

Link-Connect

Bank Fashion – a Case Study

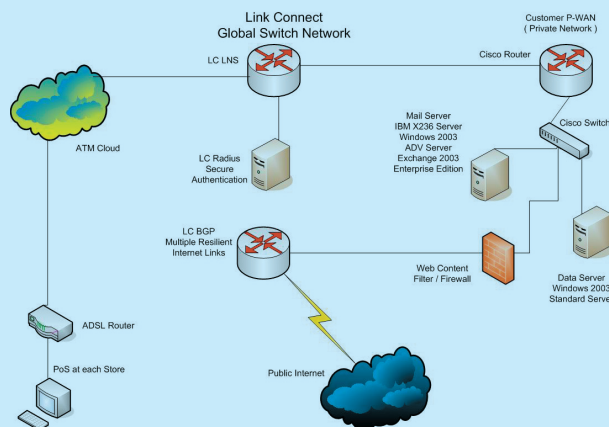
Based predominately in the North of England, Bank Fashion are retail specialists in high end fashion, featuring leading brands such as Adidas, Ted Baker, Firetrap, and Bench alongside quality emerging brands like Superdry, Fly 53, Henleys, and Vero Moda. More exclusive than the local high street, yet not as intimidating as a fashion boutique. With around 40 stores, the company has grown steadily since launching in 1994 and has its sights firmly set on expanding to at least 100 stores nationwide.

With a growing network of stores – and further expansion in mind – Bank Fashion were looking for a low cost, flexible, and scaleable solution for their data transfer and communication requirements.

Link-Connect were commissioned to implement and manage a new system utilising cutting edge technologies and this now handles all data requirements for Bank Fashion including VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) and email.

How Does it Work?

The system is essentially a VPN replacement known as a Private Wide Area Network (PWAN). The Bank Fashion PWAN acts as a private network for the community of stores and because it's a private network (with no internet access*) there is no need to install firewalls at each site. This in itself allows for vastly increased transfer speed for files and data.



A central server, based in Link-Connect's Cisco based network situated in Docklands on the backbone of the UK Internet, contains all data content allowing stores extremely quick access to information. A Smart Router lies at the heart of the system, enabling a variety of connections including ADSL, SDSL, leased lines, ISDN, and manages these connections such that if one goes down, the system will automatically switch to an alternative without any interruption of service. It's a low-cost way to provide superior resilience and bandwidth at HQ.

The Benefits

- Average transaction time was reduced from 30 seconds to just 4 seconds – the difference between a sale and a lost sale in many cases.
- Previous VoIP reliability problems were resolved upon implementation of the system
- No VPNs or firewalls to set up – this represents a huge cost saving
- Significantly reduced hardware costs - minimal hardware means less initial cost, less to fail, and less to manage.

Bank Fashion now enjoy a flexible, low-cost solution which allows fast, secure, reliable data transfer. It is also easily scaleable – an important consideration to allow for the proposed growth of the organisation

**Internet access can be made available for specific branches if necessary – this is usually controlled by the company's head office and at management's discretion.*

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