



Customer Story

Transportation and Logistics Industry

P&O Ferrymasters Makes a 30%–40% Cost Saving with Ericom Connect



“It wasn’t a difficult decision to make, Ericom was faster and cheaper!”

Stephen Walters
IT Director
P&O Ferrymasters



Logistics is one of the most competitive industries in Europe. Companies in this sector must therefore take every opportunity to minimise their operating costs and improve their efficiency, so that they can offer attractive pricing and good service for customers.

The transportation company P&O Ferrymasters realised that it could make significant annual cost savings by replacing its Citrix thin client environment with Ericom Connect. But it didn’t have to compromise. While 30–40% less expensive, the Ericom solution gives employees the consistently good performance, ease-of-use and flexibility they need to work efficiently and be responsive to customer needs.

CUSTOMER

P&O Ferrymasters

INDUSTRY

Transportation and logistics

PRODUCT

Ericom® Connect™
Ericom® AccessToGo™
Ericom® AccessNow™

CHALLENGES

- Reduce annual IT costs
- Deliver IT applications to over 40 remote sites
- Provide flexible remote access for users of mobile devices

SOLUTION

- Replace Citrix with Ericom Connect
- Take advantage of Ericom’s integrated AccessNow technology for tablets and web-based access

BENEFITS

- Reduces annual costs for the renewal of maintenance and licenses by 30–40%
- Delivers consistently good application performance for users at multinational sites
- Enables the business to facilitate a ‘Bring Your Own Device’ strategy and give managers secure access to a key business system from personal mobile devices
- Is easy to use and administer, resulting in fewer support desk calls

“Ericom Connect just works. It’s so simple to use and administer.”

P&O Ferrymasters set out on a journey to save money. Along the way, it found a solution that offered more consistent performance, easier administration and all the flexibility the business needed.

A SIZABLE REDUCTION IN COSTS

Part of the Dubai World organisation which employs 50,000 people, P&O Ferrymasters is a highly successful logistics company, transporting 570,000 loads across 13 countries every year. In addition to a head office and data centre in the UK, the company has over 40 small, local and regional offices throughout Europe with different levels of connectivity and network bandwidth. Employees at these remote sites need to be able to access the company’s core systems including, in particular, Freight Manager, a vital ordering and transportation planning tool.

For several years, P&O Ferrymasters had used a Citrix thin client environment to enable employees at its remote offices to access Freight Manager and other applications. The thin client concept worked well, as it enabled the company to overcome bandwidth limitations in different locations. However, the cost of renewing the Citrix licenses and maintenance agreement each year was very high, inhibiting the company’s ability to expand this platform.

A chance phone call then led the company to Ericom. P&O Ferrymasters conducted a trial of Ericom Connect product and quickly established that it offered a far more cost effective thin client solution. Richard Barker, Network Manager at P&O Ferrymasters, says: “We took the decision to move to Ericom and made an annual saving of 30% over renewing the Citrix licensing and

support.”

Ericom Connect was also considerably cheaper than reverting to a traditional wide area network (WAN). “If we didn’t have an affordable thin client environment, we would have to purchase additional bandwidth, lease dual lines or even install network optimisation devices at all of our remote sites,” explains Barker. “Doubling the bandwidth to our VPN sites alone would cost over £5,000 a year”

“The speed at which Ericom responds to any queries that we have is excellent.”

Richard Barker
Network Manager
P&O Ferrymasters

A FLEXIBLE HIGH-PERFORMANCE SOLUTION

P&O Ferrymasters soon realised that Ericom Connect wasn’t only cheaper; it was also, in many respects, better. It was rolled out to all of the company’s remote offices and gave employees at these sites fast, secure access to Freight Manager and a wide range of other applications. Barker says: “It started out as a cost saving measure, but once we started using Ericom Connect, we saw just how good it is and realised that we could use it for other things as well.”

The Freight Manager application is hosted at P&O Ferrymasters’ data centre. While people at the company’s remote offices now

employ Ericom Connect to use this key system, head office workers access it over a dedicated WAN link. Interestingly, it is the Ericom Connect users who gain the better performance, with response times six to seven seconds faster than over the WAN.

Ericom also enables P&O Ferrymasters to support a ‘Bring Your Own Device’ strategy. Using Ericom Connect, employees can use their home PCs and mobile devices to access Freight Manager and other important business systems. What is more, many employees are taking advantage of Ericom’s AccessToGo™ for iPad app, to tap into Freight Manager using their personal Apple tablets. Consequently, a growing number of employees now have the flexibility to be able to check and update customer orders and shipment plans at any time, without having to return to their desks. It helps them to react quickly to unexpected events and deliver responsive and efficient customer service.

TIME SAVINGS IN THE IT DEPARTMENT

Feedback from users has been very positive with many commenting on the convenience of Ericom Connect’s single sign-on facility. At the same time, Barker and his colleagues in the IT department find Ericom Connect much easier to configure and manage than the previous Citrix solution. “Ericom Connect just works,” Barker says. “It is so simple to use and administer. For example, the amount of time required to set up a new user with Ericom Connect is half the time of Citrix.”

The company used to receive a high volume of support desk calls from users experiencing client-side





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volume of support desk calls from users experiencing client-side difficulties with Citrix. “We don’t see that anymore,” Barker says. Indeed, despite the fact that the number of employees using Ericom is currently 50% higher than the number of employees who previously used Citrix, the volume of support calls relating to the thin client environment is significantly lower.

P&O Ferrymasters appreciates the high standard of support available

from Ericom in the UK. “The speed at which Ericom responds to any queries that we have is excellent,” comments Barker. “The knowledge of the consultants is as good as it gets. I can’t speak highly enough of them.”

THE RIGHT DECISION — REAFFIRMED

After using Ericom Connect for around four years, P&O Ferrymasters decided to re-evaluate it against Citrix’s newest solution. It wanted to make sure that Ericom was still the best option for the business and arranged a head-to-head test at one of its remote offices in Belgium. “The time had come to upgrade and buy a lot more licenses, so we wanted to make sure we were still on the right track,” explains Barker.

Ericom set up the latest version of Ericom Connect at the Belgian site in less than a day, while the Citrix reseller took three days to set up its thin client solution. These two systems were then tested against a traditionally-configured PC running a local IT environment. “In our side-by-side comparisons, Ericom performed better than Citrix, giving consistently good response times,” Barker says. “Citrix was, by this time, also 40% more expensive in comparative quotes.”

So, today, more than five years after making the original decision to replace Citrix with Ericom, P&O Ferrymasters is confident that it made the right decision. Barker concludes: “For me, Ericom Connect is much more cost efficient and a better product.”

ERICOM – ACCESS DONE RIGHT

Ericom® Software is a leading global provider of Application Access and Virtualisation Solutions (VDI). Since 1993, Ericom has been helping users access business-critical applications running on a broad range of Microsoft® Windows® Terminal Servers, Virtual Desktops (VDI), Blade PCs, legacy hosts, and other systems. Ericom provides concrete business value by helping organisations realise the benefits of their IT investments. With offices in the United States, United Kingdom and EMEA, Ericom also has an extensive network of distributors and partners throughout North America, Europe, Asia and the Far East. Our expanding customer base is more than 30 thousand, with 8 million users.



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