

# SPITFIRE NEWS

For the latest communications news, views and comment

WINTER 2015/16

## 3CX telephony platform now offered as hosted solution

Spitfire have been working with 3CX for many years, and is the only London-based Platinum Partner listed on the 3CX website. Now Spitfire is one of the first UK providers to offer the 3CX telephony platform as a hosted solution. This eliminates most of the capital expenditure usually required on servers and licences as only handsets are now required.

The 3CX telephony platform is a Windows based IP softswitch that is based on the SIP standard. Previously customers wishing to use the 3CX solution would need to host it on their own server hardware, but now Spitfire can provide this hosted remotely with a full "intelligent hands" service by Spitfire.

At the recent 2015 Comms National Awards the 3CX platform won the 'Best SME On Premises System' category, a real endorsement for Spitfire's decision to include 3CX in our portfolio. Taking this award-winning system and combining it with our solutions and services in a hosted environment gives our customers some really powerful telephony choices for their business.

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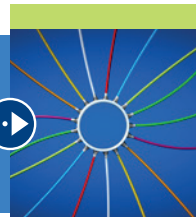


Tom Fellowes, Sales Director of Spitfire commented, "Many customers want the benefits of the 3CX telephony platform, but without the need to host the solution on their own hardware server. Our hosted 3CX service eliminates the need for on-premises hardware except for telephones. It also brings business continuity benefits, because if the customer's premises cannot be used for any reason, businesses with access to the 3CX phone service can carry on at another location."

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[www.spitfire.co.uk](http://www.spitfire.co.uk)

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## Foreword - Harry Bowlby

Over the last year we have focussed on a number of different areas to provide our customers and partners with the highest levels of service. Resilience and the cloud are persistent themes, so we have added additional Core Network Nodes at Equinix and Telehouse North connected by a diversely routed London ring. Our customers and partners can now take advantage of our 'data centre ready' strategy to place their servers and applications in a readily available location while confident that they can achieve a high degree of networking resilience.

Recognising the increased complexity of solutions required by our partners and customers we have extended IP Engineering training to all customer facing staff including Sales and Support. This includes Cisco Engineering exams together with practical training in IT application requirements and IP networking solutions.

Complexity and diversity require better communication so we have an ongoing programme to take advantage of the latest technology to provide partners and customers with ready access and management of our products and services. We have had a Customer Portal and Web Ordering system for a number of years and have been working hard at improvements to meet partner and customer needs. We will be launching the new versions in the New Year and would very much appreciate your assistance in achieving widespread uptake which should bring substantial efficiency gains to everyone's mutual benefit.

Best wishes for a Happy Christmas and Prosperous New Year.



Harry Bowlby

## SIP Communicator™ is award winning for third straight year!

Spitfire's SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service has won the Comms National Award for Best Hosted Platform for an unprecedented third year!

Spitfire was also one of seven finalists for its entry in the Best ISP category coming second on the night to win the accolade "Highly Commended".

The Comms National Awards organised by Comms Dealer magazine are widely acknowledged as a benchmark of excellence within the telecoms industry.

The Awards celebrate and reward excellence in the provision of ICT solutions. They are judged by an independent panel of industry experts and Spitfire's winning and highly commended entries were chosen ahead of other finalists and many more entries that failed to make finalist status.

Tom Fellowes, Sales Director, commented "We



are delighted to have won a prestigious Comms National Award for SIP Communicator™ for the third year running and to come second with Highly Commended for our Best ISP entry. The judges recognised that SIP Communicator™ has unique advantages over rival services. Because we are a business ISP, SIP Communicator™, together with Spitfire's voice approved circuits, is designed as an end-to-end service to guarantee Quality of Service (QoS), overcoming one of the biggest objections to moving to cloud based telephony. Our third Comms National Award shows that SIP Communicator™ in combination with our Internet Services provides a winning combination for our customers."



