

Flamingo



**TalkTalk
Business**

Flamingo Holdings

**"We now have the stable, central hub
that we needed for data communications
which has allowed us to develop group
wide applications."**

Tony Thompson, Group Network Manager, Flamingo Holdings

talktalkbusiness.co.uk/mpsipvpn

Call:
0800 954 5707

Lines are open Mon-Fri 9am-5pm

The challenge

Increasing flexibility
Increasing reliability

Flamingo Holdings wished to create a global network that gave multiple sites access to corporate email systems and data. They also required a robust and reliable solution that could handle high volumes of data.

The solution

MPLS IPVPN

We provided a sophisticated routing scheme that would ensure round the clock stability on an MPLS IPVPN network, built on our Next Generation Network.

The benefits

Constant visibility of the MPLS IPVPN network anywhere in the world, without the risk of downtime, security breaches or loss of data

They also benefit from our own Next Generation Network for a secure and reliable service

Leading the way

Flamingo Holdings is an international agribusiness operating primarily in the UK and East Africa. Currently the company is one of the largest vertically integrated added value horticulture producers and exporters of flowers, fruit and vegetables from Africa to the EU. It is also a major importer from suppliers worldwide in Europe, South America, Asia and the Middle East.

Supplying flowers and fresh vegetables to major supermarkets such as Marks and Spencer, Tesco and Asda, Flamingo Holdings' mantra is 'from field to table in 48 hours'. As such, running a highly efficient, ultra-productive operation with first class data communications is critical in order that it can meet the demands of its key customers.

Established in 2000, Flamingo Holdings today owns four companies in the UK and two in Africa, bringing together a worldwide supply chain with its manufacturing and distribution companies in Britain. Flamingo Holdings four UK sites suggest a deceptively simple operation. However, the UK is the hub of a global VPN with operations covering dozens of sites across the world and some 10,000 remote workers, - many via satellite.

The challenge

"The Flamingo Holdings operation is very complex due to the nature of the business and the fact that it encompasses a number of geographical locations," explained Tony Thompson, Group Network Manager at Flamingo Holdings. "All sites across the world operated independently and on different domains. We wanted to create a single global network which would make for easier and smoother communications," he added.

Flamingo Holdings requirements were detailed and comprehensive. Tony Thompson, an expert in remote access and network management, had spent 18 months designing and planning a system which would meet the company's own individual requirements. However, when beginning to source a supplier for the project, he found many were unable to meet these needs. "We had discussions with many of the larger carriers who were simply unable to deliver the system we wanted. Our requirements were very specific and so the typical "one size fits all" approach wasn't appropriate for the business. We needed a solution that could meet all our needs," said Tony.

As a 24/7 operation, Flamingo Holdings cannot allow any form of system downtime. Not only would a new solution need to offer high availability and reliability, but it would also have to be implemented with the least disruption possible to the company's operations. The nature and operation of Flamingo Holdings business means that network traffic is very high which was causing latency issues.

Flamingo Holdings has a high number of roaming users and having the ability to access applications and files from any site worldwide is critical.

"TalkTalk Business's expertise and experience is unsurpassed. It delivered us a scalable solution and service that no other carrier was able to."

Tony Thompson,
Flamingo Holdings

The solution

TalkTalk Business delivered an IPVPN network based on its dual backbone hybrid VPN architecture. It optimised uptime by delivering diverse connectivity into the offices via a blend of copper and fibre circuits to eliminate common failure modes in the access layer. Essentially providing two physically separate and independent networks, the dual backbones and sophisticated routing scheme protects the Flamingo Holdings business from individual circuit or equipment failure. We also included a hosted internet hub with managed security and VPN elements with integration to a satellite system terminating in London for connectivity to sites in Kenya.

One of Flamingo Holdings UK sites is a main data centre accessed via Citrix. By installing a copper circuit and load balancing, we gave this site a high level of resilience – a major priority and important requirement from Tony Thompson.

Since implementation, Flamingo Holdings has enjoyed very low latency with complete visibility of the network and faster communications. "The system has transformed the way the business operates," said Tony. "We now have the stable, central hub that we needed for data communications which has allowed us to develop group wide applications. It's a completely tailored system designed for our needs which provides all the functionality that we were seeking."

"For an IT department, that's obviously very valuable," he continued. And it's not just our technology that Flamingo Holdings is so impressed with: "The support TalkTalk Business offers is excellent. I was given access to a dedicated engineering resource which, in my experience, simply isn't offered by any other carrier".