

World's largest maritime services company cuts worldwide IT hardware footprint by 85 per cent

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
CUSTOMER NAME · Inchcape Shipping Services
LOCATION · Chafford Hundred, Essex
INDUSTRY · Business Services
COMPANY SIZE · 2,456 employees worldwide
BUSINESS CHALLENGE · Double business size and revenue within five years · Many worldwide office locations faced with regional telecommunications infrastructure of varying quality · Increase mobility and service delivery to users worldwide
NETWORK SOLUTION · Cisco data centre network solution · Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) · Cisco Unified Communications system
BUSINESS VALUE · Reduces worldwide IT hardware footprint by 85 per cent · Improves bandwidth optimisation by 50 per cent · Increases network performance for regions with poor local infrastructures · Delivers LAN-like performance to users worldwide accessing UK-hosted applications · Helps to reduce the business' carbon footprint

Cisco application networking services solution delivers Local Area Network (LAN) – like performance to over 200 worldwide branch offices accessing UK hosted applications; increases Wide Area Network (WAN) bandwidth optimisation by 50 percent.

Business Challenge

Inchcape Shipping Services (ISS) began in 1847 supporting East India Company ships. Today it is the world's largest marine services provider with more than 200 offices in 52 countries. When a vessel arrives in port, ISS acts as the agent, handling services such as providing tugs, docking permission, fees and refuelling. The company handles over 58,000 ship calls – every time a ship arrives at a port – a year. ISS also provides a number of additional shipping services such as defence, machinery and cargo services. Customers, typically organisations that own or charter ships, include Maersk, ExxonMobil and BP.

ISS has an aggressive business strategy to double in size and revenue by 2010. To support its business growth, ISS embarked on a programme to rationalise its IT systems and infrastructure. There was also a drive from the business for more services and applications such as enabling staff at large port complexes to be more mobile.

Bryan Phillips, Group Information Director at ISS, says, "We wanted to use technology to improve the way we work and to add value to the business, and make setting up and running our port-located offices much more cost and resource efficient. The only realistic way of doing that was through network optimisation and technology that would allow us to consolidate IT

services, but provide the same feel and improved performance to end users."

ISS operates in a number of regions of the world where communication infrastructures are not always as advanced as those in the developed world; in some cases bandwidth is as low as 128Kilobits per second. ISS has to circumvent these problems so staff have the efficient support systems they need.

ISS is a long-standing user of Cisco networking equipment and it saw the opportunity to extend the capabilities of the network by adopting Cisco's data centre networking strategy using the network to support its global, branch office business structure. "To expand our business globally and for IT to support that expansion with networking solutions and services that are easy and cost effective to deploy, Cisco is the best strategic partner for ISS," says Phillips.



“Cisco isn’t just about optimising data traffic, it provides the foundation network upon which we can deploy a number of other business services – like Cisco data centre technology and its IP voice solution – so we can expand the scope and capability of the infrastructure in ways that we could not have contemplated before.”

Network Solution

ISS has a Cisco Wide Area Network (WAN) which connects up Cisco Local Area Networks (LANs) in headquarters and branch offices using Cisco Virtual Private Networks (VPNs). The infrastructure is managed entirely in-house by ISS. At the heart of the WAN is a data centre in London with around 100 servers and three terabytes of data. This is linked to a disaster recovery site in the North of England.



ISS is in the process of consolidating virtually all of its data and applications into the data centre increasing the data volume by a further three terabytes. The main application is YourISS which staff across the world use to manage the services they deliver to customers. For example, all information related to a vessel’s port operation is recorded in YourISS. The management of a vessel in port is heavily paper based, so data also includes

scanned documents. YourISS is also available online to customers so they can track and monitor, in real time, the progress of their ships, anywhere in the world. Customers have full visibility of a vessel during its port operation and see related information from pre-arrival to final invoice.