# Spitfire additional core network nodes to provide resilient London ring

Increasingly customers and partners told us that they wanted to connect to services hosted in datacentres that we were not in. Spitfire has responded by extending its core network into two additional locations – Telehouse North in London Docklands and Equinix LD3 in Park Royal.

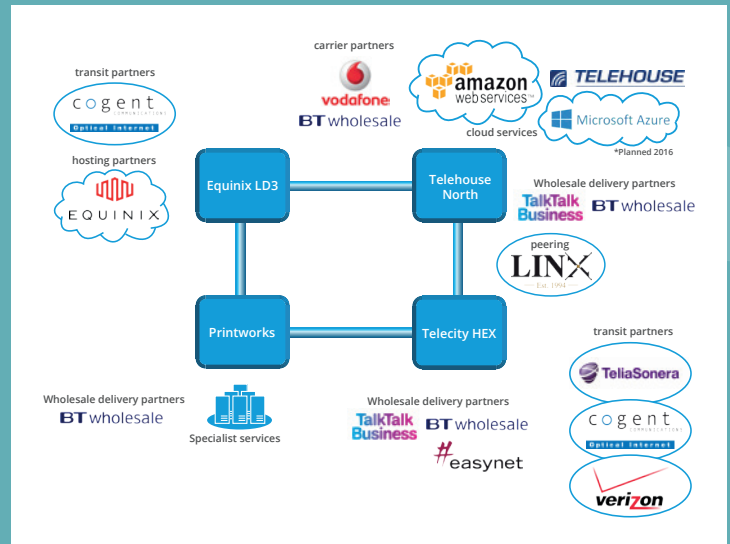
Telehouse in particular offers access to a wide range of carrier services and LD3 provides geographic diversity for those customers who don't want to be in Docklands or at least have all of their equipment in one area.

Extending into these additional locations makes it easier than ever to join up these services in a Spitfire MPLS network with either customers' own equipment or hosted services provided by others. In the New Year we will be adding low latency connectivity to Microsoft Azure and Amazon AWS cloud services. Amazon Web Services is the World's largest cloud provider and Azure is the choice of many companies developing on the Microsoft server platform.

Our core network now has four network nodes connected through our multi-10 Gigabit Ethernet London ring. Redundant links provide resilience to failure and the ring offers resilience in the event of individual links failing.

As we continue to expand we will be offering services from each of these locations so that customers can spread risk, for example by ensuring that backup circuits are terminated in a different datacentre to primary ones.

We also took the opportunity when extending our core network to introduce a dual vendor network equipment strategy designed to protect against individual vendor failures. By using equipment from world leaders Juniper and Cisco we plan to ensure as far as possible that a software bug in one vendor's code cannot bring down the entire network.



## Whitepaper explains benefits of MPLS

Our latest whitepaper explains the considerable benefits of MPLS (Multiprotocol Label Switching) networks for cost-effective voice and data connectivity across multiple sites. An MPLS network is an ideal solution for multisite applications because it provides a secure low cost voice and data link between multiple sites, for example branch offices of the same company, where high volumes of data and guaranteed voice service provision are a necessary requirement.

Spitfire's approach to MPLS is simple; our clients receive all of the technical and commercial benefits of an MPLS solution without the large implementation and management related costs usually associated with MPLS projects. Spitfire MPLS is ideal for any sized business which wants to share data and/or voice connectivity across multiple sites.

The whitepaper explains in a non-technical way how MPLS networks operate, the benefits of the technology and the particular advantages of Spitfire's MPLS service. The whitepaper is FREE so to download your copy please visit: [www.spitfire.co.uk/white-papers/](http://www.spitfire.co.uk/white-papers/)



## Support Service commitment

As part of our ongoing service commitment to provide you with an excellent Spitfire support experience we have a target of answering calls within one minute.

