."

Oncore IT has used the power of Microsoft's Terminal Services across the new centralised servers – located in one data centre – by connecting them by a MPLS network. From a mixture of Windows NT 4 and Windows 2000, Oncore IT upgraded all servers to leverage Microsoft's new Active Directory technology. By implementing a thin client environment based upon Microsoft Windows 2003, Terminal Server users now access their many business applications from the centralised data centre.

David Ebsworth, Oncore IT's chief technology officer says, "It is more economical to pay for one high quality terminal server solution to serve all offices than to buy mediocre servers at multiple sites. Many servers also means expensive licenses. High quality hardware and software centrally deployed in a simplified network infrastructure will result in reducing long term costs and increasing business productivity, every time."

Furthermore, in order to minimise the PC faults which were causing downtime and effecting productivity, Oncore IT decided to reconfigure and lockdown all desktops to create a uniform corporate policy on settings and available applications. Having knowledge of the underlying configuration of each PC allows Oncore IT to quickly hone in on possible faults and minimise the misuse of PCs and unauthorised access as users can't change settings which could otherwise cause problems.

### **Ongoing IT services from Oncore IT**

Oncore IT now provides Emprise with a total outsourced IT support service using its highly effective and successful PReSS remote network management system. PReSS is at the heart of all of Oncore IT's managed services and provides continuous and proactive system monitoring, fault identification, alerting and resolution services 24/7/365.

PReSS incorporates a full call logging and escalation process that ensures any IT problem detected is immediately logged and then constantly tracked through the system until it has been resolved by the network operations centre team in accordance with Emprise's SLA.

The system has been designed to be completely transparent allowing full access by Emprise staff to view all support activity undertaken to ensure SLAs are met.

In addition to the core PReSS system, Oncore IT also provides a wide range of other key managed services, including a SSL VPN which provides Emprise staff with secure network access to the terminal server from anywhere in the UK allowing them to easily work on the move. It consists of a recognised industry-standard set of network security features which ensure only authorised users have access to the internal network from the public Internet.

### **Disaster recovery: tried and tested**

To enable true business continuity in the event of data loss, whether it is an entire set of servers or just one misplaced file or email, Oncore IT provides Emprise with a disaster recovery managed service and its online data back up solution (OLB), based upon Asigra's award-winning data protection software technology.

As Emprise now has a single datacentre in which all company data from every branch/remote office is stored, the OLB service automatically backs up newly created or amended data every night to Emprise's datacentre, as well as Oncore IT's own datacentre where a fully resilient data back up vault is held.

For an added layer of security, Oncore IT runs a duplicate and highly secure offshore vault in Amsterdam containing a second full copy of all stored data. As the service is online and data fully encrypted from the moment it leaves the Emprise network, it is much easier, quicker and safer to store and restore information when required.

### **The results**

Mark Mitchell says, "We are more productive, with improved communications both internally and externally, and everyone is able to respond to clients more efficiently. Oncore IT is very proactive and quick to react to our queries. They also arrange to meet with us on a regular basis, ensuring we have the latest technology to maximise the efficiency of our systems."

Ebsworth concludes, "The new infrastructure and multisite data back up platform allows for virtually limitless capacity, so Emprise's new IT system can handle whatever growth the company experiences in the future."

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### **About Oncore IT**

Oncore IT is a cloud Managed Service Provider with vast experience delivering and managing critical IT infrastructure for clients operating from state-of-the-art tier 4 datacentres in the UK and Europe. One of only 10 tier 1 bandwidth providers in the world, clients get unparalleled connectivity, super fast system performance, unmatched reliability and total security.

Oncore IT offer a variety of hosting, co-location and cloud-based managed services all guaranteed by class-leading service level agreements and solutions looked after by professional, dedicated account managers and technical experts.

Oncore IT excels in designing, implementing, and managing scalable, high performance, low latency infrastructure so its works faultlessly, fully supporting line of business applications no matter what size of company or industry.

PCs, servers, firewalls, security, Internet connectivity, remote access, online data back up, anti spam, virus protection, email and office applications, along with business continuity, remote monitoring and 24/7/365 technical support – that's what we mean by infrastructure.

Oncore IT makes infrastructure work because that's what makes businesses work. That's why year after year, 95% of customers renew their contracts with us.

For more information, please visit the web at [www.OncoreIT.com](http://www.OncoreIT.com) or call 08450 541122.