

Case Study: Microsoft IAG



Customer Profile

Angus Council, one of 32 Government agencies in Scotland, encourages civic participation and promotes healthy, safe neighbourhoods for its constituency of close to 110,000.

Angus Council and its 7,000 employees, take great pride in supporting a growing range of public services, including the management of schools, roads, public transportation, housing and social services.

Business Needs

IT Services at Angus Council had been using Juniper Networks to allow the councils remote working employees, associated agencies such as social services and ancillary Government departments to access published applications, whilst working remotely. However, the solution had its flaws.

The Juniper solution was difficult to administer. There were performance issues and functionality limitations with Outlook Web Access. In addition to this IT Services could not securely provide access to one of its key applications, Forth Valley GIS, a geographic information management system.

The Council was concerned about the level of security Juniper could provide when allowing users to access Forth Valley GIS.

Employees and partner agencies need to look up information on maps using Forth Valley GIS and often need to do so from remote locations which weren't possible with the current infrastructure.

Other partner agencies were also using the mapping systems. For example, the Tayside Joint Valuation Board collects geographic information to develop the Property Valuation Roll, Council Tax Valuation List and the Electoral Register.



Study Facts

Customer:
Angus Council

Website:
www.angus.gov.uk

Industry:
Local Government

Challenges:

IT Services at the council found Juniper difficult to administer.

The solution had performance issues when providing access to certain functions with Outlook Web Access.

Benefits:

- Increased Efficiency
- Security
- Ease of Administration
- Flexibility
- High Availability

Services:
Microsoft IAG



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The Council's technical team tried several approaches to give employees better access to Forth Valley GIS, but time and again, they ran into the same challenge: they could provide access, but not a secure connection.

Not wanting to compromise their network's security, IT Services began looking at alternative solutions.

Solution

"The administration of the Juniper solution was proving to be quite time consuming," said Colin Milne, the Senior Support Engineer at Angus Council. "IT Services spent a significant amount of its time problem-solving and ensuring that our users were able to connect to the required applications."

Colin had previously attended a demonstration of Microsoft IAG; during which it became apparent to him that the solution would be much easier to administer, providing a secure method of remote access to any application with increased functionality.

Angus was keen to run IAG alongside the Juniper solution, to make the most of their current investment.

Colin Milne requested that Sapphire, Angus Council's preferred security partner, set up a proof of concept, allowing IAG and Juniper to run simultaneously while enabling simple remote administration controls.

During the proof of concept, it became obvious that the IAG solution, with its SSL VPN (secure socket layer virtual private network), a Web application firewall, and endpoint security management, would provide a new, higher level of security for the council's users whilst connecting. In addition to this, IAG was easier to administer and able to provide access to more applications than the Juniper solution.



"We did try to resolve our problems with Juniper," said Colin, "but after having reviewed both products it was evident to us that Juniper Networks could not provide the same level of secure access to required applications as IAG, nor did it have the same ease of administration."

Angus Council purchased the NS-IAG5000 with Microsoft Intelligent Application Gateway (IAG 2007) software with an additional appliance as fail over. Now, with IAG, employees and other users are able to access published applications, whether they're working from home, a client site, or a remote location. Furthermore, the connection is always secure: The Council's IT Services can dynamically grant or deny access to specific applications and data; they can set preferences based on specific users, the locations of sign-on, or the type of devices employees are using, For example, IT administrators may want to deny access to an employee logging on at an airport — or a laptop that hasn't been secured.



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Sapphire, one of the world's leading IAG teams, was onsite to install the product and ensure a seamless integration between all applications and the existing infrastructure. Since the installation, Angus Council has sent its IT administrators on the Sapphire IAG training course.

Benefits

Angus Council chose the IAG solution for the following benefits:

- Increased efficiency – Provides access to the required applications, including Forth Valley GIS, cutting the time that the IT Services previously spent on facilitating connections. Also, users now have secure and controlled anytime anywhere access to their required published applications.
- Security – Provides more security than the Council's previously deployed solution, easing concerns about sharing sensitive information with Government departments.
- Ease of administration – Provides a secure remote access solution which is easy to administer.
- Flexibility – Works alongside Juniper to maximise existing investments, while providing access to all required applications – something Juniper could not provide.
- High Availability – Eliminates concerns of the system failing: an additional appliance provides fail over relief.

For More Information

Contact us today on 0845 58 27001 or visit www.sapphire.net to learn more about how we can contribute to the success of your business.