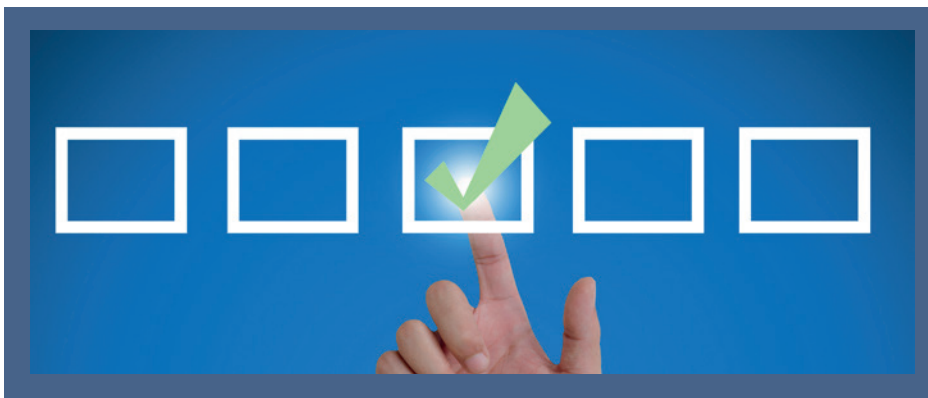
In the 3 months to October 2015, Spitfire Support answered 83.9% of all inbound calls within 15

seconds and 95.5% of all inbound calls within 1 minute. The most frequent customer wait time was just 5 seconds!

Ensuring there are low customer wait times is just one of the ways Support Technicians work hard to give the best possible

customer service and distinguish Spitfire from other Service Providers in the very competitive telecoms sector.

We also task a third party to conduct regular customer satisfaction surveys. In the most recent survey, 90% of respondents stated that a service issue logged with Spitfire was resolved by the first person who took the call. This is a further endorsement of the rigorous training our Support Technicians receive, leading to increased customer satisfaction levels and a more fulfilling and rewarding career for our Support Technicians.

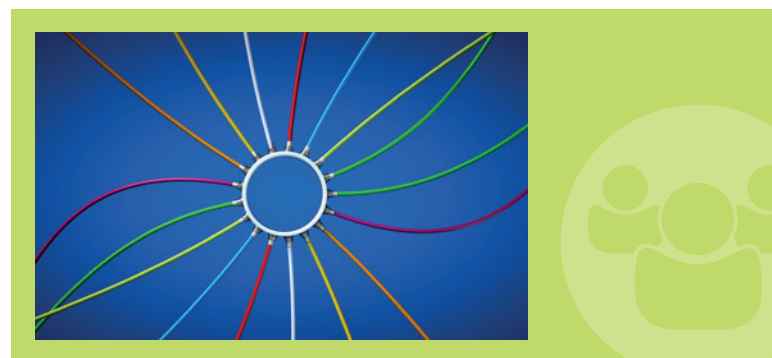


## New 'wires only' VDSL requires minimal installation

We are now offering 'wires only' VDSL fibre broadband, without the requirement for an Openreach service engineer premises visit, thereby reducing implementation time.

On a two year contract Spitfire VDSL 80Mb Premium Unlimited Fibre Broadband costs just £49 a month and is supplied with free connection and free router. The free connection saving is worth at least £139 alone. A free Back-up circuit is also available with zero rental, connection and router charges.

VDSL (Very high-speed Digital Subscriber Line) from Spitfire uses fibre from the local exchange to the Openreach cabinet in the street to provide bandwidths of up to 80Mb download and 20Mb upload, significantly faster than conventional ADSL connections.



Tom Fellowes stated, "This is a great opportunity for business customers to get high speed broadband, with the minimum of fuss and cost. It means you could be up and running with VDSL broadband within two weeks. For any company which depends on its internet connection, and today that is almost all businesses, VDSL is an ideal solution."

