

Bradford Building Supplies



Trusted by trades and loved by locals since 1770, Bradfords is committed to delivering the highest level of service across its network of branches. A complete communications and IT systems overhaul has provided secure foundations for operational success in the South West and beyond.

Location: South West | **Number of users: 600+**

The project:

Bradfords needed to revolutionise its business communications in conjunction with the end of the contract for their existing hosted multi-tenanted telephone solution.

Furthermore, the local area networks (LANs) at their branches were ageing, sourced from a range of mismatched manufacturers and a broadband-based wide area network (WAN) had become unreliable. Cumulatively, this was having a detrimental impact on telephony services and everyday business operations.

Bradfords initiated a tender process to find a standout supplier capable of delivering an OPEX-financed solution with a high standard, high availability 24/7 network and telephony services to meet business requirements and ultimately improve customer service. Business continuity was a critical factor as Bradfords needed the new technology to be deployed before the end of their existing telephony contract.

The solution:

A purpose-built data centre is at the centre of this multi-faceted solution, hosting Bradfords' business systems and thereby providing an infrastructure as a service (IaaS) and platform as a service (PaaS) solution to overhaul their legacy servers.

The care of Bradfords' server hardware and the VMware virtualised environment that hosts the applications is now supplied as a managed service and has alleviated the daily tasks associated with looking after IT infrastructure. The result is that all branches benefit from a centralised IT resource for their business systems. This is backed up and replicated to Bradfords' comms room at their head office in Yeovil to provide a business continuity and disaster recovery solution that they can rely on in the event of an incident affecting the primary servers.



 **Bradford's**

All branches are connected to the data centre and head office-hosted business systems via a new Cisco Meraki SD-WAN to offer far superior connectivity and resilience.

Every site has a second SD-WAN fibre to the premises (FTTP) link (where available) or fibre to the cabinet (FTTC) connection from a different carrier to ensure 100% availability. SD-WAN technology gives Bradfords access to double the bandwidth for improved connection speeds and enhanced reliability.

Branch LANs were overhauled with new cabling and cabinets containing Cisco routers and Cisco Meraki switches, firewalls and access points that can be easily managed across the estate with a web-based portal. This also gives Bradfords' IT team visibility of corporate and guest devices using their Wi-Fi.

Wi-Fi was needed as a critical part of their new ERP production software. Handheld scanners allow for stock taking, stock movements and processing of materials to be updated in real time by staff working in yards and warehousing. Back in the data centre, a VoIP telephone system is hosted on their virtualised platform with everyday administration tasks managed by Bradfords' IT team without the cost or delay of third party engineers.

The result:

The Mitel UC solution gives Bradfords a resilient phone system with easy call forwarding, automated attendant for every branch, work groups, voicemail options and unified communications features, such as voicemail-to-email integration, instant messaging, click-to-dial and conference calling with the option to integrate with video services. The Mitel UC is primed for growth too with capacity for 20,000 users.

The delivery of this project took significant planning and engineering resource, especially as the existing telephony contract was due to run out within five months from contract sign-off. Despite this tight timeframe, our PRINCE2-accredited project management team and engineers deployed the initial solution on time and within budget while our trainers ensured all staff members were confident in making full use of their new communications and IT solution from day one.

Bradfords' invitation to tender resulted in a long-term partnership that has seen a major overhaul of their entire communications and IT systems from the ground up. Every high availability element is completely reliable and resilient which means staff can confidently manage and draw on critical, centralised resources to improve the way they run their business with the collective aim of improving their customer service.

Bradfords benefits from having a dedicated account manager and support manager to oversee the entire contract and to give them a named main point of contact for any incident that may arise. Monthly account management and joint service review meetings facilitate discussions around any historic incidents, changes, product updates and continual business improvements.