



NetServices Project Management team work with OAG to implement a more resilient service

When OAG became a NetServices customer following our acquisition of Telefonica's UK assets, it became apparent that we would be able to offer them a more comprehensive solution. In addition to the increase in bandwidth there was also a financial benefit – the new Ethernet connectivity had a lower monthly fee.

OAG (Online Airline Guide) compete in a market where maintaining the most comprehensive and up-to-date information is crucial to business success. They are the world's leading neutral source of flight information. OAG publish flight details and timetables online from web servers hosted at their own data centre in Dunstable, Bedfordshire. This information is accessed in real time by travel arrangers and freight operators in multiple languages via multi-media (internet, SMS, PDA, digital and print). Every 10 seconds a piece of flight information is updated on one of over 28 million departures per year, from more than 3,500 airports worldwide. Their business is dependent on the speed of response and the reliability of access to that information that their subscribers experience.

Challenges

In February 2006 OAG had two internet pipes. The primary provided by Verizon at 8Mb, the secondary from NetServices at 4Mb (two 2Mb Leased Lines), which is complete with managed router. Increases in demand for bandwidth and resilience initiated the NetServices project to deliver a more scalable solution.

The new service had to meet the following challenging specification:

- Managed Service with high availability – 99.5% uptime.
- 10Mb Internet Bandwidth, scalable beyond 34Mb.
- Diverse routing into OAG premises (no shared ducts)
- Diverse routing from BT exchanges (avoiding the local exchange used by Verizon)

Once delivered, OAG would have 100% resilience into their Dunstable DataCentre.

CHALLENGES

- Increase in demand for bandwidth and resilience
- Large and complex install
- Physical aspects of the install - ie last mile of the fibre to the OAG office

SOLUTION

- 10Mb Internet Bandwidth, scalable beyond 34Mb
- Managed Service with 99.5% uptime
- Dedicated Project Manager to manage all aspects of the project

RESULTS

- A more cost effective solution
- Greater bandwidth and resilience
- Strong business relationship between NetServices and OAG

Solution

NetServices approach to the project was to build a solution in line with the requirements of OAG, to deliver not only what is needed today, but to be able to scale for any future requirements. The original design failed at the survey stage, so an alternative supplier had to be found, and NetServices ability to source 'last mile' through multiple providers was key to the successful delivery of the solution. The project was managed by NetServices' Manchester-based projects team and completed in March 2007.

For the large and complex installation concerning the 10Mb Managed Internet Service, NetServices provided OAG with a dedicated Project Manager, who could be contacted directly via a mobile number. The project faced a number of challenges along the way, however through the continuous communication between NetServices, our supplier and OAG, all potential delays were avoided. We were therefore able to successfully manage the project to the scheduled delivery dates.

Flexibility was key for the final roll out and NetServices engineering team were able to meet OAG's out of hours work request and complete the install with minimum downtime.

Benefits

To finance the new solution, NetServices offered OAG the option to amortise set-up fees. The annual rental of the new solution still came in at below the current rental; an increase of more than double the bandwidth for a reduced monthly rental – further testimony to the value of NetServices supplier agreements.

NetServices flexibility was also a key factor in the deal. The project demanded an experienced team who could be relied upon to monitor each stage closely. Any downtime had to be kept to a minimum, as the OAG website could not afford to have any downtime during working hours due to the nature of their business.

The project was tested vigorously before acknowledging the service as live, and throughout the first week after the install NetServices offered a high level of technical support to resolve any queries.

Results

As the relationship has grown, NetServices has been able to prove itself a wise choice; Verizon recently made core network changes which forced OAG to make changes to their own router (on which the Verizon service terminates). Using the BGP* experience in house, NetServices was happy to provide consultancy and make the changes to OAGs router.

**BGP (Border Gateway Protocol) is intelligent routing across the internet*



"We make an average number of 450,000 flight changes per month. It's crucial our information is up to date and easily accessible. The new infrastructure underpinning our system is far more inline with our current needs.

Key to success was the close working relationship we have with NetServices and the ability to be able to discuss the best solutions to our needs – that was ultimately what made this project a complete success."

*John Skinner,
Telecomms Manager, OAG.*