



# Robust IT refresh and upgrade

Cockett Marine Oil updates IT infrastructure and introduces virtualisation

Cockett Marine Oil has its headquarters in the UK and eight satellite offices that are located around the world. Last year, they decided to refresh their IT infrastructure, centralise data storage, introduce virtualisation and update their IT systems. Additionally, due to the geographic nature of the business, they needed extended-hours support to cover all nine locations.

  
www.cockettgroup.com

## BACKGROUND BUSINESS NEED

The very nature of the work that Cockett Marine Oil handles (assisting bunker buyers, trading in oil in real time and achieving the most competitive prices every day, year round), calls for high levels of resilience and robustness in the IT systems that they use.

“Our existing infrastructure was more than six years old and we felt it was time to upgrade all of our existing systems. As we still only have a small internal IT department that handles day to-day tasks, we invited Network Interlinks to design, implement and (subsequently) support a new infrastructure,” says Andrew Deer, IT Manager at Cockett Marine Oil.

“Virtualisation was the obvious route for us as it means greater levels of resilience, introduces much greater flexibility and gives us the ability to split services,” he comments. “Network Interlinks not only has the necessary knowledge but a great deal of past experience that they can draw upon. They could knowledgeably advise us on best practice methodology and what would be the most suitable solution for us.”

After a consultation process led by Network Interlinks (as an information gathering process), a new design of the working environment was proposed. The company were able to install fewer physical servers - saving on power consumption, the need for air conditioning, using less space as well as the added advantage of reducing hardware maintenance costs.

## SOLUTION SUMMARY

- Reduced costs of hardware, maintenance, power, and air conditioning
- Reduced number of physical servers - less floor space required
- Greater flexibility
- Ability to split services
- Quicker data recovery times
- Improved availability and business continuity
- Readiness for disaster recovery
- Greater business efficiencies and no disruption to end users.

“The beauty of virtualisation is that we can set up dedicated servers for specific tasks such as print. It gives us more flexibility without interrupting end users - an important consideration,” says Andrew. “We can also be more adventurous. We can make changes and add new servers when we need to and be more responsive to our business needs.”

## SOLUTION

### Robust and resilient platforms

“Essentially we have redesigned the company in terms of IT, with robust and resilient platforms,” says Andrew. “Ultimately it’s only the desktop PCs that have stayed the same.”

The partnership with Network Interlinks was an important element in this upgrade. “They have been there from the outset of the project, consulting and determining our requirements. Using this technical groundwork, they came up with the solution design and they were constantly there during the implementation of the new operating systems, hardware and software,” comments Andrew. “Now that the new infrastructure is in place, we have also employed them for their support services.”

“We were happy to continue our partnership with Network Interlinks. As a trusted supplier, we chose not to go out to tender as I was confident they had the complementary skills (to our internal IT resource) and necessary experience to build the right solution that would satisfactorily upgrade our infrastructure.”

“Generally it was a good experience and despite any unforeseen issues we kept within budget,” remarked Andrew. The company now has the building blocks in place to enable business continuity and disaster recovery, ready for phase two - replicating data offsite.



*“Virtualisation was the obvious route for us and gives us more flexibility without interrupting end users in their daily tasks”*

ANDREW DEER, COCKETT MARINE OIL

## OUTCOME

### Extended Hours Support

“At Cockett Marine Oil, we selected a high level of support (Response Plus) from Network Interlinks as initially we needed to make contact quite frequently. However, as our in-house expertise and understanding of the solution has improved, the nature of support has changed too,” says Andrew. “Now, we tend to bounce ideas off Network Interlinks. They are definitely more adept and experienced in problem solving.” Andrew feels confident that there are issues where for example, he can rely on Network Interlinks’s strong relationships with ISP providers to resolve issues much faster and more effectively than he would himself.

“We have extended hours support as we need to cover working hours in both the U.S. and Australia. If a problem arises, as luck would have it, towards the end of the working day, I’d rather feel secure in the knowledge that it can be fixed the same day.”

What extended hours Response Plus support covers:

- Supporting core infrastructure (not the desktop PCs), the Citrix Servers, Virtual Environment, Communications, Data Storage.
- Telephone support (between the hours of 9am and 5:30pm GMT): guaranteed response within 30 minutes
- Out-of-hours Telephone Support (between the hours of 6-8am and 5:30-10:30pm GMT) guaranteed response within an hour.
- Unlimited telephone support
- Remote support and diagnostics within 30 minutes of escalation
- Escalated to chargeable site visit as specified in Service Level Agreement
- Remote proactive monitoring of Servers
- Remote systems administration
- Service review meeting every four months.



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