

Success story - CityFibre based Ethernet



Vale Communications



Snapshot

Vale Communications is a specialist provider of telecoms solutions to over 300 private hire taxi firms, building a specific niche for its business and positioning itself as a market-leading expert in this area.

The requirement

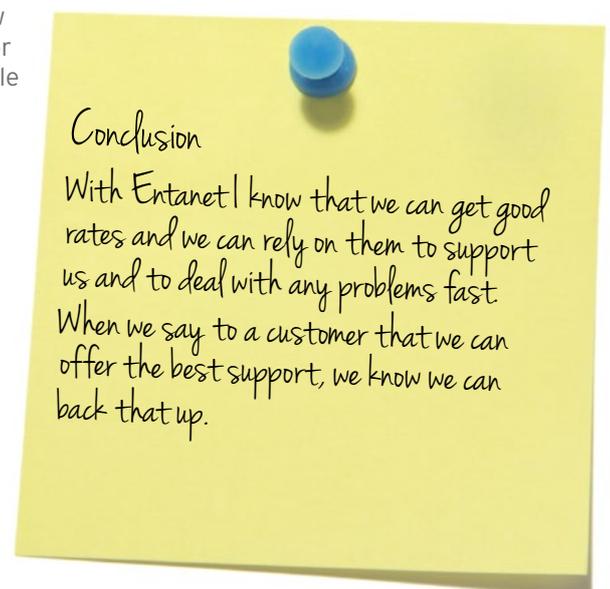
As connectivity becomes increasingly business critical for its customers, Vale Communications wanted to establish a preferred or primary supplier relationship with a connectivity provider it knew it could rely upon for superior support and quality.

The solution

After a bad experience with a competing supplier, Vale Communications strengthened its bond with Entanet following the appointment of a new proactive account manager and Entanet is now its supplier of choice for all connectivity solutions, especially CityFibre based Ethernet which Vale has found to be a highly competitive option for its customers.

The benefits

- Complete peace of mind in the superior levels of support provided at every stage of the process and the quality of the services delivered.
- Access to a new highly competitive portfolio of Entanet's CityFibre based products that provide faster installation times and gigabit capable speed options, often all for much lower pricing than the customer's current contract.
- Strengthened relationships with their existing customers as they endeavour to save them money and provide faster speeds by switching to CityFibre based Ethernet and an ever improving relationship with Entanet.



Conclusion

With Entanet I know that we can get good rates and we can rely on them to support us and to deal with any problems fast. When we say to a customer that we can offer the best support, we know we can back that up.



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In-depth

Never a bad day

For Vale Communications, Entanet has become the primary and preferred communications supplier - but that has not always been the case, as Barry Higgins, Business Development Manager at Vale explains

Based in Camberley, Vale Communications is a specialist provider of telecoms solutions and over the years has developed its own niche amongst private hire taxi firms. It has over 400 business customers all over the UK, and around 300 of these are taxi firms, so Vale has really built quite a niche for itself and is probably the most prominent provider and the market-leading expert in this market.

For taxi firms, efficient, effective voice communications are obviously of vital importance, as Barry Higgins, Business Development Manager at Vale explains. "There are so many different technologies that they can use now, and it's not just a normal office, where you would just put in broadband and voice lines and that's just about it, there are systems such as IVR for automated bookings and direct driver-to-customer calling. You have to go into it in-depth and the phone system has to be able to talk to their call dispatch software, and that's not something everybody can do.

"As technology has moved forward, the old analogue lines and ISDN are being replaced by SIP technology for Internet calls. That's making broadband connectivity very important to the customer. If the line goes down, they can't take any bookings and their business will suffer."

Seeking quality

When Barry joined the business in 2015, Vale was already using Entanet as one of its broadband suppliers. But, with connectivity becoming more and more important to its taxi firm customers, Vale was looking to work with a preferred or primary supplier that could offer a higher level of quality and service. Initially, it chose to work with a different partner.

"They promised the world, as people often do, but after a few months they just started letting us down. The main thing though, was the attitude of their account managers. If you wanted to buy something or had a customer that wanted a leased line or a more expensive connection, they'd be all over it and really helpful. But, for the day-to-day things, like an FTTC or an ADSL connection, they didn't really want to know - they'd just tell you to speak to someone in support."

Vale also had a poor experience with another of its connectivity suppliers. This company had been very good in the past and Vale had several good contacts. But when they decided to outsource technical support to Bulgaria, Vale found that the service levels dropped and the personal aspect of the service all but disappeared.

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Open door

These disappointments meant that the door was very much open for a reliable supplier to step in and provide the kind of service and partnership that Vale really needed. At about this time, Entanet had allocated a new account manager to Vale and the added attention and focus this gave them was something Barry noticed and appreciated immediately.

