

### Nebulas Solutions Group enables Virgin Media to cut Network Security Costs by 30%

"Having Nebulas as a single supplier has given us a cost saving of 30%. The feedback from my team is fantastic"

Colin Miles, UK Corporate  
Network Manager, Virgin Media

#### » Virgin Media

Formed in February 2007, Virgin Media is the UK's leading entertainment and communications company, providing a "quadplay" of digital TV, broadband, phone and mobile to 10 million customers in the UK. Virgin Media Television owns a number of popular channels including Virgin 1, LIVING, and Bravo. They also partner with BBC Worldwide to provide the UK TV range of channels. Sit-Up TV provides a range of value for money shopping channels and ntl:Telewest Business delivers a complete portfolio of voice, data and internet solutions to businesses, public sector organisations and service providers nationwide. Employing 20,000 people distributed across 800 UK sites, Virgin Media's head office is in Hook, Hampshire.

#### » The Challenge

Company takeovers are always challenging, particularly where large scale IT systems and processes need to be integrated. NTL's acquisition of Telewest and subsequent creation of Virgin Media was no exception. For Colin Miles, the new organisation's UK Corporate Network Manager, it meant inheriting an unwieldy security infrastructure which was distributed across hundreds of sites. This included vendors such as Check Point, Nokia, Cisco, McAfee, Satelcom, Nortel, F5, Shiva, RSA, SurfControl, Websense, N2H2 and BlueCoat, as well as multiple reseller partners. Supporting such a diverse estate and keeping track of the licensing and support arrangements caused major problems as equipment had been purchased by several organisations at different times from various partners.

*"We didn't know who to contact when we had to log a support call," recalls Colin. "A lot of time would be wasted because each time we made a call, we had to find out the particular support arrangements for that piece of equipment. As result, the time taken to resolve support issues was much longer than it should have been, which had a major impact on the fulfilment of our SLA to the rest of the business."*

When the support process was initiated, Virgin Media's skilled in-house team would often find that the engineers sent out by the incumbent support partners often knew less than they did. This led to multiple visits to resolve problems and further negative impact on service levels. Colin estimates that around 20% of the time taken to resolve an issue from start to finish was wasted.

Additionally, renewing support and buying equipment on an ad hoc basis meant that Virgin Media was paying far more to maintain its complex infrastructure.

In mid 2007, to address this untenable situation, Miles kicked off a tendering process that would see a single security partner supply, support and maintain Virgin Media's firewall and proxy estates, as well as some remote access and anti-virus infrastructure. Over several



#### » Customer needs met

- » Network security costs cut by 30%
- » Time saved by consolidating multiple third party support contracts
- » IT support response times improved by 25% - improving productivity across the organisation
- » More resilient network, giving improved operational continuity
- » Expert advice on new and emerging technologies that can further improve processes and performance

#### » Deployed Solutions

- » F5 Firepass
- » PGP V9
- » Nokia IP Series
- » Check Point VPN-1
- » BlueCoat ProxySG
- » Tripwire Enterprise
- » AirDefense Enterprise

months, Colin worked with the procurement team to agree a single partner: the decision being based partly on cost and partly on the expertise of the prospective partners. Finally, sole supplier status was awarded to Nebulas Solutions Group.

### » The Solution

Nebulas Solutions Group was already a partner of Virgin Media, having been awarded the contract to migrate legacy firewalls to a new Check Point on Nokia standard several years earlier. From the outset, Colin was impressed with the Group's approach. He commented: *"A true partner understands our business and where we're heading. Nebulas demonstrated a level of understanding we didn't see from anyone else."*

As part of the contract, Nebulas Solutions Group and Virgin Media hold quarterly service reviews. Call trends are analysed with continual service improvement plans devised accordingly. Most importantly the reviews discuss whether the SLA has been hit. In the rare event that the SLA is missed a "major incident review" is logged and Nebulas Solutions provides a full time-lined report from log to resolution. Colin has been impressed that with Nebulas Solutions, this has only happened once: *"Even the best partner makes a mistake occasionally. What's important is how they deal with it and Nebulas learned from the experience and never repeated it"* he commented.

Nebulas Solutions also adds considerable value to Colin and his team on a day to day basis. *"Part of my role is to look for ways to make our processes quicker and more efficient, which means I'm always looking at new products"* he explains. Colin takes product ideas to Nebulas who initially produce a performance review based on their own research on the product. If the findings are positive, Nebulas undertakes a physical technical review of the product and then provides feedback to Colin. *"Sometimes we'll go in and use the Nebulas Solutions' lab facilities and work with the engineers to test the product. We really value their expertise and know that their opinions are based on technical criteria, not whether they are resellers for a particular vendor."*

Nebulas Solutions has also provided adept at leveraging the size and purchasing power of Virgin Media: *"Having Nebulas as a single supplier has given us a cost saving of 30%"* says Colin.

Colin and his team have also benefitted from Nebulas Solutions' ifeed service – a tailored web feed that highlights technical updates and product reviews. *"The feedback from my team has been fantastic"* says Colin.

### » The Future

Virgin Media continues to work with Nebulas Solutions Group to further improve its infrastructure: the two companies are now working together to determine the most effective means of replacing Virgin's ageing Nokia firewall estate.

#### » Nebulas Solutions Group

- » Nebulas Solutions Group is a security, acceleration and virtualisation specialist.
- » Formed in 2001, Nebulas Solutions Group offers sophisticated technology solutions, consultancy and implementation expertise to help organisations address the key business issues of data security, acceleration and availability.
- » Nebulas Solutions Group comprises three divisions: Nebulas Security is the UK's leading provider of IT security, data privacy and compliance solutions. Nebulas Xcelerate provides leading WAN optimisation and applications acceleration solutions and Nebulas Virtualise offers market leading virtualisation solutions.
- » The Group's combined expertise helps organisations maximise the performance, efficiency and security of their IT infrastructure, as well as reducing operating costs.
- » Based in London, Nebulas Solutions Group has more than 200 customers worldwide, including many blue chip and FTSE 250 organisations. For further information, go to [www.nebulassolutions.com](http://www.nebulassolutions.com)

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