

Creating Scalable, Enterprise-Grade Retail IT Infrastructure

A Private IP WAN Case Study

About Strandbags

With over 300 stores across Australia, Strandbags are a leading home-grown specialty retailer of high quality luggage, handbags, and consumer travel gear. Since opening in 1927, the company has seen several periods of expansion, most recently adding to its impressive chain of locations via acquisitions in both Australia and New Zealand.

At a glance

Industry
Retail

Company size
1,000-5,000

Country
Australia

Business challenge

- Secure connection of 300 stores
- Point of Sale (POS) solution

The solution

- Private IP WAN
- Cisco Firewall Technology

The Results

- Scalable enterprise-grade IT network solution
- Dependable connectivity
- Increased customer service efficiency through store to warehouse communications
- Improved technical support for stores

The Summary

When Strandbags decided to move its outlets to a new Point of Sale (POS) system, Cory Dewar, the Strandbags Group's Network Administrator, knew that the dial-up service linking the company's retail stores and offices would no longer be up to the task.

Brennan's implementation and management of a Private IP WAN solution and new firewall technology has improved Strandbags' customer service and staff enablement, ultimately increasing sales. Spanning 300+ sites, the enterprise-grade solution is easily scalable as Strandbags continue to expand.

The Challenge

When Strandbags decided to move its outlets to a new Point of Sale system, Cory Dewar, the Strandbags Group's Network Administrator, knew that the dial-up service linking the company's retail stores and offices would no longer be up to the task.

The proposed Point of Sale system promised to deliver a raft of benefits to Strandbag's business, but only – as Cory realised – if the company could find a connectivity regime with the speed, reliability and flexibility required to support the intended communications revolution.

The Solution

Having canvassed several options, Cory soon settled on what he describes as Brennan's "highly competitive" proposal for a Private IP Wide Area Network (WAN).

Able to seamlessly link Strandbags locations across Australia and New Zealand, the Private IP WAN would deliver secure, managed networking with 24/7/365 support.

Based on Brennan's close analysis of Strandbags various requirements, Cory says that the resulting network roll-out was "Quick and pain-free," with the promised implementation delivered over a short timeframe.

Now providing enterprise-wide communications throughout the Strandbags operation, the Private IP solution also has the added benefit of allowing their mobile workers to connect with internal systems. As more stores get added to the Strandbags chain, new nodes are an easy addition to the network's adaptive environment.

In conjunction with Brennan's around-the-clock monitoring, the Private IP solution maintains high network service levels across Strandbags' systems, resulting in network reliability that Cory describes as "Extremely dependable."

Since the Private IP solution's implementation, Brennan has also further consulted with Strandbags to deliver additional network services. A highly-effective Cisco ASA firewall is now in place to help secure the network from internet threats; Cisco switches also permit Cory to examine all incoming and outgoing data.

Complementing this, an advanced 'content keeper' allows Cory to create policies for staff internet access while also monitoring his bandwidth costs with an eye on minimising unnecessary traffic.

"Brennan have been involved in our IT infrastructure for several years now. Their approach is one of partnership, which we like. They take the time to understand where we're at, and in fact, they'll often come to us with proposals for better ways of supporting the business."

**Cory Dewar,
Group Network
Administrator,
Strandbags**



Improved service delivered to customers



Improved communication across 300+ sites



Ongoing long-term partnership

The Result

Cory describes the level of communications efficiency that it offers across the enterprise as the primary benefit of Brennan's Private IP WAN solution.

The new Wide Area Network combined with the POS system enables Strandbags to provide a higher standard of service to their customers. As a result, Strandbags retains more business. Where staff in individual stores previously needed to telephone the company warehouse for up-to-date information on stocks and deliveries, they can now use the internal network to instantly access stock lists, both at the warehouse and nearby stores.

In addition to retail benefits, the WAN is also producing efficiencies in other areas. Strandbags' IT staff now have a vastly improved means of providing fast support at local sites, with remote access allowing for organisation-wide diagnosis and resolution of IT problems from the one centralised location, creating tangible savings on support costs.

Because the Private IP WAN is a managed solution, its maintenance and administration are managed by Brennan's expert team, providing concrete assurances on service levels and response times while also eliminating the cost of providing a WAN specialist within Strandbags' operation.

"Brennan have been involved in our IT infrastructure for several years now. Their approach is one of partnership, which we like. They take the time to understand where we're at, and in fact, they'll often come to us with proposals for better ways of supporting the business," says Cory.

"Across the various projects we've been involved in, I think it's their level of technological and business acumen that has been what has enabled Brennan to deliver services that meet our needs."

The Brennan Experience

Brennan is uniquely positioned to transform, deliver, and manage your complete IT environment – so your people can have a truly seamless IT experience, wherever they are working.

We provide powerful technology solutions for Australian organisations, with a portfolio of services that ranges from strategy and advisory, to application development, to end-user support, and more.

Our teams are crazy about delivering an exceptional customer experience for our clients, which is why we continue to invest in our people, systems, and automation. This has resulted in us achieving a world-class Net Promoter Score of +80.

Get in touch with us today to see how we can help your organisation.

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