

SPITFIRE

NEWS

Winter '03

FOR THE LATEST COMMUNICATIONS AND I.T. NEWS, VIEWS AND ISSUES

SPITFIRE 118 242 GETS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

Tom Fellowes, Sales Director



The recent deregulation of Directory Enquires services has caused much confusion and many complaints from the public. Ironically the intention of OfTel (the telecoms industry's independent regulator) was to introduce greater choice and price competition for consumers by deregulating the directory enquiry service and ending BT's effective 192 monopoly. It was in this spirit that Spitfire entered the market to offer a quality, value for money service for all phone users.

All the predictions are that many of the initial entrants to the 118 market will fall away as competition weeds out the winners from the losers. Spitfire's combination of quality and fair pricing has already been acknowledged as a success in the national press

against many of the more high profile 118 services.

Readers of The Sunday Times may have noticed an article on page 2 of a recent issue (12 October 2003) regarding the accuracy of the new 118 directory enquiry services now available. In the performance table that accompanied the article Spitfire's 118 242 service was ranked third with an 80 per cent accuracy rate. The worst performing service achieving only a 20 per cent accuracy rate.

Along with poor accuracy, staff at some DQ Service Providers have also been accused of deliberately cutting off callers because they are incentivised to keep calls short.

Cont'd on page 2

in brief

ARSENAL PREMIERSHIP GAME WINNER

James Ireland from Alison Price Caterers was the first name out of the hat in our draw for two tickets to a premiership game at Arsenal. James, a keen Arsenal supporter, has chosen to attend the Arsenal v Manchester United game.



CHRISTMAS OPENING TIMES

Spitfire, with the exception of the Customer Services Department, will be closing for Christmas from 1pm on Christmas Eve to 8am on Monday 5th January.

The Customer Services call centre will be open from 9am to 5.30pm and queries or faults should be logged as normal by calling **020 7501 3030**. Outside these hours please continue to call our duty manager on **020 7622 6885**.

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Win A Digital Television Receiver



6-7 SBBC, PONTON ROAD
LONDON SW8 5BL



FOREWORD

Welcome to the latest issue of Spitfire News. We have plenty to tell you in this last issue of 2003 and I would like to also make you aware of some important developments in our service offerings.

I know many of our customers use private circuits leased from BT for business communications. Although more expensive than ADSL broadband, private circuits offer some important benefits. There are no contention issues with a leased private circuit so bandwidth is guaranteed and the resilience of private circuits is also greater than the normal ADSL broadband service.

Recently, BT has also launched a megastream Ethernet service for WANs (wide area networks) where there is close proximity between the linked offices.

Spitfire can offer private circuits and megastream Ethernet at a discount over BT Retail's own pricing structure. Private circuits are available in bandwidths ranging from 64Kb to 2Mb and beyond. To discuss your specific needs please contact our sales team on 020 7501 3000.

Fixed line voice call charging is another area where Spitfire is extremely cost competitive. Our minimum call charge is 1p versus many of our competitors who charge double or even treble this. If you are not sure of the minimum call billing tariff your organisation is paying, it is worth checking and the Spitfire team will be happy to provide a call cost analysis and comparison for you, should you require it.

At Spitfire we pride ourselves on the continual review and improvement of our service offerings. This applies to all aspects of our customer relationships including billing. Our billing software is now in its third generation and the increased sophistication of our billing platform means that we can incorporate system maintenance, fixed line call charges, ISP services, and mobile phone billing on one invoice. This saves on administration time and provides our customers with greater transparency for their Spitfire account management. Our in-house development team is already working on further enhancements to the billing systems, which should roll-out over the next six months.

I am also pleased to tell you that the group has completed its transition to the new ISO 9001:2000 standard. This recognises the processes we have put in place to ensure that we continually improve our performance and procedures.

Finally, I'd like to wish you all a very happy Christmas. 2003 has been an encouraging year for Spitfire and with the economic trends at home and abroad now showing improvement I think we can look forward to a prosperous New Year - we look forward to serving you in 2004!

JUSTIN ORDE
Joint Managing Director



Cont'd from page 1

To provide an accurate 118 service, Spitfire uses BT's database resources and call centre operations, while at the same time offering cost savings against BT's Directory Enquiry services. In this way Spitfire offers the best of all worlds - BT accuracy and resources coupled with cheaper billing!

Spitfire has three 118 Directory Enquiry services, suitable for different phone user groups:

118 242 - our standard UK landline service costs just 34p for a 30 second call, the average time it takes to get a number. Calling BT's own service costs 40p for 30 seconds.

