Case study

Vindis Group
Multi-marque Vehicle
Main Dealer Network
The Customer

Vindis Group is a family-owned business with nineteen Audi, Bentley, ŠKODA, Volkswagen and Volkswagen Commercial Vehicle dealerships, and five other sites supporting its commercial operations, across five counties in the East of England.

Quick Facts

Family owned main dealer network with dealerships across five counties in the East of England.

IT environment

- 24 sites, each with a number of ADSL services
- No real Wide Area Network
- Local systems distributed at each site
- Windows XP across the PC estate
- Heavy reliance on costly, inflexible ISDN lines

Challenges

- Inadequate resilience in branches’ external connectivity
- No internet access management or control
- No infrastructure to support VoIP
- No network connections between sites, or between branch offices and HQ
- Servers at every branch office, with attendant management costs and complexity
- Small in-house IT team
Vindis approached Evolving Networks with several interlinked requirements.

- Increased bandwidth and resilience at all sites
- A managed WAN linking all sites, to support the centralisation of business systems at Vindis Group HQ, user internet access management, and policy-controlled traffic routing to Volkswagen Group mandated franchise MPLS circuits
- Group migration to VoIP telephony
- Support for a central Active Directory cluster, replacing the existing network of Windows XP clients with individual file servers at each site
- Group-wide adoption of a new centralised Dealer Management System and Microsoft Exchange
A Software-Defined WAN (SD-WAN) running over Bonded ADSL, FTTC and Ethernet connections, was implemented, serving all Vindis Group sites.

The SD-WAN uses connectivity provided by Evolving Networks unique, cross-carrier network, a mix of Ethernet services from Virgin, BT and TalkTalk, and Bonded ADSL and FTTC at sites for which Ethernet was either non-viable or not cost effective.

Some key business systems are hosted at Vindis HQ, while others, such as those hosted by VW Group, are available only via the MPLS circuits provided by VW. Taking into account this and other such issues, including the hosting location of the relevant application (at Vindis HQ, in the VW datacentre, or in the cloud for example) the SD-WAN makes automatic, intelligent, dynamic, policy-based routing decisions for all data transfers.

As well as allowing for the automation of routing and quality decisions, abstracting network control to the SD-WAN also enables transparent failover in the event of circuit failure.

Internet access, essential to Vindis Group, was implemented with three-tier failover. General access, for example for web browsing, is provided by a Virgin gigabit circuit, filtered and managed at Vindis HQ, and distributed to all offices via the SD-WAN. Meanwhile, local internet breakouts support the VoIP systems and allow other applications to use either local or central internet as appropriate.

This architecture enables seamless failover in the event of central internet access failure. Should both central and local internet connectivity go down, access is still available through the VW Group MPLS circuits.
Evolving Networks edge appliances were installed at each site to provide the necessary Bonded ADSL, FTTC and Ethernet connections. Traffic is transparently allocated to these connections, and Vindis Group’s existing MPLS circuits, by the Evolving Networks SD-WAN.

A number of Ethernet circuits were deployed after the main installation; these were seamlessly integrated into the SD-WAN as they went live.
The Results

The SD-WAN has allowed Vindis Group to make substantial, on-going cost savings by using VoIP instead of traditional telephony, as well as extensive efficiency savings arising from the ability to centrally monitor and manage all internet usage.

Further savings have been made, and management simplified, by eliminating branch office servers and relocating central business systems to Vindis Group HQ.

The SD-WAN has allowed Microsoft Active Directory to be rolled out, and migration to Microsoft Office 365.

The three-tier, seamless failover internet access provides exceptionally high uptime – key to Vindis day-to-day operations.

Vindis main Dealer Management System was previously hosted on a separate server at each site. With the SD-WAN in place, this key application is now running on a centralised system, significantly simplifying data sharing and system management.
Why **Evolving Networks?**

Vindis Group has a large number of sites with diverse connectivity options. The company needed a supplier able to deliver a resilient, managed SD-WAN using the technologies and carriers available at each site.

Only Evolving Networks could deliver such a network, linking all the sites and supporting centralised internet access, true QoS, local VoIP breakouts and policy-based routing to VW Group circuits.

- Carrier/technology independent connectivity at all sites
- Resilient connectivity at all sites
- Hybrid WAN to access VW Group cloud
- QoS for VoIP at all sites
- Centralised internet access supporting web filtering
- One supplier for all connectivity and SD-WAN functionality
Contact Us

0330 55 55 333  sales@evolving.net.uk  evolving.net.uk