

Proactive management paves the way to better service

“Fujitsu has made everything that it does relevant to our IS agenda and I would definitely recommend it to anyone interested in managed network services.”

Ben Wishart – Group IS Director, Whitbread



Challenge

When you're the UK's largest hotel and restaurant company, delivering a positive customer experience is essential. Even a malfunctioning printer can be critical, especially if it's used for producing customers' orders.

Whitbread now employs 34,000 people, serving 8.5 million customers a month in over 1,600 outlets across the UK. The core of its business is based around market leading brands: Premier Inn, the UK's largest and fastest growing hotel brand, Costa Coffee, the largest chain of coffee shops in the UK, and the Beefeater, Brewers Fayre and Table Table pub restaurants.

Whitbread's vision is to become *“the best hotel and restaurant company there is”* and at the heart of its operations is the *“Whitbread Way”* of delivering services. This is described by Whitbread as being *“like DNA. We believe in people and teamwork; caring for guests; passion for winning; and continuous improvement.”*

However, Whitbread is a highly complex business. The business impact of even the smallest outages and failures can be severe if they hit at the wrong time of the week or year. Pub restaurants are busier during the weekends, whereas Premier Inns are busier during the week when network and system availability is critical during busy check-in periods.

Solution

Fujitsu was chosen by Whitbread to provide an outsourced solution that includes a fully managed service for wide area network (WAN) links, ranging from ISDN to Megastream Ethernet, to all of the company's extended family of brands in over 1,600 locations in the UK.

Through this service Fujitsu monitors network performance 24/7 and proactively addresses any issues, so that users are often unaware of any problems or outages. Break fix hardware maintenance services are also provided to Premier Inns and pub restaurants across the Brewers Fayre and Beefeater chains.

Throughout the course of the managed network service contract, which is now in its fourth year, the data network across the whole Whitbread estate has been refreshed to provide a cost effective, secure connection to outlets and field based workers. Fujitsu has also instigated a programme of 'preventative maintenance' and undertakes proactive care visits to sites.

SUMMARY OF KEY FACTS

Organisation

Whitbread

Services delivered

A fully managed service for all voice and data networks, and break fix hardware maintenance services for outlets

Key metrics

- 8.5 million customers a month
- 34,000 employees in over 1,600 outlets

Benefits

- **Improved systems availability** - for Whitbread users:
 - network performance consistently exceeds the contracted SLA with 99.5% availability
 - break fix service consistently exceeds contracted SLAs
- **Optimised revenue** - the successful and timely opening of new outlets ensures revenue earning is maximised
- **Minimal business disruption** - ensures the network can support Whitbread's aggressive growth plans

CASE STUDY WHITBREAD

As a result, in the past six months the network has demonstrated greatly improved stability with the highest levels of sustained system availability, helpdesk calls have been reduced and the break fix service has consistently exceeded its service level agreements (SLA).

Benefits

By outsourcing its network management and outlet break fix services to Fujitsu, Whitbread is realising a number of significant benefits:

- **Improved systems availability** – for Whitbread users:
 - network performance consistently exceeds the contracted SLA with 99.5% availability
 - break fix service consistently exceeds contracted SLAs
- **Optimised revenue** – the successful and timely opening of new outlets ensures that revenue earning opportunities are maximised
- **Minimal business disruption** – integration issues have been minimised by ensuring the network can support Whitbread's aggressive growth plans.

Approach

In order to understand not only the implication of what it is contractually responsible for, but also to align its service to Whitbread's overall strategy, a member of Fujitsu's account team is on-site at Whitbread's HQ every single day.

“On the face of it this may not be a productive use of Fujitsu's specialist skills,” explains Ben Wishart, Group IS Director, Whitbread, *“but the value of this continual interaction with us is that Whitbread is assured that its services are being supplied by someone who is committed to be in-tune with our needs, and understands the impact on our business.”*

As a result of all these activities the service has been significantly improved so that now not only is Whitbread getting what it originally contracted for, it is actually getting a level of service that allows it to deliver an even better service to its own customers. For example, more thought and resources have been focused on effective peak planning to ensure that at busy times of the week and year Fujitsu can respond to Whitbread's needs.

Ben Wishart adds, *“Fujitsu treats Whitbread as a valued client, and this is evidenced by the deployment of an appropriately sized account team and their obvious availability to Whitbread. It feels like you have got the right people doing the right things.”*

Expertise

Fujitsu has delivered consistently high levels of service to UK businesses for more than 30 years, and has amassed a wealth of expertise in helping clients to use IT to create new revenue generating opportunities, reduce operational costs and increase customer satisfaction.

Ben Wishart says, *“The Fujitsu team is now in an absolute ‘best in class’ position around the identification of priorities and how to derive value add and apply that thinking to Whitbread's advantage. They are trustworthy, conscientious, very easy to do business and deliver on their promises. I would definitely recommend Fujitsu to anyone interested in managed network and break/fix services.”*

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