

*“Fujitsu helps improve service to our customers by finding new ways to enhance business performance by maximising the value from our IT investment.”*

**Andy Wagg** – Finance Director, Fulcrum Connections



### Customer's Challenge

Fulcrum Connections provides gas connection services to the national pipeline infrastructure on behalf of gas distribution networks, comprising more than 275,000km of pipeline and transporting gas to more than 20 million homes and businesses in Britain. Fulcrum connects around 140,000 new domestic and industrial customers to the network each year.

Having formerly been an integrated part of Transco, Fulcrum Connections needed to develop its own IT infrastructure so that it could operate independently. Phil Harper, IS Manager, Fulcrum Connections, explains, *“We separated from Transco three years ago, but a lot of our IT infrastructure remained closely tied together. So, we began a two phase project to develop our own core finance and business systems, followed by the more specific operational applications to undertake quotations and works management.”*

The IT communications to its four regional offices using leased lines was expensive and the company also wanted to provide complete IT functionality to its 42 depots and home workers, who were having to rely on a dial-up network.

Phil Harper continues, *“We needed to find a way to provide faster and cheaper access to our new IT systems to avoid data jams that would be disastrous for the business. The two questions that we had were 'Can we use Broadband?' and 'Can it be provided as a securely managed service through a Virtual Private Network (VPN)?' Having discussed our requirements with Fujitsu the answer to both questions was 'Yes'.”*

### Fujitsu's Solution

Unlike Internet based Broadband services, the Fujitsu managed Broadband service is private and connects directly to a Fujitsu data centre through a VPN, avoiding the inherent vulnerability of an Internet based connection. However, as Phil Harper says, *“While we had a vision of what we were trying to achieve, we did not have clarity on all the issues, because at that time we didn't know of anyone else that had taken this approach. The key to our success was having the right people working closely together as a team. We had confidence in Fujitsu's capability and Fujitsu was confident that it could deliver. Believe me it makes a big difference when you have people who not only know what they are doing, but also believe that they can make it work!”*

For those depots where Broadband is not available Fujitsu supports ISDN connectivity, so the Fujitsu managed service has now been successfully rolled-out to all of Fulcrum's 42 depots and the homes of 100 employees. In addition, Fulcrum has also provided the solution to its third party contractors, equipping them all with pre-configured PCs and

### SUMMARY OF KEY FACTS

#### Organisation

Fulcrum Connections

#### Partners Involved:

BT (Broadband), Siemens (Call Centre)

#### Service/s delivered

IT infrastructure development and management, including Wide Area Network (WAN), Local Area Network (LAN) and telephone network services, managed Broadband service, Data Centre server hosting and management and Call Centre solution.

#### Key metrics

- HQ, 3 regional offices and 42 depots
- 1,200 employees and 140,000 jobs a year

#### Benefits

- Greater efficiency - access to essential data is now significantly faster and cheaper
- Reduced travel costs - saving up to two hours a day in travel
- Increased productivity - call centre staff manage 20% more calls per week
- Improved service levels - customer response times have been reduced
- Improved administration - paper replaced by data held electronically
- Increased security - Fujitsu's VPN and server hosting provide much greater data security.

**CASE STUDY**  
**FULCRUM CONNECTIONS**

A3 colour printers, so that they now have high speed access to job-related information, which previously had to be supplied on paper.

*“We could never have implemented the services that we now have using our old technology,”* comments Phil Harper. *“Now people can work at home or in the depot and it's just like being in the office.”*

At the same time that the Broadband managed service was being implemented, Fujitsu has also been working with Fulcrum on a number of other major IT initiatives.

In particular, Fujitsu managed the implementation of the call centre software to support Fulcrum's new 70 seat Customer Service Centre, which now handles 17,000 calls a week from gas shippers and the public. Phil Harper says, *“Fujitsu was excellent. The call centre was delivered to tight timescales and to budget and was a prime example of all parties working in partnership. We're now able to handle 3,000 more calls a week with the same number of staff, and we're now looking to see how we can exploit the system even more.”*

Fujitsu has also been working with Fulcrum to increase the capacity and resilience of its main production and development environments in order to create a high availability service. Having provided consultancy to re-engineer the company's IT architecture, Fujitsu has also now taken over the hosting and management of Fulcrum's corporate servers. Phil Harper explains, *“With Fujitsu's support, not only have we doubled the power and increased the availability of our systems, but they are now in a high security establishment and being maintained in the perfect IT environment.”*

At the start of the relationship, in just three months, Fujitsu developed and implemented a new WAN for Fulcrum that doubled the network capacity. It also incorporated much more resilient links between Fulcrum's four HQ and regional offices and its 42 depots and took advantage of Cisco's Multiprotocol Label Switching (MPLS) technology, the next generation of network management software that simplifies configuration, management, and provisioning. Phil Harper adds, *“The WAN upgrade went really well. We gave Fujitsu the green light in early January and we went live in early April, on time, on budget and without any problems.”*

**Benefits to our Customer**

Through its close working relationship with Fujitsu Fulcrum

- **Greater efficiency** - access to essential data, including email, project files, customer records and Intranet, is now significantly faster and cheaper, despite processing 50 GB of data a day
- **Reduced travel costs** - employees can now use corporate systems from virtually any location, saving up to two hours a day in travel
- **Increased productivity** - call centre staff are able to manage 20% more calls per week
- **Improved service levels** - customer response times have been reduced with staff having rapid access to more detailed maps and job information
- **Less administration** - the paper based systems used by area offices, field personnel and third party contractors have been reduced

- **Increased security** - Fujitsu's VPN and server hosting ensure much greater data security.

In addition, Fulcrum is benefiting from improved system availability and scalability and now has the flexibility to implement new IT systems that exploit the speed and security of the private broadband service.

*“In common with all businesses we need to deliver a quality service to our customers. In addition, we have regulatory standards of service that we must achieve. Our business' success is highly dependent on the effectiveness of our IT,”* says Andy Wagg, Finance Director, Fulcrum Connections. *“If we don't have effective and resilient architecture and systems it costs us money. Fujitsu helps us improve service to our customers by finding new ways to enhance business performance by maximising the value from our IT investment.”*

**Our Approach**

As part of the implementation of the Broadband managed service, Fujitsu created a proof of concept system, which was implemented in one of Fulcrum's depots for a cross-section of users.

*“The pilot system worked well, and it also helped us to establish the roll-out processes and effort required,”* explains Phil Harper. *“However, when we came to install the first routers and put the new software on laptops the system often didn't work, simply because there was such a variety of applications on the machines that unexpected conflicts occurred. So, with Fujitsu, we developed a standard build for our laptops, which we then used to reconfigure them. Now all that has to happen is Fujitsu provides us with the pre-configured routers and we install and validate the software on the users' laptops.”*

As a result, when Fulcrum needed to relocate 30 of its people at short notice, it was able to get the new office up and running in just five weeks from a standing start, purely because of the ease with which Fujitsu's broadband solution could be implemented.

**Our Expertise**

Fujitsu has a proven track record in providing innovative and reliable IT services and solutions, incorporating the best and most appropriate technology, that creates value for its customers by helping them to realise their business vision and deliver impeccable customer service.

*“I deal with many suppliers and I've seen all types, but Fujitsu is excellent,”* comments Phil Harper. *“We have confidence in Fujitsu's ability to deliver - the technical expertise of its people is very good and it does what it says it will within the agreed timeframe, which is great in the IT industry! It also has a can-do partnership attitude so if either party get things wrong we work together to sort it out. It's not an 'us and them' situation.”*

**ASK FUJITSU**

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