Intellect Broadband Campaign
Case Study 9 – IHOTDESK

**Case Studies Demonstrating how SMEs in the ICT Sector are using Broadband
Campaign Sponsors: Intel Corporation (UK) Ltd**

Website: - http://www.ihotdesk.com

Contact: Paul Sells (paul.sells@ihotdesk.com)

Type and size of organisation
SME providing outsourced IT services to SMEs with 25 members of staff and 2002 Sales Revenue of £1.2m.

Description of Business
ihotdesk is a specialist IT services company focused on providing small to medium businesses with premium IT Services. Our belief is that SME businesses suffer because they do not receive efficient and effective IT support from large IT providers. We understand the very unique nature of SME businesses and their need to gain optimum benefit from IT investment.

Our services include:
- Outsourced IT support
- Remote server management
- Managed firewall and virtual office solutions
- Project management
- System integration

We specialise in mobile and remote working and have extensive experience with Firewalls and VPN Technology. ihotdesk is a Microsoft Certified Partner, Sonicwall Gold Medallion partner and accredited Trend Micro partner.

Remote workers / are all employees office based?
ihotdesk is a virtual company and apart from a small office on the South Coast used for administrative and telesales purposes, all our employees either work from home or client-site.

We also utilise hotdesking facilities in the City and West End of London, Reading, Birmingham, Manchester and Edinburgh, allowing both sales and service staff that are in between appointments access email and corporate data.

Type of Broadband connection (ADSL / Leased Line) and length of time connected
All 'core' infrastructure is situated within a secure data centre and served by a 2 Mb leased line to the internet. Sales / Service staff working from home are provided with either ADSL or Cable modem connections. There is also staff who, due to insufficient coverage, still use either PSTN or ISDN dial-up connections.

Connection times vary: some employees may use the service in the morning for an hour or two to check emails before visiting clients, and then again later in the day upon their return home to complete reports or view service calls; whereas other members of staff providing remote support or helpdesk functions could be connected for as long as 8-10 hours per day.

Are you using any associated technology?
All 'core' business applications are web-based, allowing us to provide access anywhere. We make extensive use of Firewall and VPN technology to provide secure access to these applications.

We use Microsoft's Sharepoint portal server to enable collaboration and to provide access to corporate data and use Microsoft's OWA (Outlook Web Access) to provide access to email whilst on the move or at customer site.

We have developed a web based helpdesk and remote server management system, which allows us to decentralise our helpdesk and server management functions and provide access to staff on the move.

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In addition we also use Instant Messenger for person to person communication and Webex for remote user support.

Benefits of using Broadband:
Broadband has enabled us to grow our business, we have seen benefits in the following areas:

Productivity – Employees spend less time travelling and more time supporting our customers, our staff are motivated and enjoy a better work-life balance.

Levels of service – We can respond to problems quickly and if we cannot resolve problems remotely we have service staff close by.

Reduced costs – We have been able to keep costs down; we do more with less staff and do not have the typical operating costs normally associated with a bricks and mortar based company of equivalent size, thus making us more competitive.

Does it save you money?
Yes, we save on communications, travel and office facilities.

Any thoughts on future use of the technology? What would you do if you could?
We are looking to expand the operation to other parts of the UK. Through the use of Broadband and our existing Infrastructure and Application set, we are able to exploit new opportunities quickly with minimal financial risk.

How would you cope if you could not have Broadband?
Our business is built around Broadband, being without it is not an option.

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