



Industry

Information Technology & Services

Annual Revenue

£80.1 million

Sites

1 main office and 5 branch offices

Employees

169

Website

<http://www.parity.net>

The Challenge

- Improve user experience and collaboration across the business
- Increase WAN bandwidth allowing for voice and data convergence
- Need to reduce costs while increasing data network capacity
- Project to be completed within strict two-week migration timeline
- Seeking long-term supplier partnership

The Solution

- Robust WAN and Internet services
- Carrier-diverse connectivity at each office location
- Integrated telephone services via SIP Trunking
- Hosted co-location services in hSo's state-of-the-art data centres
- High-availability firewall with VPN access to select remote users

The Benefits

- Increased bandwidth delivered in a tight timescale
- Low impact on cash flow due to the incorporation of the install costs into the length of the contract
- Business continuity through resilience & remote users
- Long-term partnership with a managed service provider that delivers high quality across multiple services

Parity Group appoints hSo to reduce costs while increasing WAN network capacity



It has not just been about commodity services but about experience. The folk at hSo fitted in extremely well with our technical team. There was a real team effort between hSo and Parity. hSo have the right solutions and are able to work with us in a practical way.



Peter Rusling, IT Director at Parity Group

The Customer

Parity Group provides Information Technology solutions across the UK and focuses on IT system services and professional resource management. Its clients include Unilever, AXA and the Ministry of Defence.

Ever moving forward, the group was keen to advance its IT services and provide improved user experience and collaboration. With several of its suppliers' contracts coming to an end, the group felt it was the right time to find one partner that could offer improved managed service delivery and with whom it could form a long-lasting partnership.

The Challenge

Parity Group was nearing the end of a five-year contract with its existing suppliers for its Wide Area Network (WAN). The group was unsatisfied with its current network supplier and the capacity issues it was experiencing, especially as the business demanded increased bandwidth due to its growing needs. The key challenge was to find a reliable, flexible supplier to help it reduce costs while increasing its data network capacity.

In addition, the group was keen to integrate an IP telephony solution, affording the ability to run voice over the same network and negating the need for their costly current voice setup.

Parity Group IT Director Peter Rusling said, "We were operating with a service that was created for the business five years ago. We needed to reshape it to match the business today."

The group considered up to five different suppliers, including hSo, in a bid to find a service provider that could meet its needs at a fair price. Rusling said, "hSo's online quoting tool was very useful and their white paper helped us to get an understanding of MPLS technology - it gave us a really good sense of what we were looking for."

Finding a company willing to build an ongoing relationship with the group was key. "We were looking for a collaborative 'can-do' type of company, a company like us," Rusling explained, "Rather than a supplier, we wanted a partner who understood our goals. Some of the other suppliers simply did not engage but hSo did."

The group was impressed by a reference from an existing hSo customer, which confirmed that hSo works in partnership with its clients to extend, enhance and broaden their services. This matched perfectly with the group's business needs.

Ultimately, Parity Group was won over by hSo's track record of building strong client relationships, excellent value for money and technical capabilities and customer-focused attitude. Being carrier-independent also meant hSo could offer Parity Group not only the best value, but also resilience. "It meant hSo could give us access to the best rates on the market at each different site. The carrier diversity also provides resilience, which is a fantastic bonus," said Rusling.

hSo: case study



Delivery of the service had to be well-timed. Parity Group had a three-month notice period with its incumbent provider and needed to minimise the cost of overlapping the services. This meant there was just a two-week migration period in which to shift all the services. hSo's flexible, client-focused approach meant the changeover was successful, on schedule and within budget. "We were really impressed," said Rusling.

The Solution

hSo's fully managed service for Parity Group included a highly robust WAN and Internet services, with two circuits at each location connecting into hSo's MPLS cloud. Data is kept on one circuit with failover to the secondary circuit, while telephony services use the secondary circuit. To provide maximum resilience, each pair of circuits use different carriers at each site.

As well as its connectivity needs, the group required telephony services (SIP Trunking). The ability to run this over the same network negated the need for its costly telephony services network.

A high-availability firewall in the cloud was a necessity, giving remote users VPN access to the network if required. "This is exactly what we need for business continuity purposes – it gives real peace of mind," said Rusling.

The group was so impressed with the implementation it also moved its hosted servers to hSo's state-of-the-art data centres. With hSo's co-location services, the group received better cost savings and more power for its servers.

The Benefits

Parity Group now experiences real-time access to its IT systems, improving user experience and collaboration across the organisation. hSo was able to provide a converged network with increased bandwidth and integrated telephony while improving value for cost.

Not only did the group benefit from cost saving but by rolling the install costs into the length of the contract, taking the charges from CAPEX to OPEX, the group benefited from increased cash flow. This is especially desirable to many organisations, sometimes over cost savings, as it affords less financial exposure and more predictable running costs.

Though it was not a key part of the initial brief, the new platform provided the added feature of resilience via the carrier-independent circuits at each location. VPN connectivity also allows access to critical business systems even if users are unable to access one of the main sites. This added benefit prevents costly downtime that could potentially disrupt business and ultimately profits.

In hSo, Parity Group found not only a reliable supplier but a trustworthy partnership. hSo's experience, knowledge and flexibility built the foundation for this relationship. "It has not just been about commodity services but about experience. The folk at hSo fitted in extremely well with our technical team," said Rusling. "There was a real team effort between hSo and Parity. hSo have the right solutions and are able to work with us in a practical way."



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Peter Rusling
IT Director
at Parity Group

About hSo

hSo is a UK managed network service provider with carrier independent inter-site and Internet connectivity, telephony and data centre services, including server virtualisation. hSo specialises in bespoke cloud delivery solutions for voice, data and security services. hSo is the trading name of HighSpeed Office Ltd. For further information visit www.hso.co.uk or follow updates on Twitter at [@hSo](https://twitter.com/hSo).

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