

AMR International builds a future-proof communications platform

colt

Customer name

AMR International

Business

Business consultancy

Sector

Professional services

Challenge

To enable rapid, reliable transfer of large project files to and from a web-based file store. To ensure high-quality calls and simplify chargebacks for homeworkers. To work with a provider able to advise on new communications services to support evolving business needs.

Products and services

IP Access, Voice Line, Voice Connect

Partner

Expect Solutions

Fast internet access and reliable voice services meet the evolving needs of AMR's consultants.

AMR International provides strategic consultancy services to help its customers grow their business, whether through mergers and acquisitions, by enhancing performance management, or by taking the right products and services to market at the right time. With offices in London, Paris and New York, it serves a diverse and international client base.

"We have consultants and freelancers working in the office, on the move and from home; and collaborating on projects across geographies," explains Richard Andrews, the firm's IT manager. "They need rapid access to applications, documents and project files, regardless of where they are."

A new approach from a new provider

When Richard Andrews decided to roll out Office 365 at AMR, he knew he would need to replace the firm's ADSL lines with a higher-bandwidth internet access service. "In particular, ensuring a seamless experience for consultants

transferring files to and from the web-based file store created a pressing need for much more bandwidth," he says.

Reluctant to upgrade the service with AMR's existing provider owing to fluctuating levels of support, he was ready to listen when Expect Solutions, a Colt partner, got in touch.

"Expect's approach was refreshing. It wasn't just a sales pitch full of empty promises: we had an open and honest conversation about AMR's needs and how, realistically, they could be met by Colt services," recounts the IT Manager. "I was aware of Colt's reputation for stability and reliability, and it was clear there was a strong relationship between the two companies, which further boosted my confidence."

Keeping pace with changing working patterns

It didn't take long for AMR to decide to switch from its underpowered ADSL lines to Colt IP Access. The firm's

consultants immediately benefited from smooth file transfer and application access, both in the office and via remote desktops and VPN connections, which helped make the Office 365 rollout a success.

During a subsequent office move, the internet access bandwidth was doubled to 100Mbps. This provided another huge leap in performance, and came at a time when AMR was experiencing a dramatic increase in the number and size of files being transferred. As well as producing documents, spreadsheets and presentations, consultants had started recording meetings with clients and interviews with experts in specialist fields, for future reference during the lifecycle of a project.

"File sizes are now much bigger — you would struggle to send them by email. So fast, reliable transfer to and from the Office 365 file store via our Colt IP Access service makes a big difference," says Andrews. "Consultants have

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“Lots of providers simply want to win your business, then don’t follow through once you’re on board. In contrast, Expect Solutions and Colt deliver what they promise and keep on supporting us as our needs evolve. It’s been an overwhelmingly positive experience.”

Richard Andrews
IT Manager, AMR International

a reputation for wanting everything yesterday, so being able to download a file in a few seconds, rather than waiting several minutes, reduces frustration and helps them to be more productive and efficient.”

Higher-quality, lower-cost calls in the office and at home

Satisfied with Colt IP Access service, AMR also switched to Colt for voice services. The building in which AMR has its London office was already directly connected to the Colt network, so implementing Voice Line was quick and easy, and there was no need to change numbers.

“The call quality is great and costs are lower than before,” says Richard Andrews, going on to explain that the Expect proposal with Colt offered savings of 43% compared with the previous provider. When that provider learned that AMR was moving to Colt, it proposed a new agreement offering a similar level of savings — but it was too late. “They had clearly been looking after their own interests, rather than ours. We had the opposite experience with Expect and Colt, so the decision to switch was an easy one to make,” he says.

AMR staff and freelancers working from home use Voice Connect, a carrier pre-selection service, for business calls. “Voice Connect simplifies chargebacks because it’s easy to identify who made

which calls and to associate them with the relevant projects,” explains Andrews. “There are also cost savings: as well as call costs being lower, consultants’ time is saved, as they don’t have to go through their phone bills and submit expense claims.”

Voice Connect has also proved invaluable when adverse weather conditions or public transport strikes have prevented people getting to the office. “Almost anyone can work from home in those situations, staying productive and avoiding delays to client projects,” he says.

A partnership for today and tomorrow

Always keen to ensure he’s providing the most reliable communications services for AMR, Richard Andrews is in discussions with Expect about implementing a business continuity/ disaster recovery solution for both voice and data services. He’s also considering moving from traditional voice services to IP telephony for greater flexibility.

“With Expect Solutions and Colt, I get proactive advice about services that can help AMR work more efficiently or save money,” he says. “Lots of providers simply want to win your business, then don’t follow through once you’re on board. In contrast, Expect Solutions and Colt deliver what they promise and keep on supporting us as our needs evolve. It’s been an overwhelmingly positive experience.”

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