

# Spitfire News

for the latest communications news, views and comment

SUMMER 2013

## Call for back-up!

**Today, most businesses rely on internet connectivity to such an extent that the organisation is unable to function without this vital link. And with the growth of storage, services and applications hosted in the cloud, dependence on a fast and reliable internet connection is increasing all the time.**

So it would seem only prudent to have a back-up for any internet connection that is critical to an enterprise's commercial activity. This is brought into acute focus when one considers that all broadband

circuits have a BT 40 hour fix time – could your business be without internet connectivity for that long? ***Even Fibre Ethernet circuits have an eight hour fix time.***

Yet our research shows that only 10 per cent of Spitfire customers have back-up for their internet connectivity. The irony is that a back-up connection need not be expensive – we offer a range of back-up solutions starting from £7 a month – if internet connectivity is important to your business, then it is surely worth spending £84 a year?

We subsidise our internet back-up solutions because we want customers to have resilient internet connectivity. We offer simple manual failover options rising to fully automatic failover and restore solutions. **Wherever possible, our back-up solutions are routed over a separate network infrastructure from your primary link to ensure maximum resilience.**

**Free back-up Special Offer on Premium broadband solutions.**

*We're offering a FREE back-up circuit with any of our premium broadband products including ADSL 2+, fibre broadband, Annex M and SDSL M.*

*This offer is open for a limited period only to new customers and existing customers placing new orders.*

*Terms and conditions apply, so please contact your Spitfire Account Manager for further details now on 020 7501 3333.*



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# Foreword

by Harry Bowlby

Finance Director and Joint Managing Director



## Backup facilities for critical supplies can prevent material damage to your business

Last Tuesday, two of our managers walked into my office and reminded me that it was exactly one year since our move to the Printworks. Could we have a party to celebrate?

My recollection was that certain aspects of the move had been less than a party. Our old building was due to be demolished from 23 June, so we had to be into the new building for the start of the week commencing 18 June. We had been given practical completion on 11 June and all was nearly ready, but there was a problem with the electricity. The basement electrical switching room powering the comms room, stores and south wing of the offices had flooded with rain water and for a once more than justified need for Health and Safety the power had been turned off. No power to the comms room meant no working servers or routers, which meant little or no working office.

Enter generator stage south. One of our key goals for the new premises was an independent back up power supply and much time had been spent designing, obtaining permission for and implementing a 200 KW generator with UPS pack and switching panel. Now was the moment of truth. At the flick of a switch, the power source was switched over, the generator was started and all systems were back in business.

Our ongoing enthusiasm for back up systems is reflected in our headline front page offer and the launch of DualStream@SF to the immediate right. If you don't already have a back up circuit for your critical businesses internet access, please consider whether now would be a good time to obtain one.

*PS: In case you are interested the response to the party request was no!*



Spitfire's generator

## VoIP solutions win Editor's Choice Award

*Business Info* magazine has awarded Spitfire an 'Editor's Choice Award' for our VoIP telephony solutions. *Business Info* is a well-regarded B2B magazine dedicated to developments in business technology. The publication's Editor's Choice awards are given for outstanding achievement and carry a lot of prestige.

In its article the magazine states, "Spitfire offers a range of voice, Internet and UC solutions for business customers covering broadband, Ethernet, SIP Trunking and hosted and on-site phone systems and UC functionality", adding "As a network operator Spitfire provides end to end solutions that deliver real business benefits in terms of cost savings, improved reliability and customer service."

Susie Ward, Marketing & HR Director for Spitfire says, "This is a great endorsement from an independent business magazine of our advanced VoIP telephony solutions for business. Our SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service and SIP Trunks cut customer costs and improve productivity. They also provide additional important benefits such as business continuity in extreme weather situations as experienced during the last winter."



## DualStream®SF launched

**For customers who want a high bandwidth connectivity solution for voice and data, but cannot justify the £400 a month cost for an all fibre solution we have launched DualStream@SF.**

DualStream@SF is designed to replicate the benefits of a dedicated Fibre Ethernet Circuit at a significantly lower price point, bringing the business benefits of Fibre Ethernet within reach of almost all businesses – with the SF standing for Synthetic Fibre.

