

Cisco helps Bromsgrove District Council increase e-government service delivery

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
CUSTOMER NAME · Bromsgrove District Council
LOCATION · Bromsgrove, West Midlands, UK
COMPANY SIZE · 454 employees
INDUSTRY · Local Government
BUSINESS CHALLENGE · Improve access to and delivery of Council services · Meet Central Government targets for developing and deploying e-government · Deliver a highly secure and resilient network platform for delivering services
NETWORK SOLUTION · Cisco foundation technologies · Cisco Unified Communications system · Cisco Security
BUSINESS VALUE · Improves citizen access to Council services · Increases ability to share resources and information with other local authorities and community service providers · Computer server resources reduced by 25 percent · Helps increase staff mobility

Cisco foundation technologies and advanced services enable more mobile working, increase data integrity and improve services for citizens.

Business Challenge

Bromsgrove District Council in Worcestershire in the West Midlands covers around 85 square miles south of Birmingham and serves a population of 100,000 residents. As part of the Council's drive to improve community services and meet central government objectives for local government modernisation, Bromsgrove District Council launched a major programme to upgrade its information and communications (ICT) infrastructure.

Mark Hanwell, technical project manager at Bromsgrove District Council, says, "The Council's ICT infrastructure and network platform is the basis upon which all core Council services rely. The Authority needs systems that are optimised and reliable, with a network that provides secure and resilient access for citizens."

The aim was not just to upgrade and improve its computer systems, but also to create an infrastructure capable of supporting systems and applications needed now as well as those expected in the future. Another driver for change was increasing data security and protection with a more robust disaster recovery solution.

Network Solution

At the heart of Bromsgrove's strategy was deploying Cisco foundation technologies to link up the Council's three main locations and create an infrastructure on which to deploy a range of business services and applications. These services include a Cisco Unified Communications system connecting up sites such as the central administrative offices and the Council's Customer Service Centre. The Cisco Unified Communications system comprises 350 Cisco Unified IP phones. The Cisco network also supports wireless networking at the three sites so that staff can use a range of portable devices such as laptops, PDAs and tablets.

Cisco's network security services – embedded in the network for fast and simple deployment to all networked locations – enable the Council to management data integrity and network access effectively. These services include intruder detection, firewalls, internet access and email content filtering. Cisco Security Agent software provides protection against targeted attacks, spyware, rootkits and day-zero attacks. But it also offers proactive protection against variants of existing threats and hitherto unknown threats.



In addition to these solutions, Bromsgrove also uses Cisco technology as part of its data storage and disaster recovery system. This helps the Council share data between Council locations more effectively and helps provide a highly resilient and innovative disaster recovery and business continuance solution. Using a high-speed network connection to nearby Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove uses Worcestershire's available capacity to house its disaster recovery site.

Bromsgrove is part of the Worcestershire Hub – a partnership between six councils in Worcestershire which is pooling IT and other resources to improve the delivery of e-government to citizens. Bromsgrove's Cisco-based disaster recovery solution is an example of collaboration between regional local government to use and deploy resources more effectively. The Worcestershire Hub aims to deliver shared services across the whole region by bringing together local and regional government and public and private agencies. Citizens only need to make one contact to access services at a local or region-wide level and the various agencies can achieve economies of scale by sharing resources such as IT and contact centre facilities.



Mark Hanwell says, "Our data storage solution along with the Cisco network infrastructure effectively means that data at the DR centre is always kept up to date, so we can be operational very quickly if the worst should happen. In addition, Cisco network security services mean that we can demonstrate exceptionally high levels of security and resilience across all our systems."

The Cisco solution at Bromsgrove has been developed and implemented by NextiraOne, a Cisco Gold Certified Partner. The Council has also opted to outsource the management of its IT help desk

function to NextiraOne resulting in a more efficient and effective service, allowing Council technical expertise to be focused on delivering and improving services.

Deborah Poole, head of e-government and customer services at Bromsgrove, says, "The creation of a whole ethos of modern transformation is a radical step change for any authority and choosing Cisco for the technological platform sets the foundation for success. As such the evaluation process was extensive and I believe we have chosen the right partner to create a truly exceptional solution."

Business Results

By providing a secure and stable network, the Cisco solution is helping the Council to provide a citizen-centric service and improve e-government service accuracy and delivery.

Bromsgrove has set up a Customer Service Centre where citizens can call, email, write and visit to access a wide range of Council services. Using the Cisco network and additional services such as the Cisco Unified Communications system, staff in the centre have access to information and records across the Council and can access specialist staff quickly and easily via the telephone. Facilities such as the Customer Services Centre and the use of Cisco solutions mean, for example, residents only need to report a change of address once for that change to be replicated across other relevant departments.

The Cisco wireless network makes it easier for staff to use mobile devices at the main Council sites. The Cisco infrastructure also helps Council staff access and share information over the network when they use mobile devices to go out into the community to elderly residents, for example, who are less able to visit a Council office.

Bromsgrove also plans to make use of the Cisco network to share relevant information with other community partners. It has helped Bromsgrove to reduce costs by sharing data management resources with the regional County Council. The Bromsgrove data storage solution and the Cisco network are helping Bromsgrove reduce its existing number of servers by 25 percent, while still increasing storage capacity and making functions like data storage and data back up easier to manage.

The Cisco network will also help the Council deploy applications in the future that will further improve services such as integrating mapping and information systems across all Council departments, so when residents call about a property or a location-related issue, it can be identified and the associated information accessed quickly.

PRODUCT LIST

Routing and switching

- Cisco Catalyst 4510R Switches
- Cisco Catalyst 3750 Metro Series Switches
- Cisco Aironet Access Points

Security

- Cisco Security Agent
- Cisco ASA 5500 Series Adaptive Security Appliances

Storage Networking

- Cisco MDS 9200 Series Multilayer Fabric Switches

Voice and IP Communications

- Cisco Unified Communications system
- 350 Unified IP Cisco phones
- Cisco Unified CallManager Version 4.1

The Cisco IP telephony system is providing productivity and management improvements since it is much easier and faster for staff to move to another office or location and still retain the same extension number. The Cisco Unified Communications system means that relocating someone or adding a new phone to the system can be done very quickly and no longer requires a phone engineer. Also, the phone system can be managed centrally so there is no need for technical staff to spend time going from desk to desk to support users.

Bromsgrove District Council now has an effective network infrastructure which

provides a foundation for future implementations, such as the delivery of web-based transactional services and puts the Authority in an excellent position for the next stage of business transformation.



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Deborah Poole, Head of e-government and customer services, Bromsgrove District Council



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