

SPITFIRE - ENSURING CONNECTIVITY FOR ANTIC LONDON'S PUBS ACROSS THE CAPITAL

ANTIC LONDON LIMITED

Antic London is a pub-management company managing over 30 pubs across London (predominantly in the South-East of London). The pubs are often differentiated from their competitors by boasting eclectic and shabby chic interiors. Many of the pubs are in buildings converted from their former use and reflect this by keeping original names.

Background

From a connectivity perspective, Antic London used to operate using two broadband connections for each pub to minimise the impact of any downtime. Although both broadband connections utilise 2 different wholesale providers, the analogue line for both connections are supplied by Openreach and therefore, when Openreach has a failure in its infrastructure both connections tend to fail, which was causing significant operational issues. This was causing Mark Boyd, I.T. Manager, Antic London, numerous headaches as the managers of each pub would call him during episodes of downtime.

Each pub's reliance on connectivity is even more important with EPOS machines operating via the broadband connections. If they lose connectivity, they cannot accept payments – making it mission critical for Antic London.



Mark Boyd
I.T. Manager
Antic London Ltd

Challenge

When Mark initially joined the company, each pub had been set up with its own BT account. Not only was this costly, but problematic to manage. If anything needed to be reviewed and actioned on any individual BT account, then only the person who had originally set the account up was authorised to deal with the issue - not easy to manage if that individual was away or had left the business.

Also, BT keeps its phone and internet connections under one umbrella company account, and these had been left associated with their original entities. As a result, Antic London was getting triplicate bills with one-in-three of those bills being paid, resulting in termination of services for non-payment of bills. This administrative error in one instance led to services stopping for one location on New Year's Eve one year, meaning the pub was unable to take payments resulting in tens of thousands of pounds in lost income.

In addition, if both lines went down at the same time Antic London were unable to process any card payments as tills are connected to the PDQs which are connected to the cloud. Every single transaction needed to connect to each other.

"I had worked with Spitfire in a previous role when I was setting up a call centre so I knew they would be a good fit for Antic London." ✓

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Solution

Sales process and evaluation of the solution required

After working with Spitfire Network Services in a previous role and having a positive experience, Mark contacted the team again to discuss possible options to improve Antic London's connectivity situation.

Spitfire's team evaluated the situation in detail, formed a comprehensive understanding of Antic London's requirements and of their network before designing an appropriate solution to meet these needs. As always, this consultative process walked Mark through the options on offer and highlighted what the result would be.

Combining Broadband and Mobile backup for 'always on' connectivity

For all of the Antic London real estate (30+ locations), Spitfire has delivered a fibre broadband internet connection as the primary circuit and a mobile data connection configured as the backup in the event that the broadband line fails. Each connection utilises independent infrastructure meaning should there ever be a failure on the primary circuit it would have no impact on the backup circuit. Now Antic London are reassured that they can keep their tills always working and communicating with the cloud.

This solution was deployed across multiple sites in a seamless manner.

ISDN Switch Off 2025

In anticipation of the analogue phone lines being phased out as part of the ISDN switch-off, Antic London will now also embark on a new digital switchover project with Spitfire. This will begin by adding IP telephone lines to each of the pubs forming a single phone system across the whole estate. From a practical point of view, it means calls can be diverted easily to the correct location, which will increase efficiency across the business.

"It was important for us to stay ahead of the game here, especially when you see so many other businesses unprepared for 2025."



Results

Overall, the solutions delivered by Spitfire Network Services for Antic London have been transformational.

"It was about customer service, really. I have a dedicated account manager that I can call on and get something fixed - someone who solves my problems."

Downtime across all locations has been significantly minimised, and even if there is a small issue, card payments aren't affected owing to Spitfire's mobile data backup solution being in place.

It has also addressed Antic London's many different business challenges around resiliency, flexibility and network access, providing the tools to become fully digital as an organisation going forward.

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