

Success story - Leased lines



Hoshizaki



Snapshot

Hoshizaki supplies the foodservice and retail industries with ice machines, refrigeration equipment and sushi cases. The Japanese company has been established in Europe since 1992 and has its manufacturing and pan-European warehousing and distribution facilities located in Telford, Shropshire.

The requirement

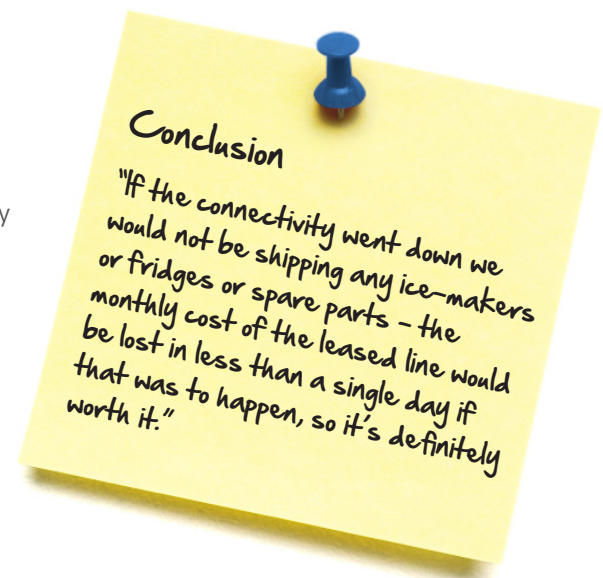
Hoshizaki needed a reliable connectivity solution to support critical communications with departments in Japan and across Europe. It was also moving premises and experiencing high levels of growth as the Telford based operation expanded to cover manufacture, warehousing and distribution across Europe. It originally required a broadband solution but was aware this requirement would expand as its growth continued.

The solution

Initially, Entanet installed 2 x ADSL broadband connections which were later upgraded to a 20Mbps on 100Mbps bearer leased line to accommodate future growth. The leased line is dedicated and fully guaranteed with an ADSL broadband connection as backup in case of a fault.

The benefits

- ▶ The 20Mbps on 100Mbps bearer enables Hoshizaki to accommodate any growing bandwidth requirements easily and quickly.
- ▶ Hoshizaki benefits from a dedicated and reliable connection to support its critical communications with Japan and across Europe.
- ▶ The leased line is supported by 100% SLA and an ADSL backup connection in the unlikely event of a fault, providing Hoshizaki with complete peace of mind.
- ▶ Hoshizaki has benefitted from increased productivity.





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In-depth

A firm foundation for growth

When Hoshizaki, a leading producer of commercial ice-making machines, needed a communications services provider who would deliver reliable connectivity, the highest SLAs and great support to provide a foundation for the continued growth of the company's business across Europe, it turned to Entanet.

Hoshizaki is one of the leading suppliers of commercial ice-making machines in the world. The Japanese company has been established in Europe since 1992 and has been steadily growing its business ever since. Much of its product manufacturing for Europe is carried out at the company's Telford operations, which also acts as a central distribution and logistics centre for the region. This means that Hoshizaki's staff need to be in constant communication with their colleagues in Japan and throughout Europe, so reliable data and voice communications are absolutely essential.

In December 2009, the UK operation moved to new, larger premises to accommodate further growth. At the time it employed around 40 people but by the end of 2011, the headcount had grown to 60. The UK-based operation had, up until this point, been a manufacturing site but it had now also taken on the pan-European warehousing and distribution functions for Hoshizaki.

This meant that Internet connectivity and voice communications took on added significance for the company as, without reliable communications, they would not be able to take orders and process shipments. The company had been less than satisfied with its previous supplier and decided instead to work with Entanet, partly because the company was located nearby, and partly because of the strong reputation that Entanet had built up.

"We try to use local suppliers as much as possible and Entanet are just down the end of the road from us. They had a good reputation and while they are quite a big company, they are not so big that we would not be important to them" explains Jason Stokes, IT Co-ordinator at Hoshizaki.