118 252 - Spitfire's international directory enquiries number costs 99p to connect and 59p per minute, both charges are 1p less than BT's own service.

118 262 - Spitfire's directory enquiries for mobile users which offers an optional 'text and connect' service. Our service has a 59p connection charge with an 8p per minute call charge.

Some 118 operators charge a low connection charge but a high per minute charge. Callers should be aware that when using the connect service (where the operator connects the call for the user) the call continues to be charged at the full per minute billing rate, so a five minute call to get directions could cost £2 with some service providers, against 40p using Spitfire's 118262 text and connect service.

To ensure that your business benefits from Spitfire's accurate and value-for-money directory enquiries service, why not have 118 242 programmed into your phone system as a speed dial for staff. If you require technical advice on how to do this please call **020 7501 3030**.

GIVE THE GIFT OF TEXT THIS CHRISTMAS FROM ONLY £79.99

The surprise phenomenon of the mobile phone era has been the boom in SMS text messaging. People have found texting to be a quick, unobtrusive, convenient and cheap means of communication.

Recognising that many phone users would like the facility of texting via the normal, fixed line phone network, BT are introducing an SMS text messaging service for single analogue phone lines used in homes and offices. BT will not be charging an additional rental for the SMS service.

To make use of this service requires an SMS compatible wired or cordless phone and these should be in the shops in time for the Christmas present buying period. If an SMS text message is sent to a user without an SMS compatible phone, the message is converted into speech and read out to the recipient.

This really is an ideal Christmas present that will be welcomed by family members, friends and business colleagues of all ages.

If you would like to order an SMS compatible phone, please call us on 020 7501 3000.

SANDY'S NOT PAST HIS PEAK!

Last July, **Sandy Sinclair**, Project Manager at Spitfire, completed the '3 Peaks Challenge' with two friends - here he tells the story of the highs and lows of the Challenge.

Last spring I got a call from an old friend and ex Spitfire colleague, Gratton MacGiffin who said he fancied a challenge - the '3 Peaks Challenge' in fact. This consists of climbing the highest mountains in Scotland (Ben Nevis, 1,344 metres), England (Scafell Pike, 978 metres) and Wales (Snowdon, 1,085 metres) in one 24 hour period. Apparently I was also to be a part of this challenge as was our old friend Craig Boath.

The date set for our challenge attempt on the 3 Peaks was Friday, 4 July so there were a lot of logistics to get organised as well as sponsorship and charity fundraising. When the big day arrived I flew to Scotland and the three of us reached Fort William just after midday. After kit checks and a final meal our first ascent started at 5.00pm and we reached the summit of Ben Nevis at 7.30pm with bright sunshine and stunning views.

We made the descent in two hours and loaded up the Ford Galaxy people carrier (kindly donated for our Challenge by a rival comms company which we won't mention here) and were on our way to the Lake District. All too excited to sleep, despite climbing the highest peak in the UK, we arrived at the Scafell Pike in the early hours. The conditions were now cool and damp as we started our second ascent at 3.00am with head torches to guide the way.

The exhilaration felt at Ben Nevis was now replaced by the realisation of what we had taken on. A low cloud base meant we climbed in poor visibility losing the trail, and valuable time, on one occasion. As we climbed higher it got colder so at the summit there was no celebration, just time for a few minutes rest before starting down.

By 7.30am we were back in the Galaxy and setting off for Wales. I drove and the other two fell asleep. Even though the Galaxy was running low on fuel we pushed on to Snowdon only to find the Pen-y-Pas car park was full meaning we had to start walking from further away, adding nearly two extra kilometres to the final ascent.

Lack of sleep and sheer exhaustion (I'd been awake now 27 hours!) meant all enthusiasm had gone. The sheer will power not to let down our sponsors and supporters was our sole motivation at this point. Finally we summited in the respectable time of 21 hours 33 minutes. Gratton, Craig and I had raised £3,000 for water aid. After an overnight stop in Chester, we drove the Galaxy back to Edinburgh and said our goodbyes.



“Lack of sleep and sheer exhaustion...
...meant all enthusiasm had gone. The sheer will power not to let down our sponsors and supporters was our sole motivation at this point.”



Image from Palm

PDAs MEAN INCREASED PRODUCTIVITY

Simone Kemp

As a convinced technophile, I'm always surprised at how much resistance there is to technical innovations that can make working easier and more productive. Certainly the latest generation of PDAs (personal digital assistant) that combine the features of a personal organiser with the functionality of a mobile phone should make life a lot easier for many business users.