## Midlands expansion to meet growing demand

Following relocation last year we have further expanded our Midlands operation with the addition of another office at The Business Centre in Redditch. This provides accommodation for the expanded team of five based in the Midlands and includes a demo area for presentations. Peter Goddard, Midlands

Partner Manager for Spitfire comments, "We are expanding our Midlands team to cope with the demand for our expanding range of network services.



There is growing interest in Ethernet connectivity, our SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service and SIP Trunks as a cost effective alternative to ISDN phone lines. Our expanded team will allow us to better meet customer demand in all these technology areas."

## Keeping the Customer Informed (KCI)

Spitfire understands that one of the most frustrating issues when dealing with any support team is not being kept up-to-date with the latest information. This led to Spitfire launching the Keeping the Customer Informed (KCI) initiative which defines how often the Customer is contacted during a support case.

Following positive feedback from our customers, this policy is now in the process of being rolled out across the entire Spitfire product range so that customers should start to notice a consistent level of support across all our products.

Spitfire's KCI policy ensures that our Support Technicians will normally contact the Customer as soon as there is any new information, and at a minimum, within the Target KCI update time specified for each product. These vary according to product type so, for example, on our DSL products this will be every four working hours.

Customers can, by logging onto the Spitfire Customer Portal, view the status of their support case at any time. Customers should be assured that Spitfire will be doing all we can to progress the support case in line with the various targets detailed.



## Web hosting

Just a reminder that for web hosting, Spitfire offers a secure service for websites with registration or transfer for all UK web domain names including .com .org .net and .uk domains.



## EBS establishes new businesses with Spitfire support

European Business Solutions (EBS) is the latest channel partner to endorse Spitfire as its preferred provider of voice and data network services for EBS clients. EBS helps companies wanting to set up in, or export to, the United Kingdom. Most EBS clients are based in the European Union and the company provides a full raft of services including corporate establishment, financial services and legal compliance.

In addition, EBS can assist clients with IT and business communications. Since the late 1990s this has included internet access as Joe Williams, IT Manager for EBS outlines. "EBS Computer Services provides a full IT management service at an affordable cost, with packages designed to support UK activities to integrate efficiently with the systems of the mother company. Obviously online access is a critical part of this process."

Initially EBS worked with a number of business ISPs, but found that poor quality customer service caused issues for their clients. "From our point of view we were trying to introduce clients to reliable network service providers that could resolve any issues directly with the client speedily and professionally. When this did not occur, we were necessarily drawn into resolving situations beyond our control and for which we were receiving no financial benefit. So we looked around for a business ISP that we could recommend to our clients both for quality service delivery and professional support."

In 2009 Joe saw an advertisement in a trade magazine for Spitfire. "I was aware of Spitfire and the ad was for their SIP Trunk service. SIP Trunks were new at that time and I contacted them to discuss what they could provide. It was immediately apparent that they understood that efficient customer service is imperative for business customers. They have no consumer customers so their focus is totally on business clients."

Joe continues, "We tried Spitfire with an initial installation of their SIP Communicator™ hosted telephony service for a client that needed fast



*Joe Williams, IT Manager, EBS with James Davis, Spitfire Account Manager.*

set-up of phone access for a couple of staff. I was impressed by the service and also the information Spitfire provided so we could explain the concept to the customer." The cloud based SIP Communicator™ service only requires SIP compatible handsets, making it an extremely cost-effective solution for business start-ups and small businesses that are growing and anticipate moving premises or are spread over multiple sites. "It works very well for our clients when they're starting out because they can start small at a very low monthly cost, with minimal capital outlay. As they expand its easy to scale by just adding handsets."

Following this Joe then chose Spitfire to manage network provision for EBS's own operations. "We needed to move our own offices and I used Spitfire to provide network connections at our new location and I was impressed by their efficiency in organising the logistics so that everything was in place and working when we arrived."

EBS has also found managing client relationships easy with Spitfire. "We manage the relationship between us, but most of the communication is from us at EBS. One thing I am confident about is that Spitfire never speaks to one of our clients without asking us first. If we need to organise a demonstration of a service for clients, such as SIP Trunks or SIP Communicator™, Spitfire will set that up and ensure it runs smoothly."

