

KINGFISHER PLC

Group Hosting Area

CASE STUDY

Kingfisher, Europe's leading home improvement group, is a geographically diverse retailer operating approximately 900 stores globally. It operates in eight countries across Europe and Asia and generates sales in excess of £10 billion. Over six million customers are served in-store every week, from everyday DIYers to trade professionals. The Kingfisher brands; B&Q, Castorama; Brico Depot; ScrewFix and Koctas, employ over 80,000 staff worldwide.

SUMMARY

COMPANY: Kingfisher Plc Group

INDUSTRY: Retail

CHALLENGE: Years of acquisitions & mergers mean that Kingfisher IT Services (KITS) is made up of disparate infrastructures consisting of a variety of technologies and solutions. Physical consolidation was seen as a priority and a need for a group-hosting infrastructure that linked the "legacy islands" was defined.

The objective was to provide users with access to shared systems from any Kingfisher Operating Company. The shared area will enable KITS to rapidly deploy shared systems thus aligning with their "Delivering Value" plan and business expansion across all market sectors.

SOLUTION: Provide Kingfisher with a clear framework for Core Network Services focusing on an integrated delivery of DNS, DHCP, and IP Address Management (DDI) thus enabling KITS to integrate the various operating companies and rapidly provision new services into the group hosting area.

The revised framework also integrates into legacy infrastructures and for the first time provides a global view of the IP addressing estate across the entire Kingfisher Group.

BENEFIT:

- The ability to integrate disparate operating company infrastructures and the rapid deployment of business systems into the group hosting area.
- Operational and technical issues overcome with improved stability, service availability, supportability and management information.
- An improved ability to relate individual project activity to an overall group strategy by providing a single global view of the Kingfisher IP estate.

Kingfisher has a clear aim - to be the world's leading local home improvement retailer by making it easier for people to have better and more sustainable homes. This means offering the best choice of the latest, high quality products and services in a way most convenient to their local customers.

In 2008 Kingfisher launched its seven point "Delivering Value" plan with the aim of improving returns to its shareholders, which apart from driving up profit in established markets, focuses on expansion of the business across all market sectors thereby growing total sales and market share.

THE CHALLENGE:

Kingfisher IT Services (KITS) was formed with a mandate to deliver robust but cost effective IT solutions to the various Kingfisher Group Operating entities, and has developed a strategy to exploit the economies of scale afforded by pooling resources wherever possible. Years of acquisitions & mergers mean that KITS is made up of disparate infrastructures consisting of a variety of technologies and solutions.

Physical consolidation was seen as a priority and a need for a group-hosting infrastructure that linked the "legacy islands" was defined. The objective was to provide users with access to shared systems from any Kingfisher Operating Company. The shared area will enable KITS to rapidly deploy shared systems thus aligning with the "Delivering Value" plan and business expansion across all market sectors.

A number of critical services were required within the Kingfisher network to facilitate the delivery of a reliable, useable, manageable and secure group hosting area. These services included Active Directory, DNS, IP address management and NTP.

- The integration of the various operating company's infrastructures had resulted in the deployment of many complex domain trusts and DNS structures. In addition, and in order to avoid address overlap, a complex environment of Network Address Translation (NAT) policies existed. This was exacerbated by the fact that DNS connectivity over NAT did not function in many environments.
- The DNS namespaces across the operating companies had totally different namespace designs. This prevented the deployment of an authoritative DNS system for the enterprise. Simplification through centralised access was impossible, resulting in large amounts of customization to integrate systems.
- Various departments within various operating companies performed IP address management manually. This was often managed by spreadsheets and disparate DNS systems that proved very hard to maintain.
- There was no single view of the IP address estate across the Kingfisher Group. This led to wide spread overlapping IP address allocation and the proliferation of complex NAT policies.
- The current Network Time Protocol (NTP) deployment was unreliable and resulted in system administrators relying solely on Internet based time sources.

THE SOLUTION:

Gyrocom were engaged to provide Kingfisher with a clear framework for Core Network Services. This focused on an integrated delivery of DNS, DHCP, and IP Address Management (DDI) and enables KITS to integrate the various operating companies and rapidly provision new services into the group hosting area. The revised framework also integrates into legacy infrastructures and for the first time provides a global view of the IP addressing estate across the entire Kingfisher Group.

Gyrocom's approach was to apply high-level resource in order to better understand the technical, operational and business priorities required to build a complete picture. A detailed program of works was undertaken to design, implement and manage a DDI infrastructure that would provide Kingfisher with the required flexibility and efficiency improvements. Gyrocom's solution was able to provide this through the following functionality:

- Centralised management in all aspects of the DDI platform for the control of the IP estate and distribution of a statum-1 time source.
- Increased efficiency and productivity by integrating DNS, DHCP, IPAM and NTP onto a single platform.
- Role based access to enable disparate organizational groups to carry out day-to-day operations while aligned to a central group policy.
- Simplification of automated routine tasks, such as the adding or deleting of DNS records, allocation of IP addresses, and automating backup and restore procedures.
- High availability and resilient deployment in order to reduce unplanned network outages.
- Automation of infrastructure monitoring and reporting in order to provide easy access to management information for the simplification of troubleshooting activities.

“

I have worked with Gyrocom in a previous role and did not hesitate to engage with them at Kingfisher. Group services are a pivotal element of our overall strategy and Gyrocom's approach has fully supported this endeavour. I look forward to a continued successful relationship in the future. ”

David Haycocks
Head of Services UK & Continental Europe –
Kingfisher IT Services

THE BENEFIT:

Gyrocom's engagement with Kingfisher has provided the following key benefits:

- The ability to integrate disparate operating company infrastructures and the rapid deployment of business systems into the group hosting area.
- Operational and technical issues have been overcome and have provided:
 - Improved stability
 - Improved service availability
 - Improved supportability
 - Improved management information
 - Reduced complexity
 - Increased efficiency
- An improved ability to relate individual project activity to an overall group strategy by providing a single global view of the Kingfisher IP estate.

FIND OUT HOW GYROCOM CAN HELP YOUR BUSINESS.

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