



At a Glance

Company: First Ireland Risk Management

Industry: Insurance

Customer Profile

First Ireland Risk Management is one of the largest Irish owned Insurance Brokerages in the country. Originally founded in 1981, the company is owned and operated by its senior partners who work full time in the business. The company employs 89 staff across two sites and its extensive client list stretches from corporate to personal insurances.

Business Challenge

The occasion of an office move coupled with significant company growth prompted a complete IT infrastructure technology refresh.

Solution

- Virtualisation of the network infrastructure using VMware and IBM Bladeserver and SAN solution, reducing the number of physical servers from 23 to 2 SAN Storage chassis housing 3 blades.
- Complete desktop rationalisation using Microsoft Terminal Services and IGEL thin clients.
- 5 Terabit Storage Area Network based on an IBM platform.
- Televantage VoIP Telephony solution.
- CAT6a cabling infrastructure with Gigabit network backbone and Gigabit speeds to the desktop.
- Microsoft OVS licence agreement on Windows Server 2003/8, AD2008, Office and Vista Business.

Benefits

- Projected reduction in server and telephony energy costs of up to 60%.
- Increased staff productivity in line with improvements in network performance.
- Enhanced control and less administration overhead in the desktop environment with lower cost of ownership into the future.
- Improved customer service with full transparency on call reporting and resource allocation.

First Ireland Risk Management Reduces Server Energy Costs by 60% and Boosts Staff Productivity by over 25%

Leading insurance broker, First Ireland Risk Management will reduce IT energy costs by up to 60% and boost staff productivity by 25%, thanks to a new IT infrastructure designed and installed by MJ Flood Technology. The solution encompasses a number of key elements including a new network backbone, streamlined application delivery, IP telephony, data storage and a newly installed CAT6a cabled infrastructure.

The occasion of an office move to a new headquarters in Parkgate Street, Dublin coupled with significant company growth prompted the technology refresh as Sarah Sheridan, Director of IT with First Ireland explains. "The longevity and success of our business is driven by the fact that we are big enough to get the best deal for our clients but small enough to provide a personal service. In reconfiguring our business operations across two sites in Dublin and Leixlip, we needed to ensure that our technology infrastructure was capable of supporting our business vision and commitment to superior customer service."

First Ireland works on the basis of the paperless office – scanning in all paperwork and correspondence using a document management system. This means the capacity, speed and performance of the underlying IT infrastructure is critical in keeping the business up and running.

Delivering More with Less

A network re-design was undertaken with a Gigabit backbone and Gigabit speeds to the desktop. The existing server farm of 23 devices was reduced down to just 2 IBM SAN Storage chassis with 3 blade servers. By virtualising the company's key applications, the IT footprint was reduced considerably and the cost of adding new applications or allocating more processing resources to existing ones has been drastically slashed. "The comms room is definitely a tidier place to be these days," comments Sarah Sheridan. "Virtualisation gives us maximum flexibility in terms of managing resources for our critical line of business applications. We can add new IT services easily and eliminate hardware costs by virtue of the scalability of the solution."



“MJ Flood Technology presented us with a very relevant proposal to match our needs. They have proved yet again their reputation for reliability and technical excellence by delivering on our objectives for this major technology investment.”

Sarah Sheridan

Director of IT, First Ireland Risk Management

Enhanced Customer Service

The Televantage IP Telephony system delivers powerful voice features that help the company’s employees work more effectively. For example, voicemail messages are consolidated within a single account for quick, easy retrieval and response. The solution also boasts powerful call reporting features supporting transparent capacity management as well as performance management for staff. Resources can be easily re-allocated at peak periods thereby reducing call wait times. The imminent addition of a GSM gateway will further reduce the costs associated with mobile calls.

“Televantage supports our ethos of building personal relationships with our customers,” says Sarah Sheridan. “We try to avoid a rigid call-centre structure to our operations. Our staff spend time with our clients, understanding their needs and advising them on the best possible fit for their insurance needs.”

Meeting Regulatory Requirements

The IP telephony solution also delivers “off the shelf” call recording which meets First Ireland’s regulatory requirements. A 5 TB storage area network provides a durable and reliable repository for the company’s electronic data, which must be stored for a period of 6 years.

More Control with Less Administration

The deployment of Terminal Services with thin client at the desktop has enabled the company to centrally “lock down” the desktop with maximum control. With only one person looking after IT for 83 users, this is hugely beneficial as it significantly cuts down on administration overheads and avoids the installation of unauthorised and potentially harmful software which can be installed by users. “Thin client technology is a perfect fit for First Ireland,” comments James Finglas, managing director with MJ Flood Technology. “It delivers the control, scale and responsiveness which the business requires and maximises First Ireland’s return on investment.”

For more information using IT as a real business enabler, talk to us today on (01) 466 3500 or info@mjf.ie