

Leading Mobile Service Provider Keeps Pace with Secure, Cost Effective Mobility Solution from Fiberlink

O2 Germany GmbH is Germany's fastest-growing mobile phone operator, with more than 7.4 million customers already using its mobile phone services and more being added every day. As part of the U.K.-based O2 (formerly the BT Group), the company provides its customers with a broad range of mobile voice and data services, as well as international mobile roaming in over 160 countries.

Being one of Europe's leading providers of mobile communications services, O2 Germany knows all too well the value of enabling mobile workers to stay connected and

secure, regardless of where they choose to work. And for a company experiencing such rapid growth, ensuring employee productivity is essential to solidifying market leadership. With Fiberlink's help, O2 Germany is more effectively addressing this challenge, enabling its employees to connect easily and securely to the corporate network from anywhere in the world.

THE CHALLENGE

Before deploying the Fiberlink solution, O2 Germany employees accessed the corporate network through a disparate series of systems and services. Unfortunately, this fragmented approach was quite costly and frustrating for both the company and its mobile workers, who frequently found it difficult, if not impossible, to connect.

"Aside from basic connection issues, the solution was useless outside of Germany," said Nicolas Hernandez-Eckle of the company's Application Development department. This was particularly problematic since O2's parent company is located in the U.K. – a frequent destination for traveling employees. For non-local travel, the company was left to negotiate complicated roaming agreements with mobile vendors in a number of neighboring countries. O2 had evaluated alternative solutions but were disappointed with the results. One approach, which involved employees utilizing a call center prior to connecting, was so complicated that it was "essentially unusable," said Hernandez-Eckle.

O2 employees were required to itemize their phone bills for their managers prior to submission to accounting for reimbursement; a cumbersome and time-consuming process that made it extremely difficult to track and manage access-related expenses.



Challenge

O2 had a fragmented approach to mobile access that was quite costly and frustrating for both the company and its mobile workers, who found it virtually impossible to connect.

Solution

Deploy Fiberlink's award-winning secure mobility solution to its 1,700 mobile workers, thus enabling them to have a simple and secure way to connect to the corporate network anytime, anywhere.

Results

Fiberlink has provided O2 with a complete solution. It's easy to use, from anywhere in the world, provides greater security, and has vastly improved cost controls.

THE CHALLENGE (CONTINUED)

Security was also a key concern. O2 provided its mobile and remote workers with a basic security package, which included a Cisco VPN, but lacked the ability to enforce security policies and ensure that employees were always using the VPN when connecting to the corporate network.

THE SOLUTION

O2 implemented a comprehensive mobility solution from Fiberlink, which now provides end users with an easy-to-use and secure way to connect to the corporate network regardless of where they are located. The company has deployed the solution to approximately 1,700 employees, of which more than 700 actually connect each month to access the company network for the data, information and applications they need to do their work from home or on the road.

"With Fiberlink, it doesn't matter where our employees are, they can work from anywhere and get access to everything they need," said Hernandez-Eckle. "That is making them far more efficient and productive."

Fiberlink's flexibility has also been a big plus for O2. While many O2 employees connect to the company network over ISDN, others use broadband or dial-up over standard phone lines. Fiberlink makes it easy for users to select from the array of transport options made available to them. It has also solved O2's international connectivity challenges, said Hernandez-Eckle, providing users who are traveling outside of Germany with a comprehensive list of dial-up points-of-presence, as well as an array of broadband alternatives from hotels or elsewhere.

The Fiberlink solution has also helped O2 improve their network security, allowing the company's IT organization to enforce consistent security policies for all their mobile and remote workers. And O2's Cisco VPN is now

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seamlessly integrated with the Fiberlink solution through connectivity scripts, making it transparent to end users and ensuring they connect to the corporate network only when using the VPN service.

THE RESULTS

In addition to increasing security since being implemented, the Fiberlink solution has yielded significant savings for O2, according to Hernandez-Eckle. Equally important, it has provided the company a way to track what it actually spends on mobile access for its employees. "Employees no longer have to bring in their phone bills, which they greatly appreciate," he said. "And our accounting department now knows how much the company is spending to provide connectivity for our employees when they work outside the office."

For O2, Fiberlink is "a complete solution," said Hernandez-Eckle. "It has met all our needs – it's easy to use, from anywhere in the world, it's given us better security, and has vastly improved cost controls. And Fiberlink has been great to work with. When we need something, they've been extremely responsive."

The Fiberlink Advantage

Fiberlink is the leader in managed security and connectivity services that make mobile working simpler and more secure for today's enterprises. Over the last five years, Fiberlink has been recognized in the Leader's Quadrant in Gartner's Managed Remote Access and Mobility Services report and has received numerous accolades for its innovative security and mobility services portfolio. Since 1994, Fiberlink solutions have been deployed to over 1 million users around the world in numerous Fortune 500 companies including General Electric, Continental and Bloomberg.