One of the key benefits is Unified Messaging, where all of a user's messages, whether voice mails, e-mails or faxes, are gathered in one electronic mail box which the user can access remotely using the

PDA/mobile phone. This makes message management so much easier. For example, using a Windows CE-based UM system, a voice mail can be saved as a Windows Wave file and then e-mailed to a colleague for audio play back.

Advances in PDA technology now mean that synchronising information with a desktop PC is simple and easy. Combining PDAs with mobile phone technology means users now have access to a host of new features to make working easier. Many of the latest units have an integrated camera which is more than just a gimmick. One of our customers uses the camera to record ideas while away on business and e-mails the images back to his office.

The latest generation of PDA/mobile phones use the GPRS signalling system so that they can operate virtually anywhere in the world including the United States, making them a must for the international business traveller.

Spitfire offers a range of PDA/mobile phones from leading manufacturers, such as Nokia, Ericsson and Palm. We also offer the increasingly popular Blackberry PDAs for workgroups. As a virtual service provider Spitfire can also offer a range of competitive and flexible tariff arrangements for the Vodafone and O2 networks.

For more about the latest generation of PDA/mobile phones call 020 7501 3000.



Image from Palm

NON GEOGRAPHIC NUMBERS

Using Non-Geographic numbers to market your company can provide a focus on customer care and help enhance your professional image. It has been proven that advertisers get a better response when a Non-Geographic number is used in adverts and it also means you can market your company nationally and maintain a local identity.

If you move, you can relocate without having to change your number and confusing your customers.

Calls to Non-Geographic numbers like 0800, 0870 and 0845 numbers are delivered to your existing telephone number(s) and lines so there is no disruption to your telephone service. Costs start from as little as £10 per month to rent a number. (The charges you pay vary depending on the type of Non-Geographic number chosen.)

Spitfire have a selection of numbers available, please call us on 020 7501 3000 if you are interested in enhancing your marketing with a Non-Geographic number.

BE AWARE - DRIVING WHILST HOLDING MOBILES

On December 1, it became an offence to use a hand-held phone, or similar device, when driving. The fixed penalty is £30, or up to £1,000 on conviction in court (£2,500 for drivers of goods vehicles, buses or coaches).

The new regulations only apply to hand-held devices, defined as something that "is or must be held at some point during the course of making or receiving a call or performing any other interactive communication function".

Hands-free equipment is not prohibited, and the Department for Transport (DfT) has confirmed that "pushing buttons on a phone while it is in a cradle or on the steering wheel or handlebars of a motorbike, for example, is not covered by the new offence, provided you don't hold the phone".

The DfT is clear that you still risk prosecution for failing to have proper control of a vehicle, if using a hands-free phone when driving.



Number	Cost to you	Cost to your customer
0870	Rebate is given for all calls received on the number	BT national rate of 6.7p* per minute
0845	Nothing	BT local rate of 3.36p* per minute
0800	3.95p* per minute for duration of call	Free

*all prices exclude Vat

NB: Oftel are currently reviewing the pricing of Non-Geographic Numbers and there is a strong possibility that these numbers will no longer be aligned with the historical 'Local' and National rates. This move will also impact on rebates paid to 0870 holders.

BT BROADBAND ENHANCED MAINTENANCE SERVICE

Georgina Baines, Customer Services Director



For peace of mind BT now offer a Total Care service for ADSL lines. This means for an additional charge of £12.50 per month your ADSL line is covered by an "enhanced fault repair" service meaning that any disruptions caused by your broadband line being out of service are minimised.

(This Total Care charge covers £9.20 for the Broadband service and £3.30 for the analogue line.)

If you are interested in taking out Total Care please call Customer Services on 020 7501 3030

GOOD SECURITY IS NEVER COMPLETE

Mark Bull



During recent months there have been several high profile news stories about hackers damaging important computer networks through opportunist attacks. I think the most significant lesson for IT managers to learn from these stories is that network security is an ongoing process that must be reviewed and revised constantly in line with current best practice.

Good network security includes firewalls (both software and hardware protection), anti-virus software and system back-ups. Spitfire recommends Cisco PIX security appliance firewalls and Symantec anti-virus software, because both set the bench mark for performance in their respective areas. Good housekeeping disciplines, such as regular changes of passwords that include both alpha and numeric characters, are also essential.

