

Cisco delivers ROI in three years and 30% annual savings for Kent Police

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	
INDUSTRY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Public Sector Authority
BUSINESS CHALLENGE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reduce network costs due to increasing desire for tax payer value for money Police 1.6 million residents plus 42 million additional visitors and tourists Aging and inefficient telephony system
NETWORK SOLUTION	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cisco IP core network Cisco Unified Communications system
BUSINESS VALUE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Return on investment delivered in three years (a year ahead of expectation) Annual cost savings in excess of 30 percent Communications with community significantly improved Real time video to remote locations in one minute instead of an hour

Challenged with reducing crime, policing 42 million visitors to the region annually and meeting rigorous Best Value performance targets, Kent Police introduced a Cisco Unified Communications System. As a result Kent Police has seen a three-year Return-on-Investment (ROI), improved community communications and a 30 percent annual saving in their communications costs.

Telephones essential to police-community communication

Kent Police, which has over 6,000 police officers and staff, is responsible for policing more than 1,400 square miles and a population of around 1.6 million. The county also has six million UK visitors every year, is home to the largest retail park in Europe and plays host to 36 million cross-channel passengers each year. This places considerable demands on Kent Police, making the county a unique place to police because of challenges such as dealing with the Channel Tunnel and antiterrorist security and illegal immigration.

Kent Police is also subject to the government's Best Value initiative which demands that public organisations deliver value for money to the community and more efficient ways of operating. The organisation is rigorously measured against this and other performance targets not just for reducing burglary, vehicle and drug-related crime and traffic accidents, but also for improving communication and interaction with the community.

Kent Police is divided into six policing areas, with specialist units such as Strategic Crime Reduction, the Police Training College and the Information Technology organisation based at the Kent Police headquarters in Maidstone. Maidstone is also home to the Force Communications Centre, a 24-hour, centralised call handling facility with more than a hundred operators fielding 1.7 million calls a year from 999 calls to missing dog enquiries. Telephones remain the primary communication medium between the police and the community and call volumes are rising by eight percent annually.

With such reliance on telephone-based communication, it is essential that police officers and civilian staff working in the region's 16 main police stations, plus more than 50 local offices and specialist departments across the county have access to a reliable and cost-effective system.

However, the aging private branch exchange (PBX) voice infrastructure had reached its age limits. The data network was expensive to operate and suffered poor resilience and availability. Another analog network carried closed circuit television (CCTV) feeds from the main office to district stations.



Andy Barker, head of the Information Systems Department (ISD) at Kent Police, says, “The telephone is the way most people in Kent communicate with the police so it is vital that we have an easy-to-use and efficient telephone system. Also the existing data network was based on an ageing infrastructure, and we were starting to encounter a number of performance problems, such as outages and incompatibility.”

Cisco solution imaginative and value for money



Kent Police turned to Cisco for the solution. “We believe it is important to be forward-looking to ensure that we attain the best operational and business advantages for Kent Police and the community. Having a technology partner like Cisco significantly reduces the risk of that investment,” says Barker. “By using Cisco technology to converge our data and voice networks, we realised we could improve the level of service to end users and make significant savings on our communications costs.”

Before Kent Police could take advantage of these benefits, however, it had to overcome a number of technical and implementation challenges, in particular, it needed to be able to run its existing PBX systems and a separate CCTV system alongside the new IP network until the Cisco infrastructure was fully developed.

“We needed a partner that could deliver a very specific solution,” says Mark Williams, Specialist Services Manager at Kent Police. “Some of the bidders for the contract said the different technologies could not be integrated, but Cisco came up with an imaginative solution that also represented good value for money.”

The solution at Kent Police is a Cisco IP network which comprises a 100Mbps Wide Area Network (WAN) connecting Local Area Networks (LANs) at the Maidstone head office and local police stations. This infrastructure acts as the foundation for a Cisco Unified Communications system which supports 4,500 Unified IP Cisco phones and Cisco CallManager. The Cisco infrastructure also supports CCTV and video conferencing.

The Cisco solution at Kent Police was implemented by Computacenter, a Cisco Gold Certified Partner.

“Our Cisco IP infrastructure will allow us to police Kent more efficiently and effectively as we prepare for the future,” says Barker. “It means the money we save by streamlining operations can be put towards increasing local policing presence to ensure the county remains one of the safest in the country.”

Andy Barker, Head of the Information Systems Department, Kent Police

Cisco makes communications efficient and easy

The Cisco solution has enabled Kent Police to use advanced technology to improve internal and external communications as well as helping the organisation to meet strict Best Value performance targets. Kent Police is now saving as much as 30 percent every year on communications costs and it even achieved a planned four year return on investment within three years.

“As well as savings of more than 30 percent a year, the Cisco solution also gives us a more cost effective and simpler way for us to expand our communications infrastructure to additional sites, such as new community based police stations. Before we would have been looking at an investment of around £30,000 to provide the necessary technology, with Cisco it now costs us only a few thousand pounds.”

Kent Police has improved service levels to its outlying stations. “Our remote sites used to suffer bandwidth problems and reduced functionality,” Barker says. “Briefings that formerly took smaller police stations nearly an hour to download now take under a minute.”

Because the converged network is so reliable, maintenance is reduced to no more than a swap-repair activity.

The converged network is helping the Kent Police meet its targets for productivity and responsiveness and to improve services to the people of Kent. "Our Cisco IP infrastructure will allow us to police Kent more efficiently and effectively as we prepare for the future," says Barker. "It means the money we save by streamlining operations can be put towards increasing local policing presence to ensure the county remains one of the safest in the country."

Cisco delivers ROI a year ahead of expectation



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