DualStream@SF consists of a Premium Fibre Broadband circuit for data use, delivering up to 76Mb downstream bandwidth and 20Mb upstream bandwidth, combined with a 2Mb uncontended (1:1) SDSLM Voice Approved circuit for use with Spitfire SIP (Voice over IP) services.

To provide resilience, both circuits run through a single business grade router and this manages the auto-failover between the two circuits. So if either circuit fails, both voice and data will route over the remaining live circuit. As the two circuits are delivered over different access networks there is even greater resilience.

Call 020 7501 3333 for further details.





# Partner seminar focuses on Ethernet services

Earlier this year we held a partner event in central London with over 50 of our 300 channel partners attending. In the first session partners heard details of Spitfire's Ethernet options including GEA Ethernet, EFM and Fibre Ethernet. The second session covered SIP Communicator™, Spitfire's hosted telephony service; Spitfire's SIP Trunk service; avoiding telephony fraud; and intelligent call routing. Formal presentations were followed by lunch and an opportunity to network.

Spitfire's Partner Service is aimed at enhancing the products and services offered by IT companies, consultants and other organisations that want to offer customers best-of-breed integrated services. Spitfire partners benefit from detailed product training, technical support and assistance.

Spitfire's Partner Service Manager, Nick Goodenough says of the event, "The relationship with our channel partners has to be based on good communications and the seminar events we hold have proved to be an excellent way of briefing our partners on our service portfolio, getting feedback and providing a forum for discussion."

If you are interested in partnering with Spitfire please contact the team on 0800 319 6500.



# Radio ads get to the Heart of comms

We are continuing our radio advertising campaign to promote our portfolio of cutting edge voice and IP connectivity products. The ads will run on Heart London and also Heart Thames Valley covering Berkshire and North Hampshire.

The ads will promote four technologies in Spitfire's advanced range of business communication services

including the SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service; Spitfire's SIP Trunks service; our extensive range of business broadband products including competitively priced VDSL, SDSL and ADSL circuits; and finally there is an

ad focusing on Ethernet to deliver high-speed internet connectivity for businesses.

Susie Ward, Marketing & HR Director says, "We have always taken an innovative approach to marketing, stepping outside the comfort zone of conventional business advertising channels. Communicating the benefits of sophisticated business communications technology in a 40 second radio commercial is a challenge. But I believe it is one that we have met successfully with this campaign. We have pioneered the use of video clips to explain and promote our services on our website and on YouTube, we also have a successful Twitter feed. Today's diverse media environment requires a multi-layered approach to marketing."



You can hear the new radio commercials at: [www.spitfire.co.uk](http://www.spitfire.co.uk)



Follow us on Twitter @SpitfireUpdates



# Pebble IT picks Spitfire for network services

Pebble IT is among a growing number of IT companies offering Spitfire's range of voice and network connectivity services to its customers. Based in Vauxhall, London, Pebble IT specialises in Apple Mac network support for businesses in the creative sector such as graphic design and advertising agencies. The company was established in 2006 and has 10 staff. "Our people are either in network engineering or tech support and

consultancy. We don't have any salespeople as such, because we don't sell things to



*Paul Evans, Managing Director, Pebble IT.*

**our clients, it's not the way we work. We help them and support them by taking the role of an external IT department. If we think they need additional services or hardware we recommend it as part of our service", explains Paul Evans, Managing Director of Pebble IT.**

When the company needed to provide external data and voice connectivity for its clients they used a sub-contractor. "It worked initially but then we realised that we needed to be more professional about voice and data connectivity so we began to look at suitable third party providers." One of the companies Pebble IT partnered with was Spitfire. "Initially it was because of their proximity to us which made things easier, but increasingly it came down to a shared approach to working. Spitfire are good at relationships and maintaining a dialogue. We're a relatively small team and we didn't want to deal with a faceless network services provider, where you're calling a contact centre and have to quote your account number and speak to someone you don't know."

Spitfire's Authorised Partner Service aims to enhance the range of services offered by IT service suppliers, such as Pebble IT, allowing them to provide high quality Internet and telecoms services. Paul continues; "We do support PBX installations but now when clients want telephony services we involve Spitfire and advise the client on the solution proposed. Supplying and maintaining telephony systems requires specialist engineering skills and we're now happy to leave that to Spitfire, as it's not core to our business. With new voice technologies such as

SIP Trunks now an option for clients we needed a supplier with voice connectivity expertise".