Summing up the relationship with Spitfire, Joe says, "It's been very positive for us. The range of services they offer and the quality of the technical support has really helped our business. If they say they have a solution we know it will be deliverable and reliable, because we have full confidence in the Spitfire team. They don't beta test on the customers and they don't take a 'best effort' approach to service delivery. That's precisely the approach I was looking for."

## Training intensified for new recruits

"Train hard, fight easy", was the maxim of Russian Field Marshal Alexander V Suvorov. We are taking something of the same approach to the training of Spitfire staff and have been refining our intensified training programme for our graduate entrant recruits.

All recruits, whether support or sales are now required to take the Cisco ICND1 exam as a minimum qualification to evidence their understanding of the routing and switching technology Spitfire offers. This comes at the end of a rigorous three month course that not only covers vocational training but

also fundamental IT, including modules on binary maths and computer programming as these skills are no longer taught generally in schools.



Susie Ward, Spitfire's Director of HR and Marketing comments, "We insist, that whatever their role, all our employees have a thorough understanding of the technical aspects of our service provision, so they can fully understand customer needs when working in engineering, support or sales. We do not consider second best to be acceptable so we recruit the brightest people and invest heavily in their training to instil the knowledge and authority they need to do a good job."

## Spitfire launches Customer Portal

We are pleased to announce the roll out of our Customer Portal following a successful soft launch trial with some of our customers.

The portal acts as a Telecomms Management Tool giving you access to a wide range of information on your account.

This includes viewing:

- The progress of recent orders
- Support jobs logged
- BT Wholesale and Openreach updates on jobs
- Sales Ledger and Accounts information
- Billing
- Connection and service details
- Site and contact information



To get started, your Customer Account Manager will need no more than 5 minutes of your time to guide you through accessing and navigating the portal's features.

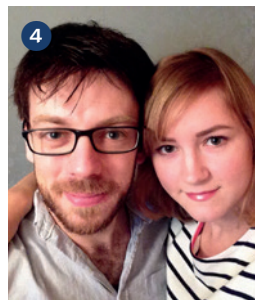
Contact your Customer Account Manager now on 020 7501 3333 to be sent your personal log in.





## Staff News

- 1 Natalie Harris, Rob Abell and Dominic Norton with Michael Kleynhans from CBS at the finish of a very muddy 10k Major Series event earlier this year. Natalie raised £230 for Breast Cancer.
- 2 Hats off to Rob Harradine on his engagement to Sarah.
- 3 Congratulations to James and Samantha Davis on their wedding in August.
- 4 Three cheers to Elinor Perks and Andrew Battersby on their engagement.



## Breaking News

Spitfire are delighted to have received the Editor's Choice Award from *Business Info* magazine for Best Business ISP.



## Spot the objects

**Win some wine...** For the chance to win some wine in our free draw just workout what the 4 objects below are and either e-mail it to: [competition@spitfire.co.uk](mailto:competition@spitfire.co.uk) or post including your email address, to: Objects, Spitfire Network Services Ltd, The Printworks, 139 Clapham Road, London SW9 0HP.

Competition closing date: 31st January 2016 - winner will be notified by email.



## Spitfire Christmas Opening Times

Over the Christmas and New Year period Spitfire office opening times will differ from our normal 8am – 8pm.

|                      |           |
|----------------------|-----------|
| Thurs 24th December  | 8am – 4pm |
| Fri 25th December    | Closed    |
| Mon 28th December    | Closed    |
| Tues 29th December   | 9am – 5pm |
| Wed 30th December    | 9am – 5pm |
| Thurs 31st December  | 9am – 5pm |
| Fri 1st January 2016 | Closed    |

**Outside of these hours please contact our Duty Manager on: 020 7582 4000**

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