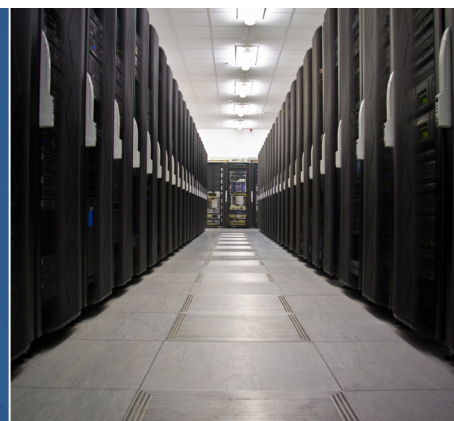


Case Study / PD Tees Port



A massive technology overhaul by one of the UK's largest ports based in the northeast is seeing wireless technology overcome the problems of distance between sites.

PD Teesport, consisting of the ports of Tees & Hartlepool, manages the river for all users and provides dock facilities at the port. Teesport handled a record 54 million tonnes of freight during 2003 making it the second busiest port in the country. The four sites in the Tees Valley comprising PD Teesport are currently linked together on a wide area network (WAN), and several wireless links have recently been installed to collect and share vital seafaring information along the Cleveland coast.

Washington-based I.T. solutions provider Knowledge I.T. has been helping PD Teesport upgrade its technology over the last five years, and is now finalising the most exciting phase of the contract. Upon completion, PD Teesport will be one of the most technologically sophisticated ports in the country.

Knowledge is about to complete several wireless links that will cover a range of almost 6 kilometres. Initially implemented to provide a Vessel Tracking System to provide real-time information on all Port traffic movements, now several more wireless links are being installed mainly to help retrieve weather information online from remote unmanned sites.

“To install the first wireless link an antenna had to be mounted almost 100 feet above the ground and work at the top of the tower required the radar to be turned off. As the radar tracks vessel movements in one area of the Port, this had to be done during fine weather! High winds also caused problems as the equipment had to be winched to the top of the tower, and a specialist partner company was used to carry out the necessary rigging work.”

Work has also recently been completed for PD Teesport's parent company PD Ports, Logistics and Shipping to implement the PD Group WAN, which is managed out of Knowledge's data centre in Sunderland, and which links four divisional locations at various sites around the UK. Knowledge IT is also assisting with the migration of PD Teesport's network to Windows 2003 and addressing security by installing an encryption system, to ward against unwanted hackers.

Martin Coleman, managing director at Knowledge I.T., said: “PD Teesport has been a highly challenging and unusual project for an I.T. firm as good old fashioned issues like the weather often held up the project. It has been an extensive yet relatively affordable transition for PD Teesport that will make a massive difference to the way the port's multi sites operate on a daily basis.

Project Overview

Company: PD Tees Port

Project: Network Integration

Web: www.thpal.co.uk

Solution:

- WAN Implementation
- Wireless Link Installation
- Microsoft Migration

Benefits:

- Real Operational Benefits
- Improved Communication
- Centralisation & Consolidation
- Reduced Operational Costs
- Efficiency Gains
- Increased Productivity

“The network solutions we have identified and upgraded are common to a lot of organisations that have several sites in one geographical area. By embracing the latest wireless technology into their network, huge time savings are made which improves productivity and real efficiency savings can be made.”

Colin Giles, I.T. manager at PD Teesport, said: “The implementation of new wireless links has allowed us to introduce a number of remote, previously isolated, locations to the network. These have provided real operational benefits at a relatively low cost, as well as improving overall network resilience. The PD Group WAN project has created the infrastructure to enable all divisional offices throughout the UK to communicate internally. It has also provided the mechanism to centralise and consolidate multiple common services, such as Internet access, and thereby achieve significant cost savings. Both projects were successfully managed by highly skilled Knowledge I.T. staff, who overcame some difficult issues to create a secure, stable and reliable networking service.”

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See how Knowledge I.T. can benefit your organisation
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