



Aegis Group plc

Case Study

The Client

Aegis Group plc is a leading marketing services company employing approximately 12,000 staff in over 60 countries. Headquartered in London and listed on the London Stock Exchange (AGS.L) the Group is structured around two core business areas: Aegis Media, which includes Carat, Vizeum, Posterscope and a range of communication services businesses and Synovate, which is a leading global market research network.

Aegis delivered record revenues and profits in 2005. The group's growth is a result of new client wins, increased spend from existing clients, and multiple acquisitions.

Global IT requirements

Following a period of major growth, a large part of it through acquisitions, Aegis decided to adopt a global IT strategy that required a central datacentre for the group's global applications.

"Our Group headquarters is a lean operation that provides strategy and direction and sets IT standards for the Aegis Group of companies, who then operate their IT infrastructure within this framework," explains Andrew Sprules, Aegis Group IT Infrastructure Director. "We did not want to embark upon building a new datacentre and having to recruit skilled IT staff to manage and operate the systems on a 24 hour basis."

Aegis needed an IT services partner who could provide a full set of hosting and managed services with 24 x 7 x 365 support as required by a global group of companies. It also needed the company to be flexible to the business needs of a fast-growing company.

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Andrew Sprules, Aegis Group IT Infrastructure Director



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Responding quickly to business change

Centrecore was selected to host and manage Aegis global datacentre, which now hosts the group's Intranet, its companies' websites, client extranets and a number of core group business applications.

"Centrecore provides us with the flexibility to grow the service at short notice," comments Andrew. "As a fast-growing company, our global IT infrastructure needs to be able to expand quickly in response to business needs. Centrecore's people are very easy to work with – they understand the media business and also the need to be flexible and creative – and although we have a contract and SLAs in place, Centrecore is quick to respond to changes in our requirements."

Aegis owns the servers and applications, preferring to select the vendors and technology based on its business needs, yet safe in the knowledge that Centrecore will be able to manage them on Aegis' behalf.

Centrecore provides 24 x 7 x 365 helpdesk services based on ITIL best practice processes and is responsible for the management and monitoring of operating systems, applications and databases. It also provides backup services, internet bandwidth, and is prime contractor for hardware support.

"It is a resilient infrastructure with over 60 servers hosted in 2 of Centrecore's datacentres. Having the infrastructure and assets split across two sites spreads our risk and also provides us with a high level of business continuity," explains Andrew.

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Growing the partnership

Following the success of the datacentre, Centrecore was asked to design and implement a global virtual private network (VPN) for Aegis and is now responsible for managing it. Centrecore ensures round-the-clock availability of the network, which is accessed by all major offices within the group across 60 countries, managing both hosted and remote firewalls and providing 24 x 7 monitoring of the VPN sites.

Following each new acquisition by Aegis, Centrecore works directly with the local companies, often across different time zones, to add them to the network and provide them with access to global applications within a short timeframe.

As Aegis Group has grown, so has its requirement for data storage.

“We needed shared data storage for the multiple businesses in the group involving numerous applications,” explains Andrew. “We explained our problem to Centrecore and with their help we now have a storage area network that is flexible to meet our needs. Centrecore had the technical know-how to help us select the best technology for our needs as well as provide a managed service for the on-going running of the SAN.”

The SAN needed to be expandable, highly reliable, and able to cater for data-intensive applications that demand increased host connectivity. Centrecore designed, implemented and now manages the IBM DS4800 SAN that gives Aegis the confidence and security to deploy their mission-critical applications at Centrecore.



Andrew Sprules
Aegis Group IT Infrastructure Director



Quality service and flexibility for the future

Throughout the partnership, Centrecore has exceeded Aegis' expectations as well as SLAs. The three-year managed service contact has now evolved into a twelve-month rolling contract and Centrecore has established itself as one of Aegis' preferred partners.

“Centrecore provides us with a high level of service that is cost-effective and that gives us the flexibility we need,” concludes Andrew. “Our company has more than doubled in size during the last five years and the volume of services that Centrecore provides to us has kept pace with that level of growth. Centrecore can draw on a wide pool of resources and consistently delivers against our requirements within tight timescales.”



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To find out more about Centrecore's range of technology and service solutions, please contact your account manager or contact us on:-

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