



About Eclectic Clubs & Bars

Eclectic Clubs & Bars is a chain of high class nightspots. There are currently 13 venues across the UK and capacities of the venues range from 100 to 650.

Project Overview

Business Requirement

- Fast, secure, reliable network infrastructure to connect 13 sites throughout the UK

Solution

- IP VPN provided a future proof network with increased security and scalability for growth

Business Value

- Improvements in security and resiliency led to an increase in reliability and communication across all sites

Industry Focus

- A chain of bars catering for a range of customers in key towns and cities across the UK

Although not the cheapest, Zen's proposal was very competitive and offered the best value for money that ticked all our boxes.

Richard Price, IT Manager
Eclectic Clubs & Bars

That's Zen thinking

Eclectic raises the bar with Zen's IP VPN

The Challenge

Eclectic had a private IP-based wide area network in place which was built using ADSL broadband. Connectivity at each site was provided using a variety of ADSL circuits which were backhauled to Head Office over a 2Mbps BT central pipe. Eclectic were effectively operating as their own ISP.

Internet access for all branch sites and Head Office was provided with a 2Mbps leased line at Head Office, although there was no resiliency for this connection.

Internet security was provided at the Head Office by an ISA server which was managed in house by Eclectic's IT Manager. A separate device was used to terminate IP Sec VPN tunnels from each site.

Eclectic's main concern with their incumbent network design was the lack of resiliency on the BT central pipe. If this were to fail then Eclectic would lose connectivity between sites and Head Office preventing delivery of electronic point of sale (EPOS) data, e-mail retrieval, and shared applications. They would also lose Internet traffic for all sites and inter-site traffic.

The costs of managing their ADSL connectivity themselves throughout the UK, with the absence of an ISP, had also become a huge burden.



“We went through what the existing network offered and how it worked and Zen gave us all the same functionality with the IP VPN without exception to make the change as easy as possible.”

Richard Price, IT Manager at Eclectic Clubs & Bars

The Solution

The key requirements for Eclectic were a reliable, scalable and secure network. We recommended that Eclectic Clubs & Bars upgrade their current IPSec infrastructure to a dedicated IP Virtual Private Network (IP VPN) solution.

Eclectic connected their Head Office to the IP VPN using a robust 2Mbps leased line providing guaranteed throughput and backed by a Service Level Agreement. The primary leased line has an ADSL Backup circuit providing transparent circuit resiliency.

Pre-configured Cisco hardware was used to terminate the primary circuit and included a 4 Hour onsite response in case of hardware faults. In the unlikely event of hardware failure or loss of both circuits at Head Office, inter-site traffic and site access to the Internet remains unaffected.

Each site connects to the IP VPN using ADSL broadband and pre-configured Thomson hardware. The automatic configuration feature allows all sites to join the IP VPN with minimal effort required from Eclectic.

Once each site was connected and able to securely share data in confidence, the next step was to provide Internet access in to the IP VPN.

Breakout to the public Internet was provided from our data centre and secured by a managed FortiGate UTM firewall providing deep content packet inspection and protection against spam, viruses, and network intrusions.

“We had a static network that was stable and mostly just worked but was poorly supported from the supplier and didn't give any scope for change/upgrade. I also wanted to get away from our Head Office being the single point of failure with all internet traffic coming through there” Richard Price, IT Manager at Eclectic Clubs & Bars commented.



The Implementation

A Prince 2 certified Project Manager was assigned to Eclectic and given full responsibility for the successful deployment of the IP VPN solution.

The Project Manager met with Eclectic's IT Manager, Richard Price, to discuss every aspect of the project, in particular Eclectic's concerns about resiliency, support, and migrating from their incumbent network to the IP VPN.

Following a consultative process between Zen and Eclectic, a project plan was created, agreed, and incorporated any risks or issues that may arise and potentially have an impact on the project.

The Project Manager then set up a virtual team internally and co-ordinated the transition of Eclectic to the new network with minimal disruption.

It was very important that the network was implemented in an acceptable and timely manner with minimal disruption to other sites. It was planned to migrate all sites to the IP VPN over two weeks to allow the Eclectic IT Manager to install hardware at each site.

To allow this to happen, the new IP VPN network and the incumbent ADSL network had to run alongside and communicate with each other during the migration period.

“Zen accommodated the migration from the old network to the new so that both were running side by side reliably while the migration took place.”



Benefits of IP VPN

IP VPN provides a completely private wide area network for your business, offering prioritisation of key applications and corporate grade Unified Threat Management (UTM) Internet Security for all participating sites.

Key benefits of the solution include:

- Security
- Reliability
- Performance
- Scalability
- Network Convergence
- Controlled Internet Breakout

The Benefits

Implementation and timely delivery of the IP VPN solution vastly improved the security and resiliency of the network. Staff at all sites now had secure, reliable and fast access to systems and the Internet.

The IP VPN ensures communications between sites is secure and as no expensive hardware was required at each site it delivered a substantial reduction in total cost of ownership. This also meant there was no longer total reliance on Head Office infrastructure which delivered a significant increase in performance at a number of sites.

Eclectic could now benefit from corporate grade, secure Internet access for all of their sites which enabled them to decommission their VPN hardware at Head Office.

“The new IP VPN solution gives us the perfect platform to grow the network with the company and add on remote sites as we need them with very little effort.”

They could also make security changes to the centrally-hosted FortiGate UTM firewall that immediately impacted all 13 sites significantly reducing management costs.

We have effectively replaced Eclectic as the ISP to their sites. This means Eclectic now benefit from management and support provided by us instead of having to support everything themselves in house.

Eclectic have plans to grow their chain to 20 bars in the future. The IP VPN is well suited to these growth plans, and it is now much easier to add new sites as no complex firewalling and VPN tunnelling is required at each new site.

“Overall I am incredibly pleased with the move to Zen and I feel that as we centralise our environment into Colocation within Zen the benefits of working with Zen will continue.”

Zen Internet

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Zen Internet

Zen Internet, an independent Internet Service Provider (ISP), has been delivering services to business and residential users in the UK since 1995.

Led by founder and Managing Director Richard Tang, Zen's mission is to provide the best ISP service in the UK and is committed to investing in the latest technologies and providing high levels of service, support and reliability.

Zen's Portfolio

Whether you want a fast, reliable Internet connection, want to build an online presence, or need a server to provide hosted applications, we can help. Our portfolio includes:

Connectivity

- Broadband
- VoIP
- Leased Lines & Ethernet
- IP VPN
- Managed Firewalls

Hosting

- Domain Names
- Web Hosting
- Managed Hosting
- Dedicated Servers
- Co-location

Data Backup

