

# Customer Case Study.

## Total communications solution.

Gleeson.

Gleeson Group is one of the largest distributors of beverage products in Ireland from Tipperary Natural Mineral Water and Finches soft drinks to Bavaria beer and Merry's whiskey and cream liqueur. In terms of revenue it is one of the Top 20 private firms in Ireland. It was acquired more recently by drinks group C&C at a valuation of 58m.

### BUSINESS CHALLENGE

With 11 fully owned distribution hubs, a manufacturing centre in Borrisoleigh, Co Tipperary and a headquarters in Dublin, a reliable and secure communications network between sites and for over 60 reps on the road was essential.

"We had creaking on premise email servers running in our Dublin and Borrisoleigh sites," comments Conor Kinane, IT Manager, Gleeson Group. "It could not deliver direct push email. From a professional and security point of view it is important that customers receive emails from a Gleeson Group address rather than individual rep's Gmail or Hotmail accounts. Plus we had no centralised contacts so if a handset was lost it was difficult to recover the contacts."

With about 650 employees, Gleeson has a small internal IT team of just two people. "A lot of our time was spent on fire fighting, administration and upgrading in order to keep the email servers up and running 24 X 7," points out Kinane.

The second big challenge was the cost and reliability of the MPLS network which connected the company's hubs and sites around the country. "With the incumbent provider the cost of the MPLS was very high,

the reliability was not great and getting back up if a line went down was a nightmare," says Kinane.

### SOLUTION

Gleeson Group explored the implications of installing an on premise Microsoft Exchange email server in order to achieve enterprise class email. "When we explored this we found that it would be costly to install and administer," says Kinane.

Gleeson Group was already using Three mobile and fixed lines. "Three had a look at our situation and suggested we could add Microsoft 365 at low cost to our existing plan," says Kinane.

Microsoft Office 365 is Microsoft's cloud solution which provides secure, anywhere access to email and calendars, Office web apps, instant messaging, conferencing and file sharing. It includes the familiar Office packages such as Word, PowerPoint, Exchange and Excel. For companies without one, it even incorporates a website builder. This all comes with one bill from Three.

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Three.ie

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Of particular interest to Gleeson Group was access to Exchange Online. This provides business class email, calendar and contacts on PC, phone and web. Users can retrieve email, calendars and contacts from almost anywhere using their computer, browser, or phone.

It includes heavy duty 25 GB user mailbox of up to 25 MB. Easy-to-use online management tools allow IT manage user permissions and service settings as well as easily set up new email addresses.

Working with Three, Gleeson trialled Microsoft 365 with 16 users and then rolled it out to 300.

Three's ICT team also came up with a solution to the inter sitecommunications issue with its managed WAN solution. Three's Managed WAN allows you to connect your head office and remote sites over a fully managed IP network. Three Managed WAN is a purpose built resilient MPLS infrastructure. This infrastructure allows Three to design and provide the use of diverse access methods to form an integrated Wide Area Network solution to suit customers' individual requirements and circumstances.

This was provided at lower cost, greater support and increased redundancy that the incumbent provider could offer. "It made a huge difference in terms of reassurance and implementation that we could secure a total communications solution from the one provider in Three," comments Kinane

#### RESULTS/BENEFITS

"We can now do business any time, from any location," says Kinane. "All our reps are supplied with netbooks and they can securely access the email server and send Gleeson Group emails from home, a hotel, a customer site or on the road."

As mobile phones come up for replacement users are being supplied with Nokia Lumia 800 handsets which are fully compatible with Microsoft. Other devices including Apple and Androids can also use the email. Contacts are centralised so that they remain in the company if handsets are lost or staff leave.

The monthly cost includes support. "We have saved a day a week or almost a week a month in terms of IT time leaving us to focus on more strategic and business critical issues," says Kinane. "The Three support was terrific. During the implementation an Three engineer was assigned to us who held our hand every step of the way. We've had very few issues but if we do Three support is very responsive." The new MPLS data network has also boosted productivity. "If a line goes down Three chases that up with eircom.

In addition, there is built in resilience. For example if a line is down it switches into Three's 3G network which has country wide coverage and makes sure we are always online and available to customers." Linda O'Leary, account director of Three which operates the Three brand in Ireland added, "An increasing number of Irish businesses, like Gleeson Group, are discovering that Three is a Total Communications Provider, not just a supplier of mobile services."

To find out more.  
Call our Business Team on 1850 200 740



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