In terms of data connectivity, Spitfire has also been able to offer Pebble IT the right solutions for its clients. "There's increasing demand from our clients for products such as Ethernet and we have to educate them on the options and manage their expectations. Creative design companies generate massive graphic and video files and Ethernet is an ideal solution for them. The recent introduction of GEA Ethernet has dramatically reduced the costs and made it affordable for most clients. We now recommend Spitfire's GEA Ethernet to new clients and to any existing clients that find their existing ADSL connection too slow or unreliable."

With regard to account management and support, Paul and his team have been pleased with the Spitfire service. "We've got a good relationship with our Spitfire account manager. We don't need a lot of support, but they're very proactive when we do want it."

Of course costs are always an issue in any business relationship and Paul has been reassured by Spitfire's competitive approach. "In any price comparison of 'like-for-like' services Spitfire has always come out on top, which is very encouraging for us and our clients. At first we were dealing with several network service providers but we have recently concentrated on Spitfire. The relationship is better and more personal, with good products that are well priced. That suits our approach to business and meets the needs of our clients", Paul confirms.



Photo courtesy of Apple







# Communications industry at a turning point



*Justin Orde, Joint Managing Director of Spitfire is also Chairman of the Federation of Communication Services. In a recent article in the trade*

*magazine Comms Dealer Justin outlined some of the current issues and trends for the comms industry.*

**Towards the end of 2012 installations of SIP Trunks exceeded those of ISDN channels for the first time. Clearly the comms industry is at a turning point, with the long predicted convergence of voice and data communications becoming a reality at last. So now would seem an opportune time to take stock of what the future may hold.**

Any discussion of the UK telecom market must include mention of BT. It is almost 30 years since the privatisation of BT, but as custodian of the UK Public telecommunications infrastructure through Openreach it still shapes the landscape for telecommunications. Sir Michael Rake as Chairman and Ian Livingston as CEO have done an excellent job of increasing the company's financial performance (as reflected in the much improved share price).

The slimming of the BT workforce has had an impact on Openreach with many older and experienced engineers taking redundancy and early retirement. This loss of expertise became apparent last year when the flooding that hit large parts of the country revealed issues with manpower resourcing. Openreach has remedied this by recruiting ex-military personnel with telecoms expertise and using sub-contractors which has improved service levels.

the residential telephone exchanges and not necessarily those exchanges serving business customers. BT Retail faces competition in this area from TalkTalk, Virgin Media and Sky.

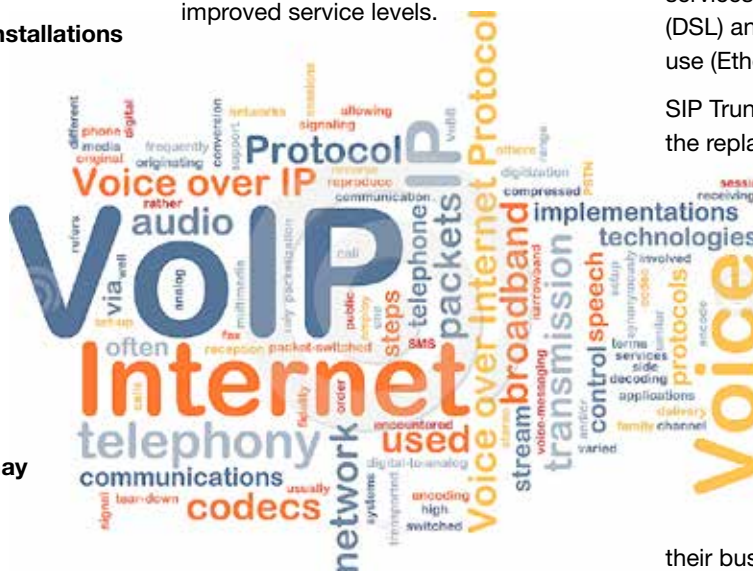
For suppliers of network services to business such as Spitfire, Ethernet has proved to be a technological game changer. We are starting to see a clear divide between internet connectivity services aimed at the consumer market (DSL) and those designed for business use (Ethernet).

SIP Trunks are also firmly established as the replacement for traditional ISDN2e/ISDN30e. The demand has been driven by the economic downturn because it saves businesses money.

