

Specialty Insurer’s Integrated Network Supports Expansion

Beazley uses Smart Business Communications to support growth, starting with a reliable, secure network foundation.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY
<p>BEAZLEY GROUP PLC</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Industry: Insurance • Location: London, U.K. • Number of Employees: 400 <p>BUSINESS CHALLENGE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support rapid growth and help ensure responsiveness to customers by giving underwriters a reliable network for conducting business • Expand rapidly into new markets and geographies to sustain growth while keeping underwriters connected to facilitate collaboration • Improve productivity for mobile underwriters, providing access to information regardless of location
<p>INFRASTRUCTURE SOLUTION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reliable, secure network foundation supports expansion • IP telephony, unified messaging, and videoconferencing improve inter-office communication, productivity, and collaboration, and enhance customer satisfaction and responsiveness • Wireless headquarters provides employees with mobility during the workday
<p>BUSINESS RESULTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Smart Business Roadmap uses technology to manage planned and unexpected growth • Employees enjoy greater productivity and are more responsive to customers with Cisco Unified Communications, which provides integrated and reliable access to e-mail, voice services, and data • Transatlantic call charges are eliminated, and inter-office communication is improved • Ongoing cost-savings are achieved from faster and more efficient IP phone moves/adds/changes

Business Challenge

Beazley Group plc, which comprises two Lloyd’s syndicates and a U.S. underwriting operation, covers such specialty lines as product recalls, extortion, and terrorism, as well as the more traditional marine and property lines. Beazley entered a high-velocity growth phase after going public in 2002, opening offices in the United States, adding insurance lines, and growing to over 400 employees.

Beazley’s challenge was to sustain its growth, including moving to new headquarters and expanding in the United States and other markets. The company needed to provide underwriters around the globe with reliable access to information and tools to collaborate with colleagues and brokers more effectively.

But Beazley’s existing infrastructure, based on a single, under-capacity switch, was so unreliable that failures were frequent and recovery was slow. Underwriters could not always access the data that they needed to respond to customers. E-mail broke down constantly, and there was so much frustration that employees actually avoided using the network.

When Dave Boswell, head of IT Operations and Governance, joined the company in 2004, he, along with infrastructure manager James Wright, quickly realized that one thing hindering the company’s growth was its IT infrastructure. A security audit in

2004 highlighted more than 100 vulnerabilities. There was no redundancy in the network. “IT was lagging way behind the growth of the company. Our job was to get IT aligned with and supporting the growth of the business,” says Boswell. “We wanted to define a strategic technology roadmap that would give us a stable network platform for today, and that we could also build on to provide secure connectivity between offices and information sharing as we grow.”

Beazley chose to partner with Logicalis, an international provider of integrated Information and Communication Technology (ICT) solutions. Logicalis shared Beazley's vision for developing and following a long-term technology roadmap to support the company's growth.

Network Solution

For Boswell, Cisco Systems® was the only choice for the network. "I have been in this business for almost 30 years, and I have confidence in Cisco and the company's ability to support us over the long term. With its size and investments, Cisco is addressing all of the technologies that are of interest to us."

Using Cisco Smart Business Communications and following the principles of the Cisco Smart Business Roadmap, which addresses primary business challenges with technology solutions that support and optimize the business over time, Beazley began working with Logicalis to formulate plans to support the tremendous growth of the company. Implementation of a secure, reliable network foundation began in 2005 with the design and deployment of a fully redundant, resilient LAN.

The new LAN is based on redundant core Cisco Catalyst® 6500 switches. All users and servers are now on Cisco edge switches connected to both core switches with automatic failover, so if there is a failure anywhere in the network, user traffic is rerouted and business continues uninterrupted. "We have gone from having a single point of failure for everything to helping ensure that there is no single point of failure for anything," says Boswell.

With a solid network foundation that users could trust to "stand up and not fall over," Boswell agreed to Logicalis' recommendations to install a Cisco Aironet® wireless network across all three floors of the new headquarters. The secure wireless connectivity allows underwriters to move about freely, conferring with colleagues and customers while maintaining access to the information that they need.

"Having a roadmap and a long view for our technology infrastructure has been absolutely invaluable. Without that, we would still be responding to immediate crises. Instead of fixing things every day, we have controlled growth."