ISS is using Cisco’s Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) technology as the key enabler to support and expand its consolidation strategy because it optimises network bandwidth so ISS can centralise applications, content and data in the UK and still deliver LAN-like speeds to branch offices globally. Phillips says, “What we like about the Cisco technology is the intelligence. It works by caching relevant data locally for an application or process so network bandwidth isn’t wasted sending the same data time after time. As the technology learns the data patterns of our applications, it starts to continually improve performance over a period of time.”

Because Cisco WAAS optimises bandwidth use, ISS is now deploying additional services across its WAN such as a Cisco Unified Communications system comprising 80 Cisco Unified IP phones in its UK head office and hundreds more across offices in Dubai, Chennai and Oslo. One of the key advantages of Cisco Unified Communications is it will allow ISS to extend IP telephony services to locations where it has been too expensive, if not impossible to deploy.

At each location, Cisco technology also supports mobility so staff can move around a large location with multiple sites – such as the Mississippi delta in North America – using wireless laptops.

The Cisco data centre solution at ISS has been implemented by Dimension Data.

Business Results

“An agent on the bridge of a vessel docked in Singapore can use a GPRS-enabled laptop to exchange information, in seconds, with our UK data centre. That information is accessible by anyone in the organisation, but significantly, customers can go online and see what’s happening to their vessels or cargo. The application and the data may be hosted in the UK, but for the agent it performs as if it was on their laptop. This is what Cisco WAAS means to our business,” says Phillips.

Cisco’s application networking services solution is having a fundamental impact on ISS. By deploying Cisco technology and reducing the need to deploy distributed servers and system, ISS expects to reduce the amount of hardware at worldwide branches by a staggering 85 per cent. This has the added benefit of helping ISS reduce its carbon footprint. A small office currently might have two or more servers and a router. Cisco cuts that to a single router.

Cisco is also helping ISS increase its ‘green’ credentials by reducing its carbon footprint. Phillips says, “One of our strategic goals is to reduce our global carbon footprint and using Cisco WAAS to cut the amount of equipment we need in each branch office is a key part of that strategy. If you think that each of the servers we had was drawing around two to three amps and multiply that across all our locations, that’s quite a big reduction in energy use.”

In addition, ISS estimates it will improve bandwidth optimisation by 50 per cent. Phillips says, "Djibouti in Eastern Africa is a classic example of where the Cisco technology will make a real difference. From a business perspective Djibouti is growing rapidly – we now have over 75 staff there. But Internet

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<p>Application Networking</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Wide Area Application Services (WAAS) • Cisco Wide Area Application Engine (WAE) Appliances
<p>Voice and IP Communications</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Unified Communications • Call Manager Version 5.0 • Cisco Unified IP Phones 7900 Series

connections are limited; at one stage we could only get a 64Kbps (Kilobits Per Second) connection and even now it's only 256Kbps. But with Cisco WAAS we're able to make much better use of the bandwidth and we're starting to see tangible traffic reductions that are pretty impressive – something like a 50 per cent improvement on bandwidth optimisation."

Another example of how Cisco WAAS impacts the business is enabling ISS to improve collaboration, saving time and money. "If we have a sales tender, instead of the tender being worked on by someone in North America and then emailed to the Middle East, then worked on there and emailed on to somebody else, we want to be able to provide a portal for everyone to collaborate. And the best way for us to do that is by

consolidating all the relevant information centrally and using web-based applications – accelerated by Cisco WAAS – to access that information without anyone noticing the data is thousands of miles away."

One of the benefits of Cisco's data centre technology that underlines ISS's view of Cisco as its strategic partner is the ability to set up new offices more or less anywhere in the world quickly and simply. "All we need to do is put a single Cisco router in a location and that delivers pretty much all the services we need. It also allows us to do things like maintenance remotely which is essential because in some of the locations there isn't IT staff on site."



“An agent on the bridge of a cargo vessel docked in Singapore can use a GPRS-enabled laptop to exchange information, in seconds, with our UK data centre. That information is accessible by anyone in the organisation, but significantly, customers can go online and see what’s happening to their vessels or cargo. The application and the data may be hosted in the UK, but for the agent it performs as if it was on their laptop. This is what Cisco WAAS means to our business.”

Bryan Phillips, Group Information Director, Inchcape Shipping Services



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