During the recession the comms industry has been focussed on delivery of cost savings to its customers. However, we would prefer to be talking to customers about how we can help

their businesses grow, rather than how they can slash costs. The recovery is underway but is still in its infancy. We won't see the spending tap turned on full until the SME sector is confident that the recovery is well underway.

The comms industry is well placed to take advantage of an improving economic climate. The rapid expansion of cloud services means reliable high-speed connectivity is now essential for all businesses. This will also bring a massive change in working patterns as huge increases in Ethernet bandwidth mean that remote and home teleworking becomes a practical reality.



Olivia Garfield, the Chief Executive of Openreach has had a positive impact on the business and genuinely wants to deliver improvements in operational performance. Openreach has an objective to deliver Fibre Broadband to around two thirds of UK homes and businesses by the end of spring 2014. The drive to roll-out FTTC is driven in part by government pressure to ensure that the UK does not lag behind other countries.

BT Retail's fibre broadband promotion under the Infinity brand has been a great success with the programme focused on



# Protect yourself against phone fraud

By Terry Regan SIP Trunk Engineer



**If you don't think telephony fraud should be a concern for your organisation then consider this scenario. A fraud attack occurs over a Bank holiday weekend from Friday night at 8.00pm until to Tuesday morning at 8.00am, a total of 84 hours. The victim company's telephony trunk has 15 channels which are in constant use dialling a premium rate number which charges £2 per minute per call. This equates to £1,800 every hour or £151,200 for the full 84 hours! That level of fraudulent attack could put the victim company out of business.**

How is it done? An example of a common attack vector is traditional 'dial-thru' where the attacker dials into the phone system (PBX) and then uses its functionality to generate an outbound call to a premium rate destination in response to subsequent inbound calls. Sometimes known as 'phreaking', traditional dial-thru is one of the oldest forms of attack. The attacker will simply dial all of the phone numbers of an organisation, often during the night, looking for a number that is answered by the automated functions such as voicemail; Automated Assistant; remote DISA (Direct Inward System Access) and so on. Once one of these services is located the attacker will look to exploit any vulnerability in the PBX to perpetrate the dial-thru fraud.

One of the most common methods of perpetrating dial-thru fraud is achieved by accessing a user's unprotected voice mailbox and reconfiguring it to forward calls to an external number. Any subsequent calls answered by this mailbox will then generate calls to the

external number at the expense of the owner.



Preventing traditional dial-thru fraud is often a case of first understanding your own requirements and then the capability of the PBX. For example if you (or your users) do not require the ability to forward calls from your voicemail then do not enable this functionality on the PBX, thus removing this vulnerability. If this functionality is a requirement ensure that any voicemail passwords are secure and not factory default or simple numbers. Depending on the capability of the PBX you can often further lower this risk by barring voicemail ports from dialling expensive premium rate or international numbers.

Some modern PBX's also have logging and alerting systems that can warn you of suspicious call activity. Enabling these may allow you to detect an attack in progress and take action accordingly. They may also detect a pre-cursor attack, where the perpetrator makes a few test calls during the week before launching an all out attack over the weekend, allowing you to take preventative steps to secure yourself.

**Allowing users to access their voicemail from outside the office ... is also a very common phreaking attack vector...**

Dial-thru is just one of a number of attack vectors for fraudulent phone system hacking. What they all have in common is that the attacker is using vulnerabilities in your voice network to perpetrate the fraud. Vulnerabilities which for the most part can be secured, or if not secured then most certainly addressed so the risk is minimal. In many of the cases of fraud investigated by Spitfire the victim was not aware of the vulnerabilities present in their voice network or the threat that those weaknesses presented until the attacker took full advantage of them. With this in mind it is important that the voice network (and if you are on a converged voice and data network this will include the data portion of this network as well) configuration and security is assessed for any weakness so they can be addressed to reduce the chance of a fraudulent attack.

We don't all need to be experts on voice security but if you are responsible for your PBX or voice network a little knowledge of the threat you face can go a long way in enabling you to counter it. Spitfire has produced a 'white paper' which explains the various attack methodologies and the steps you can take to protect yourself against fraud.

