

Case Study Type: Connectivity

Frendoc - (Ceased trading)

Company Profile:

Frendoc are an NHS out of hours GP service operating in the South Gloucestershire area.

Existing IT Structure:

A multisite office organisation with 6 distributed servers and 60 client computers.

Existing IT Problems:

The Wide Area Network (WAN) was unreliable between sites, and when it did work it was horribly slow. Frendoc also required N3 access (N3 is a secure connection to the NHS network) but could not demonstrate a high enough level of security for the NHS to install the N3 into their network.

EvolvIT IT Solution:

Initially we had to discover and diagnose what the state of the existing WAN was - what was it using and what hardware was in place. The WAN end points were being serviced by Draytek 2820 routers and the broadband at all locations was standard DSL.

The Draytek routers are solid devices, however some of the older models are unreliable if not updated to the latest firmware. We discovered that all the routers were out of date, so job one was to ensure all of these were upgraded.

We then set about migrating all the broadband accounts to our own service away from BT. This allows us unparallel control over what products to use and also to begin fault finding why the WAN was so unreliable. Once we had migrated the accounts over we immediately line tested all the associated copper lines. We found two of the connections had line faults and we worked with BT to get these corrected. We then placed each line on 'super stable' profiles, sacrificing a little speed to ensure that the connections remain stable.

Finally we researched each location to find out what the fastest broadband product each line could support. In Frendoc's case each line had been neglected and left on old DSL technology, we upgraded all of these to DSL2+. Overnight this more than trebled the upload speed on each connection.

Once the WAN was stable we set about working with BT N3 to ensure that all the security measure were put in place to ensure that Frendoc could securely use the N3 infrastructure without any contamination from the external broadband connections. This was finally achieved with a combination of Cisco Routing and using Microsoft's own Routing and Remote Access that is built into most Windows Servers. With BT N3 satisfied we worked to get the N3 installed and configured so that Frendoc could begin using the N3 directly rather than using the expensive VPN N3 connections they had been using to date.