Spitfire offers a range of network security measures, some of which are included in our annual network maintenance contract. As part of the contract we will remotely check that your anti-virus software is working, that system back-up is working and we will check the network worklogs. Any

issues that we identify as part of these routine checks are notified to the customer by e-mail. Should customers require remedial work due to problems identified in a routine check, Spitfire can provide this at an additional cost.

Spitfire will also run a free of charge on-site security check for customers wishing to identify areas of weakness in their network security arrangements. Based on the security check, Spitfire will develop an action plan with a work schedule that Spitfire technicians can complete for the customer at an agreed charge.

Alternatively, Spitfire also offers tailored contracts covering a period of hours to perform network system maintenance, including patches and updates, as well as security checks.

Spitfire is a Cisco Premier Partner and Security/VPN Specialist. We employ engineers with full Cisco accredited training, so customers can be assured that they are receiving the best possible network security support. If you would like further information on the network security services offered by Spitfire, please call **020 7501 3000**.

SPITFIRE OFFERS 'VPN IN A BOX' SOLUTIONS FOR HOME WORKERS

Peter Walker

The demands of balancing domestic life and work plus the increasing cost and difficulty of business commuting are leading to the rise of the so called COHO - company, home office worker. New technology is making it easier to work from home whilst making full use of the company's IT network.

To facilitate this, Spitfire has developed a number of cost-effective VPN (Virtual Private Network) solutions for home workers, which we term 'VPN in a box'. This series of scaleable solutions begins with an entry-level package for a single home worker that costs just £50 to set up and £5 a month for ongoing support. A series of incremental packages will allow 5 to 100 additional home workers to be added to the VPN with provision for over 100 home workers if required.

Using the VPN technology over an always-on ADSL link means access costs are fixed with no dial-up costs for using the public phone network. Home workers log onto the company network in exactly the same way as they would if they were at the office, with access to all the network facilities. (Subject to the bandwidth requirements of specific applications and the speed of the connection.)

Properly managed COHO working can mean higher productivity as time spent travelling is devoted instead to productive work. It can also reduce overheads because field workers, such as sales and service staff, don't have to keep a desk in the office and can spend more time on territory.

If you would like more information about Spitfire's 'VPN in a box' solutions, please call **020 7501 3000**.



NETWORKS WILL GO WIRELESS

Mark Bull, IT Engineering Manager, and Peter Walker, ISP Engineering Manager, look at the pro's and con's of today's wireless technologies

While cable is still king for most voice and data networks, this is set to change. Advances in digital compression and signal encryption mean that wireless networks will replace cabling in many offices over the next decade.

Available right here and now are two technologies for office-based wireless data transmission. Bluetooth is a 'shortwire' standard designed to replace all the cables needed to link personal devices together, such as notebook PCs, presentation projectors, mobile phones, digital cameras, headsets, phones and so on.

Bluetooth has been developed by a consortium of manufacturers (the Bluetooth Special Interest Group) led by Ericsson, IBM, Intel, Nokia and Toshiba. The intention is to provide devices with an in-built method of communicating with other enabled devices conforming to the Bluetooth standard.

Bluetooth is not just intended for business use, but also for use with domestic electronics, such as MP3 players, televisions and even microwave ovens and fridges.

The Bluetooth range is 10 metres, extendible to 100 metres using an external signal amplifier. Up to eight Bluetooth devices can be linked in a 'piconet' for an ad hoc, temporary network.

The advantages of Bluetooth are that it uses very little power, does not require a 'line of sight' connection and is a royalty-free open technology, encouraging all manufacturers to use it as an industry standard. It is ideal for

personal mobility (termed WPAN - Wireless Personal Area Network) applications such as wire free telephone headsets.

Bluetooth-enabled products for business and domestic use are already on the market and more will appear in the course of 2004.

Wireless LAN technology is a 'longwire' replacement for the cable link from the desktop to the LAN hub. Range is 100 metres with an access point supporting approximately 30 clients. The Wireless Ethernet Compatibility Alliance has been formed by manufacturers, network operators and other interested groups to ensure standards conformity for WLAN technology.

WLANs have obvious benefits. Apart from allowing greater mobility and flexibility for office workers and making new 'hot desking' working patterns possible, enterprises can save a great deal of money on expensive cabling. Older buildings, not suitable for cabling can use a WLAN infrastructure, making 'character' buildings suitable for IT applications.

Soon WLAN technology will be advanced enough to support both voice and data traffic, allowing one wireless voice and data network to be used for all communications.

