

How technology has transformed the exceptional care our veterinary clinics provide



A new networking solution helps this rapidly expanding veterinary business to keep pace with its growth while upgrading IT across the group.

Our customer is a fast-growing veterinary business with more than 400 local veterinary surgeries across the UK. Its nationwide network includes 27 pioneering 24-hour centres and a state-of-the-art veterinary laboratory.

Enabling clinics to flourish by delivering IT support services

The business is built on a unique branch partnership model, where vets can become equity partners with the organisation in their own clinic. The 'hub and spoke' operating model enables smaller practices to access the very best specialists, diagnostics and treatments while offering local care. Administrative and back-office support is delivered from their support centre in Watford, freeing each clinic to focus on delivering exceptional care for pets and their owners.

Support includes IT and technical services, including networking and software. However, the existing WAN solution was not performing as well as central services would have liked. The expensive system suffered frequent downtime with a lack of adequate bandwidth hampering operations and limiting revenue generating activities.

Choosing to work with CAE

Three of the team at one of the support centres were responsible for managing the WAN across the 470 UK sites. With downtime occurring frequently and the lack of an adequate backup meaning a practice would be completely down until a problem was fixed, the team was struggling to keep up with the workload.

The problems and poor bandwidth were holding the organisation back from rolling out its chosen technology systems to clinics, especially a new ERP solution which supports the online diagnostic services.

A new WAN solution was needed, that would be more reliable, offer easier management and backups and enable the innovation the business desired. It chose to switch to a managed WAN solution with the support of CAE for the deployment and management of the new service.





Resiliency and ease of management ensure improved reliability

CAE recommended a highly resilient solution for the large, 24-hour sites and the head office comprising two leased lines with two different carriers to maximise resiliency. Smaller clinics have a FTTP/FTTC or ADSL connection with a 4G connection as backup.

The initial rollout extended to 100 locations. The new network management solution enabled a 'plug and play' approach which streamlined the rollout and ensured consistent management and security across the clinic network. CAE worked closely with the team, expediting the rollout wherever possible to ensure that the project deadlines were met.

The new WAN and SD-WAN solution has dramatically improved service uptime. Thanks to the improved bandwidth, the ambition of the central IT team is no longer curtailed by performance issues. This has enabled the business to press ahead with the rollout of the new ERP system.

The company-wide ERP solution supports clinics to improve clinical care and service levels. Further, it provides access to the online diagnostic services, opening up new revenue opportunities for clinics. The option to deliver remote video diagnostics was impossible with the previous network solution. The opening up these new revenue opportunities as a result of the network upgrade has been a big win for the organisation and its local clinics.

Investing for the future

Moving forward, the rollout is now being extended to another 250 sites over the next six months. This will be achieved with the support of CAE using CISCO zero-touch deployment and remote management tools.

CAE delivers ongoing support with 24/7 network monitoring. The 24/7 nature of CAE's support is key to the veterinary business, given its operating model. The associated dashboards give the company visibility of network performance in a way that simply wasn't possible before. It knows that its SLAs are being met.

The proactive approach and continual monitoring of CAE ensure the highest security. To further enhance security, they are now piloting SecureConnect, Cisco's next generation secure access service edge (SASE), with a view to rolling it out to 450 hybrid users.

The remote management capabilities are ideal to support the ambitious growth strategy. It ensures new practices can be onboarded quickly and effectively, with the right connectivity and network security in place to deliver the bandwidth they need. This ensures vital tools, such as the ERP system, can be rolled out quickly and effectively, maximising revenue generating opportunities and freeing up the clinicians' time to focus on delivering exceptional quality care for pets and their pet owners.

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