Attractive options

The range of solutions offered by Entanet was also attractive. While Hoshizaki only needed a conventional broadband service for its Internet connection at the time, if it grew in line with expectations, it would need more bandwidth in the future. Entanet had a range of options that would enable Hoshizaki to do this at any time. When it made sense from a commercial perspective, the company intended to switch over to a dedicated leased line, which Entanet could easily provide.

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Also, with European logistics now being run from Telford, the firm would need connectivity to be 100 percent reliable. Hoshizaki was also interested in finding out how it could potentially increase its efficiency and save money by switching to VoIP solutions when it moved into the new premises, and this was also something Entanet could offer.

Initially, Hoshizaki ordered two standard up to 8Mbps broadband ADSL connections at the new site; one to carry Internet and email traffic, the second for Entanet's VoIP Enrich service, which Hoshizaki had also decided to take for all its voice communications.

The provisioning and switch-over to the new connectivity services was straightforward and trouble-free and Hoshizaki made use of the systems throughout 2010 without encountering any major difficulties. The quality, performance and reliability of both the Internet connectivity and the VoIP Enrich service were good. When Hoshizaki did have questions, Entanet's support team was always easy to contact and able to provide the answers, says Jason.

Growing business

In the meantime, Hoshizaki's business in Europe had been growing and the UK operation also took on the warehousing and distribution for Gram Commercial, a wholly-owned part of the Hoshizaki Group, which produces commercial fridges. These factors made the data and voice connectivity at the Telford site even more business-critical, as without them, the shipping and distribution of both Hoshizaki ice-makers, Gram fridges and any spare parts, to dealers and agents throughout Europe, would soon grind to a halt.

The company arrived at the point where its growth and level of business meant it needed to upgrade to a leased line. When an equipment failure at the local BT exchange through which the broadband connections were routed caused a problem, Hoshizaki made the decision to move to an Entanet leased line without delay.

Jason Stokes explains: "It was always the plan to move to a leased line when it suited the business to do so. When the ADSL lines went down a couple of times, due to a fault in the local BT exchange, all our Internet and our phone lines went down, so that really pushed it for us. We decided to make the switch to a leased line because we really needed the higher availability, speed and bandwidth it would give us."

Taking advantage of Entanet's own nationwide MPLS network, the leased line provided Hoshizaki with a dedicated, un-contended connection that assured reliability and ample bandwidth availability.



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Simple switchover

Hoshizaki implemented a 100 Megabits per second (Mbps) bearer of which it utilises 20Mbps - so there is plenty of room for further growth. This capacity though is more than adequate to meet the company's immediate needs. Making the change was easy enough, says Jason: "The switch-over was quite simple and even though BT discovered that the trunking into our building was not the correct size and had to replace it, the whole project was completed a month before it was due to go live."

Hoshizaki has kept one of the original ADSL connections in place, at Entanet's recommendation, to act as a backup should there ever be an issue with the leased line. If there is ever any kind of issue, Hoshizaki has the reassurance of knowing that it can easily switch both data and voice services to the broadband line.

"This is important because, as well as depending on the connectivity to receive and process orders and to keep in touch with other offices and partners around the UK, Europe and the world (Hoshizaki regularly utilises video conferencing), Hoshizaki is moving to a hosted ERP system, which means that it will be even more dependent on reliable, fast and consistent Internet connectivity to function properly. Many companies are now making use of hosted applications and voice or cloud-based services, so knowing that you can depend on the connectivity completely is vital."

Robust performance

The Entanet leased line has performed faultlessly for Hoshizaki. The performance improvement has been noticeable too, so the 25 staff that use the Internet and voice services on a daily basis can be more productive. In terms of return-on-investment, the leased line is definitely paying its way, says Jason. "If the connectivity went down we would not be shipping any ice-makers or fridges or spare parts - the monthly cost of the leased line would be lost in less than a single day if that was to happen, so it's definitely worth it."

He's been pleased with the service and support he has received from Entanet. "They are very reliable and it is very easy for me to contact the people I need to talk to there and get the answers I need. They are a big company, so you can rely on them, but they are not so big that you can't get a simple answer out of them fairly quickly. They have also got a good track record and they are a stable company too. I think these days you need a comms provider that is fairly robust."

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