“At the time we just had a few connections with Entanet, but we did not really use them much for some reason. The new account manager came along and was very proactive. If there were any new products that he felt could be of benefit to us, he would let us know. He wouldn’t just fire across an email either, he’d actually call me and explain how it could help us. I found that quite refreshing.”

From this point on, the two companies started to build more of a relationship and the partnership has since grown and trust has built up to the point where Entanet has become Vale’s primary connectivity supplier.

Helpful people

Barry has been hugely impressed with the support Vale has received from Entanet. “With Entanet you always seem to get through to people who are knowledgeable and helpful. And things just seem to get done quicker - you always get updated. The support is really, really good.”

What’s notable about Entanet, he says, is that all its different business functions seem to be equally good.

“Normally, there would be one department that stands out, so their sales process might be really good, but their support might be lacking, or their accounts department might miss things. With Entanet, it’s good across the whole business - whoever you speak to is spot-on.

“For example, we recently had to make a couple of small changes to a circuit; we sent an email off to Entanet customer support and they came straight back, telling us that they’d been done. We never have to think about chasing Entanet. With other suppliers we’d have to chase even small changes like that and getting hold of someone who is dealing with it would be virtually impossible. With Entanet we get a ticket number straight away and the name of the person who is dealing with it. That just makes my life so much easier, because we don’t have to keep chasing them up.”

Valuable service

This exceptional level of service is especially valuable when Vale is installing an important connection, such as a new leased line, says Barry.

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"It's usually a three-month process to get a leased line installed and with other suppliers, I would have to have a spreadsheet and call them regularly to find out what was happening. With Entanet I will get an update that tells me when something is going to happen and when the next update will be due, unless anything changes. And I will always, always get that update - and if something happens, they'll let me know sooner. With Entanet, I don't have to think about it all the time. It's just a nice smooth process and that takes away a lot of the headache for me."

Barry says that there is no single piece of business he can recall that Vale has not won or been able to complete because of Entanet; the supplier has been directly supportive in almost all the new connectivity contracts we have been winning.

"With other suppliers, I would be able to pick out a deal - with Entanet, I can't, because every single one that we do, is good. They provide a really solid and consistent performance - it's not up and down like it is with other suppliers. They are very competitive on pricing too and other suppliers just can't get near them on a lot of the circuits."

First choice

Entanet has now become the preferred, first-choice communications provider for Vale Communications. Barry says that they will only use other suppliers where expressly asked to or where they are contractually bound, and their hands are tied.

"Our customers totally trust us because they know that we know the business. A lot of my customers will get approached by other communications companies but won't entertain them because they have a long relationship with us and will always ask us for advice. There are a lot of companies out there who will chuck out really cheap deals; with us it's about the service and the support we deliver."

Barry also likes the direction the Entanet business is taking and Vale has quickly become an enthusiastic advocate of the CityFibre services now available via Entanet. As well as offering tremendous speeds, these offerings are extremely price-competitive, says Barry.

"Our account manager contacted us to talk about them and we do have customers in some of the coverage areas, so we've looked at that together. The pricing is very competitive, and the speed of the installations is incredible. We have cancelled a number of leased lines with other suppliers and when they have contacted us to ask us why, they just can't get anywhere near the pricing."

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Fast installation

Entanet has been able to have CityFibre circuits live within a month of the initial survey being carried out, says Barry. With other suppliers, Vale might normally expect to wait three months or more for a leased line installation.

Vale has already swapped several leased lines over to CityFibre and Barry expects there to be more. "When I know it is going to be a winner for the customer and a winner for ourselves, then we're always going to look to do that, because it makes it easier for everyone."

The CityFibre offerings are attractive because they are faster and cheaper for the customer - and for Vale Communications, it's just as profitable too. "Say I have a customer that is on a 30Mbps leased line now, I can offer them a 100Mbps CityFibre circuit for less than what they are paying at the moment, so I can offer them three times the speed for less money.

"The customer is over the moon and the buy price is so good, we can offer a better deal and stay profitable. That's very important when there are so many other companies out there approaching our customers with low-cost deals. It means we can be competitive but still make a profit. We can offer competitive rates and we have the support to back it up."

All the signs since the CityFibre and Entanet merger have been hugely positive. Entanet has continued to deliver great prices and support and the addition of the CityFibre services has added a new dimension to the proposition.

Fast installation

In the future, Barry can only see the partnership between Vale Communications and Entanet getting stronger. He is entirely confident the supplier can not only meet customer demands for bandwidth and competitive pricing, especially now that it has the CityFibre offerings in its portfolio, but also provide the highest quality of service.

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Entanet's approach suits Vale Communications and its customers very well, says Barry, who wonders if perhaps the sun must always be shining on Telford. "Everyone I speak to in every department at Entanet - sales, accounts, support, provisioning, customer services - is always happy, positive and helpful. Everyone has a bad day now and then, but with Entanet, you never feel that they do."

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