**Visit [www.spitfire.co.uk](http://www.spitfire.co.uk) to read the white paper in full.**





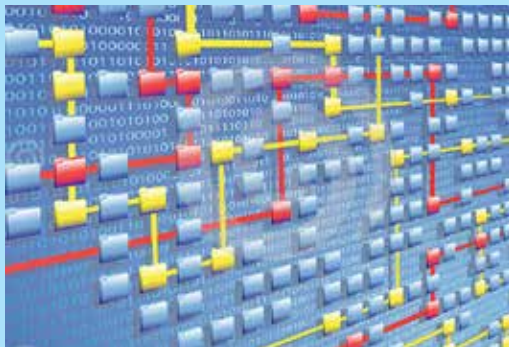


# Buzzword watch

## SDDC

### Software Defined Data Centre

– The next decade’s solution



**SDDC – Software Defined Data Centre, where the core components of a data centre, network, server and storage are configured and controlled by the software.**

In a SDDC all the infrastructure will be virtualised on commodity hardware and configured as needed to meet demand. Software configures the necessary processing, storage and networking resources from a pool of available resources to meet the requirements of an application.

What makes SDDC different from commonplace virtualisation is that the software applications themselves define their computing, storage and networking requirements, their required SLAs, the necessary security policies and cost considerations. These requirements are passed onto the SDDC software layer that uses its own business rules to interpret and configure the required components.

The goal of the SDDC is to make more efficient use of resources by providing just enough resources without having to oversize to make room for later growth or risk under sizing and having a poorly performing application. Humans just keep feeding the SDDC with more virtualised hardware and the machines configure themselves.

# SIP Trunks call an end to ISDN



**As detailed in Justin Orde’s article on page 5, at the end of last year orders for SIP Trunks exceeded those for new ISDN installations for the first time in the UK. An Ofcom report published in 2011 stated that the ISDN30 market in the UK had been contracting by over 300,000 channels a year in the previous two years. This continuing trend means that ISDN channels will decline to less than a million channels within the next five years.**

This sharp decline is due to the increasing use of SIP Trunks as an ISDN replacement driven by the associated significant cost savings. With call charges reducing, line rental now accounts for up to half of all business phone bills. SIP Trunks can dramatically reduce the cost of line rental compared to ISDN. Spitfire’s SIP Trunks offer business quality secure telephony at, typically, up to 50 per cent less than the monthly rental cost of an equivalent ISDN service. This compelling saving includes the cost of the circuit carrying calls.

SIP Trunks are now a mature technology that business users trust and depend on for business

communications. We now have customers in the financial sector using SIP Trunks, where the need for reliable telecoms is a mission critical requirement. The key determining factor in the quality of service for SIP Trunks is controlling all aspects of service provision and delivery. This is the underlying principle in our approach to SIP Trunks – rigorous testing, combined with our own circuits and call termination allows us full control over call quality and customer satisfaction.

As one of the few ISPs and fixed line operators to offer a SIP Trunk service, we offer a complete end-to-end SIP service via our own IP and TDM infrastructure. Spitfire can provide a direct connection between the customers’ premises and Spitfire’s core network over the UK’s widest range of SDSL, ADSL or Ethernet circuits.

So it seems likely we will see ISDN replaced by SIP Trunks by the end of the decade. If you would like to discuss the cost savings of migrating to SIP Trunks from ISDN call our SIP consultants on 020 7501 3333.



## Staff News

Wedding bells are in the air, congratulations on their engagements to:



Tamara Quinn  
and Richard Jenkins



Ian Davidson  
and Laura Holland



Darren Conway  
and Robyn Guegan

Twin congratulations to Brian and Kirsty Hogan on the birth of Gabriella and Max



**Summer is here:** Bumble enjoying the summer sunshine in the office.

## Win a Bottle of Bubbly.

Can you name which TV show a Spitfire cab made a scene stealing appearance in during June e-mail us the answer to [competition@spitfire.co.uk](mailto:competition@spitfire.co.uk),



## Win some celebratory summer 'chilling' wine!

...12 bottles of excellent wine from Private Cellar...

Simply send us your best caption for the photo on the left with your name, address and contact details.

Either e-mail it to [competition@spitfire.co.uk](mailto:competition@spitfire.co.uk), fax it to **020 7501 3001**, or post to the address below:

**Caption Competition,  
Spitfire Network Services Ltd,  
The Printworks,  
139 Clapham Road,  
London SW9 0HP.**

Competition closing date:  
31 August 2013.



The judges decision is final and no correspondence will be entered into.