Beyond this, Wireless WANs are envisaged. The next generation cellular mobile phone technologies will support sophisticated data applications as well as mobile voice communication. The 'blue sky' possibilities this offers are practically limitless. Cellular systems always connected to the Internet will allow you to access



“The advantages of Bluetooth are that it uses very little power, does not require a ‘line of sight’ connection and is a royalty free open technology, encouraging all manufacturers to use it as an industry standard”

Image from Palm

your bank account details, conduct video conference calls, make car rental reservations etc. - all on the move.

Potential users of wireless should, however, be aware of the inherent security risks associated with such technologies.

In a traditional, well secured wired network, access to your network requires someone to have physical access to the wiring or network ports in your building before they can access and utilise your network resources.

This is not the case with a wireless network. It is effectively possible to access a wireless network from anywhere within range of a wireless access point. With modern wireless access points, this could theoretically include areas 100 metres or more from your building.

All commonly available modern wireless equipment can be configured by a competent engineer with basic security settings that will prevent all but the most determined potential intruder.

Where a wireless user has more stringent security requirements, there are a number of solutions available that can achieve an effective balance between security and cost.

At Spitfire we have a team of qualified network and security engineers who can help you find a solution that suits your unique requirements. For more information on wireless network applications for your organisation, please call Spitfire's network specialists on

020 7501 3000.



BACK OF THE CAB

THE HAMMERS STAY IN TOUCH WITH SPITFIRE



Today in professional football commercial success is as important as sporting success.

Recognising this, West Ham United as one of London's leading clubs has retail shops at its Boleyn Ground at Upton Park, at Barking Road in East

London and at the Lakeside shopping mall in Essex. Peter Longley, West Ham United's IT Manager asked Spitfire if it was possible to upgrade the existing ISDN 2e dial-up connection between the Upton Park Stadium and the shops/Training Ground to a faster, more cost effective method.

Spitfire recommended a virtual private network (VPN) to link the stores to the central IT network

and implemented this solution for the club stores and the Training Ground. The VPN information from the shop tills (more properly known as point of sale terminals) is sent directly back to the club's central computer network. This means information on sales volumes, revenue and stock is up to date allowing efficient management of resources. The system will also allow the stores to book tickets for customers to forthcoming matches online.

Spitfire has also been able to assist West Ham United with efficient business communications in a number of other ways. Recently West Ham United opened a new community centre in Beckton. The new community centre, which contains offices, dressing rooms and a full size artificial football pitch with floodlights was developed in partnership with the London Borough



of Newham and Fairview Homes. Spitfire installed the latest Panasonic KX-TDA phone system at the new community centre.

At the Boleyn Ground Spitfire has also implemented a number of communication solutions. For the media suite at the ground Spitfire installed ISDN2 digital phone links so that journalists can file copy directly from laptop

computers to their publications.

The communication links installed by Spitfire also allow live commentary from the ground by broadcasters.

To ensure efficient operation of all communications on match

days Spitfire provide an on-site engineer for all home games at Upton Park. Commenting on the communications support provided by Spitfire, Peter Longley for West Ham United

says, "Like any well run business we need reliable and efficient communications. In addition, because of the media attention the club attracts we also have to provide top class facilities for the sports journalists who report on our games. The advice, equipment and support that Spitfire provides for us ensures we have the very latest communication facilities to meet these demanding needs."



Competition

Spitfire is giving away a digital television receiver to the lucky winner of this month's wordsearch competition. The runner-up will receive a bluetooth cordless headset. Simply send your completed wordsearch entry to the address below or fax it on **020 7501 3131** by 15th Feb 2004. The winner will be the first name drawn out of the hat.

Spitfire Wordsearch
6-7 SBBC
Ponton Road
London
SW8 5BL

H	E	A	D	S	E	T	U	E	H
T	A	W	I	R	E	Q	M	R	T
A	N	N	I	A	U	M	O	I	O
N	P	U	D	R	N	O	B	F	O
A	I	M	O	S	E	T	I	T	T
L	O	W	R	C	F	E	L	I	E
O	V	I	S	O	S	R	E	P	U
C	A	L	L	S	U	I	E	S	L
P	L	O	A	T	B	T	D	E	B
M	I	S	S	E	L	E	R	I	W

can you find: HEADSET, BLUETOOTH, SPITFIRE, HANDSFREE, WIRELESS, DISCOUNT, MOBILE, VOIP, LOW, COST, CALLS, LAN

Name _____

Position _____

Company _____

Address _____

Tel _____

Email _____
