IT MANAGEMENT AND CYBERSECURITY 'UPLIFT' IN THE PIPELINE AT INTERFLOW

Interflow®

CUSTOMER PROFILE

Founded in 1936, Interflow has become one of Australia and New Zealand's leading providers of trenchless pipeline solutions and employs over 600 people.

CHALLENGES

The company wanted to move away from its 'scattergun' IT approach, which was manual and cumbersome with limited visibility and weak security, and step into an optimised IT environment.

SOLUTION

- A significant upgrade to HPE Aruba network infrastructure.
- Enterprise-grade Sophos XG Firewall solution operating end-to-end in every branch. Exposes hidden risks and uses advanced protection to block unknown threats
- Adoption of the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) Essential 8, as well as the 37 strategies to mitigate cybersecurity incidents.

BENEFITS

- Greater visibility
- High level of cyber resiliency
- Ease of IT management
- Better employee mobility
- Increased bandwidth performance
- Improved business operations
- Greater agility
- Peace of mind

Pipeline infrastructure provider, Interflow, has embarked on a business transformation journey that sees the 80-year-old firm dramatically lift its game on the IT management and cybersecurity front and say goodbye to a scattergun approach and randomised IT strategy.

"We needed to embark on an IT journey," according to Daniel Bogos, Interflow IT technical services manager, who said the company opted for the guiding hands of IT service provider, Somerville, to help the company modernise the fort and reinvigorate its IT management and cybersecurity posture.

"We were looking for a partner that could take us on an IT journey. With Interflow's growth, there was a lot of opportunity to take things forward from an IT perspective. Our cybersecurity program was just kicking off and our core networking needed a redesign. Our IT was disbursed and, in some cases, lacked the visibility we needed," Bogos said.

"We had a lot of manual process which was cumbersome, and a lot of the time it was a needle in the haystack approach," he said, explaining Interflow had limited network documentation, a lack of visibility and oversight, and needed to undergo an intense discovery process.

Since its inception in 1936, Interflow has become a leader in water and pipeline infrastructure. Today, the company - which employs over 500 field crews and office-based staff - is regarded as one of Australia and New Zealand's leading providers of trenchless pipeline solutions, specialising in the water mains, wastewater, stormwater and culvert sectors.

Bogos said the long-standing firm - which has a track record of delivering world-class solutions to its customers, communities and the environment - needed an IT revamp and refresh - wasn't aligned with an IT service provider in the past – and needed to modernise its IT management methods - and ultimately looked to Somerville for support.

"Somerville ticked all of the boxes and understood the company's business requirements and objectives, and

is now walking with us on a modernisation journey," Bogos explained.

"We were looking for a partner that could examine our overall IT efficiency, and determine ways to optimise our IT environment, as well as helping us work better. We also wanted to have a centralised partner for purchasing – hardware, software and professional services. But we also wanted someone that could bring ideas to the table, sit down with us and strategise."

Indeed, strategising on the cybersecurity front was the first port of call. As part of the initial transformation plan, Interflow adopted the Sophos XG Firewall solution, which is now operating end-to-end in every branch.

Bogos said cybersecurity has become a lot more prevalent over the last three years, in part because issues have skyrocketed, and cyber-attacks have become an industry unto itself.

"Cybersecurity is a key strategy we've now onboarded. Prior to this project, our IT and security maturity was in the early stages. But now we've adopted the Australian Cyber Security Centre (ACSC) Essential 8, as well as the 37 strategies to mitigate cybersecurity incidents. And we believe the Sophos solution, as well as partnering with Somerville, helped us achieve most of those goals."

Bogos said the company has come a long way in such a short time - and the IT team are now kicking goals and even being widely recognised.

"Somerville helped us step up from our original solution into an enterprise grade, site-to-site networking solution from Sophos. That delivered a high level of cyber resiliency, and oversight and management across all of our networks."

Indeed, it's a nice feeling, Bogos admitted, and one that's raising the profile on security.

"Security can be underfunded, and many people don't want to talk about it until a breach occurs. But this solution now gives us peace of mind. It's robust, and we don't have to even think about it. If there are issues, we get notified by email. The Somerville support team is on tap to help us out when needed."

> **"**Somerville ticked all of the boxes and understood the company's business requirements and objectives, and is now taking us on a massive IT journey.
>
> **- Daniel Bogos, IT Technical Services Manager, Interflow**

NETWORK REDESIGN EQUALS GREATER AGILITY

But that wasn't the only move under the company's wider digital transformation plan. Bogos said the company also embarked on a network redesign as part of the same IT project.

"We replaced our aging network, with some equipment being over 10 years old. The company had gaps to leap before, and we had some consumer grade networks and WiFi routers where an Enterprise solution was required. Somerville helped us on a journey and refreshed all of our networking with Aruba Next-Gen networking solutions."

Bogos said the network boost is crucial in a business that needs to be quick and agile, and rehabilitate pipeline infrastructure in a timely and efficient manner.

"If there's a major sewer pipeline or mains water pipeline that needs to be rehabilitated, we go in there and we do a no-dig reline. Our technology allows the sewer to continue being in use and reline it, and restore it into fit and working condition, and give it a few extra years of life.

NEXT STEPS
ON THE IT JOURNEY

Boosting employee mobility and ramping up agility is key, Bogos added. "This helps the employees in terms of mobility, and drives agility across the business. It allows our workforce to remain mobile and to access resources. The network is a lot more reliable now after having increased bandwidth performance. So that improves things for the processing times for quality assurance checking."

But the IT journey doesn't end here. Bogos said the plan is to explore even more avenues and deepen the Somerville relationship further now that Interflow has tasted success with its IT management and cybersecurity efforts.

"We're looking at things like device management technologies, mobile device management technologies, and cloud computing infrastructure as-a-service. We've achieved a fair bit of alignment already from our licensing - we now have all of our licensing consolidated under Somerville, and all of our hardware purchasing has been consolidated too."

But connectivity is the next frontier, he said. "We're starting on the connectivity journey as well, so as links come out of contract, we're signing up with Somerville for Internet connectivity. We're about to move server and infrastructure hosting over to Somerville for all of our applications - so there's still quite a bit of a journey left.

"In fact, we're only on the first quarter of our journey - there's a lot further to go and many more milestones to achieve."

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