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Technology Solutions
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Networked, satellite solution results in 40% reduction in telephone costs and faster, more secure communications for PNG based company.

A networked satellite solution implemented by Winbasic Technology Solutions, in conjunction with SpeedCast, has achieved outstanding results for an aviation company based in Papua New Guinea.

With remote offices and operations throughout the Asia Pacific region, Pacific Helicopters has seen a 40% reduction in telephone costs (with the introduction of Voice Over IP), along with faster and more secure connectivity throughout the company. Pilots are now able to communicate with families located offshore, increasing staff satisfaction. Pacific Helicopters envisage a further reduction in network costs, adding more value for customers and employees.

BACKGROUND

Pacific Helicopters is a well-established aviation company with operations throughout the Asia Pacific region, as well as many other regions around the world. The company operates a varied fleet of 26 helicopters and are a leading supplier of helicopters services to PNG, including both PNG helicopter charters and helicopter hire services within the country.

Based in Goroka, Pacific Helicopters PNG has multiple bases in many remote provinces of the country. The vast majority of Pacific Helicopters' pilots are employed on a Fly-in Fly-out basis and are located offshore.

CHALLENGE

Pacific Helicopters required a new network to communicate effectively between their three sites (Goroka (HQ), Kopi and Moro air bases) as well as enable welfare applications for the company's offshore pilots. The staff needed fast Internet connectivity for recreational purposes and reliable voice services to be able to communicate with their families.

Pacific Helicopters required a network; which provided good value for money, facilitated efficient allocation of bandwidth between the three sites, addressed staff desire to communicate with families, supported voice and real-time applications and provided competitive VoIP services.

Finally, the network design had to be flexible in its ability to respond to shifting goal posts, and provide extensive monitoring and support of the entire network.

To address these unique requirements, a collaborative partnership was formed between an IT partner, Winbasic Technology Solutions, and global satellite services provider, SpeedCast. The partnership combined the presence and network expertise of a local consultant, Winbasic, with the satellite expertise and diverse technology of SpeedCast, a company with multiple corporate-grade satellite links across remote PNG.



SOLUTION

In late 2013, Winbasic Technology Solutions developed and implemented a business technology strategy to optimise Pacific Helicopter's existing telecommunications services and create additional value for its offshore pilots. The strategy implementation required SpeedCast's expertise in providing an efficient bandwidth platform for internet connectivity and clear, competitive voice calls.

SpeedCast proposed a reliable, secure and efficient remote connectivity solution, bringing all three locations interconnectivity via a high performance Teleport in Sydney. This was made available for TIER 1 internet and voice services, and produced a cost-effective and superior offering.

Based on a C-Band Hybrid SCPC network topology, the network is more resistant to wet climate conditions of PNG and provides unlimited (based on guaranteed charges) bandwidth, which could be dynamically shared between the three sites. This unique network design facilitates the ability to share the outbound bandwidth between sites, so the bandwidth reserves automatically switch to the active site, when the remaining two are not using the bandwidth.

"Based on our experience and customer requirements, the recommended option of a shared download pool and a dedicated upload for each site is in fact the optimal solution to support VoIP and other real-time applications", said Sherak Adam, Associate Director of Operations, SpeedCast. "The upload can be equally split or remain individual per site, increasing the cost effective approach to bandwidth SpeedCast is renowned for," Adam added.

Voice services are provided via SpeedCast's Core network with direct connectivity to TIER 1 carriers including an E1 straight into Telkom PNG – SpeedCast being only one of a handful of Pacific carriers with this feature due to the number of minutes (up to 20 Million a month) we operate across the region.

To ensure maximum efficiency and seamless operation, SpeedCast completed the project by integrating its value-added services:

Bandwidth Management tools including QoS and Application Filtering were applied to prioritise certain applications and contain the bandwidth usage.

Online Network Monitoring: an online portal provides scheduled and on-demand reporting on all aspects of the satellite network, including bandwidth usage and voice performance.