– Dave Boswell, Head of IT Operations and Governance, Beazley Group

Based on the strong foundation that they had created, the company added IP telephony based on Cisco Unified CallManager and Cisco Unified IP Phones. The move to IP telephony happened to coincide with the company's decision to move to new headquarters in the heart of London's financial district. The company deployed the system alongside the existing analog private branch exchange (PBX) in the old office. Beazley worked with Logicalis to implement and test the new system, training employees at the same time. "When we switched off the old phones, it was easy for employees to use their new Cisco Unified IP Phones," says Boswell. All employees, including U.S.-based personnel, are now on a single network, using one phone system.

To help employees become even more productive and responsive to customers, the company added Cisco Unity®, giving users secure, unified access to voice, e-mail, and faxes using their

IP phones or single Outlook mailbox. Underwriters can also dial directly from their Outlook address books.

When Beazley migrated to the new IP telephony system, the company implemented quality of service (QoS) to support voice, video, and data. With the converged network in place, and reliable, high-performance connectivity assured, Logicalis demonstrated how Beazley could easily and cost-effectively add Cisco Unified Video Advantage to facilitate collaboration on a global scale using desktop videoconferencing. “Our goal is to help them make sound investments in technology that continue to support their business growth,” says George Georgiou, client director for Logicalis.

Business Results

The most important business advantage that Beazley has realized with Cisco Smart Business Communications is that their network foundation delivers undeniable reliability. Because underwriters can now do business with brokers and customers without interruption, they have gone from avoiding the network to using it virtually 100 percent of the time. “Before we put in our new network, every week was a challenge, and now every day is a joy,” says Boswell. “In my position, believe me, I have problems when things go wrong, and now I do not have them. It is great.”

The converged network with QoS has provided transatlantic calls between London and the U.S. offices that are “perfect, simple and, in a way, free,” says Boswell. “This saves us a lot of money, especially as we continue to expand the number of U.S. offices and add employees. We are all on the same directory, so employees in London simply dial four digits to reach anyone in the United States. It is easier for specialists in the United States to consult with specialists here, which makes our employees overseas feel much more part of the company. Underwriters here can talk to their underwriting teams in America and give them support and direction, and ultimately provide customers with improved service.”

Another benefit of the new phone system is how easy and cost-efficient it was to move to the new headquarters. “We just picked up the IP phones and plugged them in. I did not have to add new lines or reprogram phones. It was a smooth transition,” says Boswell.

Desktop video is also helping to transform the way employees work. “The comments that I hear

most from users are about how great the videoconferencing is,” says Boswell. “We do a lot of videoconferences with brokers in America and the United Kingdom, which helps build stronger business relationships with clients. And if our WAN does not stretch to all of the new offices straightaway, we can still deliver desktop video over the Internet. We could never have considered that without the reliable network that we have now.”

Boswell also says that “having a roadmap and a long view for a technology infrastructure has been absolutely invaluable. Without that, we would still be responding to immediate crises. Now we are progressing through the challenges, stepping our way along our roadmap and coming out of the other side very well. Instead of fixing things every day, we have controlled growth.”

PRODUCT LIST	
Routing and Switching	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catalyst 3750, 6000, 6500 • Cisco 2651 Modular Router with Cisco IOS Software
Security and VPN	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco PIX 515 Firewall • Cisco Secure ACS
Video	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Unified Video Advantage
Voice and IP Communications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Unified CallManager • Cisco Unified IP Phones • Cisco Unity • Cisco Conference Connection
Wireless	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cisco Aironet 1100

Next Steps

Beazley acquired a new office in Singapore and five new offices are being opened in the United States. Offices are also under discussion for Hong Kong and France. “A reliable, secure network foundation was the first thing that we wrote in the grand plan that we put together in 2004,” says Boswell. “We did not know about Singapore until a month ago, and now we can quickly and easily connect new offices that are springing up all the time. Our Cisco technology foundation makes it possible and easy. With the right foundation we can support unexpected as well as planned growth.”

For More Information

To find out more about Cisco’s Smart Business Communications and Smart Business Roadmap, go to <http://www.cisco.com/go/smb> and <http://www.cisco.com/go/sbr>.



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