RESULTS

Complementing each other's assets, SpeedCast and Winbasic Technology Solutions met all customer expectations in designing and implementing a telecommunications strategy; providing good value for money, increased pilot satisfaction along with flexibility to evolve together with the customer's requirements:

The Pacific Helicopters pilots can now communicate with their families located offshore via various platforms including VoIP lines, Skype, Messenger and Social Media.

The dynamic allocation of bandwidth ensures maximum efficiency of its reserves and better communication between the three sites.

Significant savings in voice calls (illustrated in Figure 1), resulting in faster Return on Investment (ROI) and Total Cost of Ownership (TCO). Standard call costs to Australia were costing the company \$3 USD per minute using a local telephone provider however with VoIP the cost has been reduced to \$0.25c.

Faster network performance due to SpeedCast's efficient, diverse-carrier platform and bandwidth management tools. "The SpeedCast satellite solution, in conjunction with the end-to-end services provided by Winbasic Technology Solutions, is an ideal fit for Pacific Helicopters in both corporate and welfare applications.





The new network enables fast and secure connectivity and has so far saved us 40% in VoIP costs” said Ben Ignas, Pacific Helicopters. “We anticipate additional gain in our overall operations by further reducing network costs while adding more value to our customers and employees.

As for SpeedCast, this project helped strengthen the Company position as the market leader in providing completely managed and value-added satellite communications services across PNG.

Nick Miller, Sales Director, PNG of SpeedCast commented: “We are proud of supplying a fully customised, integrated network that worked so well for our customer. “I thank Winbasic for their responsiveness and knowledge throughout. It was their expertise in the IT Business Solutions and local presence that allowed our partnership to provide an efficient and reliable service for Pacific Helicopters”

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MOVING FORWARD

Throughout the multi-year deal SpeedCast will continue monitoring the existing network and provide recommendations and adjustments to the QoS rules to ensure network efficiency, maximize throughput and continue saving costs for the end customer.

ABOUT SPEEDCAST

SpeedCast is a leading global network and satellite communications service provider offering high-quality managed networks services in over 60 countries; and a global maritime network serving customers worldwide. Headquartered in Hong Kong, with 14 international sales & support offices and 24 teleport operations, SpeedCast has a unique infrastructure to serve the requirements of customers globally. With over 4,000 links on land and at sea supporting mission critical applications, SpeedCast has distinguished itself with a strong operational expertise and a highly efficient support organization, which are the foundation of SpeedCast’s success. SpeedCast is publicly listed on the Australian Stock Exchange (ASX) under the ticker SDA. For more information, visit www.speedcast.com.

ABOUT WINBASIC TECHNOLOGY SOLUTIONS

Established in 1996, Winbasic Technology Solutions is one of Australia’s longest established IT support services companies. Servicing clients throughout Australia, the Asia Pacific and Europe, Winbasic offers a comprehensive range of IT services, including Managed IT, IT Consulting, Business Intelligence, Disaster Recovery, Customised Software Development and Project Management.

Winbasic Technology Solutions provides Pacific Helicopters with Managed IT Services which allows for remote management and monitoring of Pacific Helicopters head office and associated bases. Remote management utilising an efficient and reliable satellite communication system allows for IT management costs to be kept to a minimum by reducing the costs associated with onsite visits.

Given the harsh environment in which IT has to operate in PNG due to power and weather conditions, Disaster Recovery protection and Remote Management are two of the primary tasks carried out utilising the satellite communications system.

ABOUT PACIFIC HELICOPTERS

Based in Papua New Guinea, Pacific Helicopters is an established aviation company with operations throughout the Asia Pacific region, as well as many other regions around the world. The company has operated for over 30 years, and is the leading supplier of helicopter charters and helicopter hire services in Papua New Guinea.

Pacific Helicopters offers expertise in Heliportable Seismic Support Services, geographical exploration, construction projects, IFRR/VFR Off-Shore Petroleum Exploration, Aerial Survey and Photography and Power line Construction. The company also assists with weather information, topography, flight following, fixed wing charter and logistics support.