

# CASE STUDY

## FINANCIAL SECTOR

# CUMBERLAND BUILDING SOCIETY



Cumberland Building Society has 33 branches (six incorporating branches of its Cumberland Estate Agents subsidiary) and two separate Cumberland Estate Agent branches primarily in Cumbria and southwest Scotland. All are connected via a wide area network. When the organisation wanted to upgrade its existing network, it chose Redcentric to give it the improved performance, support and future-proofing that it needed.

## CHALLENGES

When Cumberland Building Society's existing contract for its wide area network (WAN) was coming to an end, Gary Richardson, Assistant General Manager for IT at the building society, decided to carry out a thorough grass-roots evaluation of replacement network solutions.

He started by approaching a number of traditional network suppliers, such as BT. He added Redcentric to the list as the building society had successfully been using Redcentric's managed data backup services for several years: encrypted backups from all branches have helped Cumberland meet stringent data security regulations while the ability to centrally manage backups and recovery for all sites from a single location has brought efficiency benefits.

The challenge in upgrading the network was to find a vendor who could provide:

- Cost savings over the previous solution
- Bandwidth improvement
- Excellent technical support
- Ability to migrate in future to BT 21CN and beyond.

In addition to a conducting a rigorous tender process, Gary Richardson wanted to run a pilot project before committing to a long-term contract.

## REALISING THE BENEFITS

Redcentric ticked every box – they were cost-effective, offered improved bandwidth, gave us excellent support and future-proofed the service.

Gary Richardson  
Assistant General Manager for IT



**Cumberland**  
Building Society

## HOW REDCENTRIC HELPED

Gary Richardson says, "Redcentric exceeded all other suppliers when it came to agreeing to the pilot. While other organisations made the pilot project commercially unviable, putting various barriers in place such as wanting us to sign up for a year's minimum term, Redcentric were much more helpful and flexible, and offered significantly better terms."

During the pilot project, it became clear to the Cumberland Building Society team that the Redcentric solution would give them the high quality, resilient network service they wanted. Improved bandwidth was matched by knowledgeable, readily available support.

Gary Richardson says, "Even during the pilot we could see that Redcentric were excellent. We had taken up references from other organisations that we knew were using them, so this wasn't altogether a surprise. We really were very pleased with the commitment they showed."

As a result, Cumberland Building Society chose Redcentric's Managed Network Services to provide the equipment, management and support of:

- An MPLS-based WAN incorporating all 35 branches and the head office
- An internet pipe to the head office giving 24/7 high-speed broadband access
- ADSL circuits from the offices to the core network.

The network also provides full support for the Redcentric Managed Backup Services that all Cumberland Building Society's offices continue to use.

## TECHNICAL INFO

- MPLS-based core to 35 branches
- 21CN WES 100 and WES 100 connectivity
- ADSL circuits
- Internet pipe to the HQ
- Managed Firewall
- Managed Backup Services

## BENEFITS

Gary Richardson says, "Basically Redcentric ticked every box – they were cost-effective, offered improved bandwidth, gave us excellent support and future-proofed the service." The benefits from this include:

### Constant network connectivity

As part of an enhanced service package, Redcentric offered Cumberland Building Society a guaranteed broadband service level response and fix. Gary Richardson says, "They assured us – and have borne out in practice – proactive managed network and support, and the guaranteed service levels are absolutely vital to us as a building society in maintaining our customer service. Normally a network provider doesn't know there's a problem until you phone them. It's entirely different with Redcentric – they identify and fix any issues, often before we even know about them."

### Improved customer service

Proactive management and support of the network is particularly beneficial outside business hours as the branches' cash machines need to be up and running 24/7.

### Enhance IT productivity

With Redcentric looking after the network, Cumberland's IT team is free to concentrate on more important, front-end operations. Gary Richardson says, "Usually, we don't even have to phone in if there's an issue, as Redcentric's support team will already be on the case."

### Cost savings

The improvements to the network have been implemented while achieving cost savings over the previous network.

### Peace of mind

Cumberland has been impressed with the Redcentric support team's level of communication. Gary Richardson says, "There are regular face-to-face review meetings, we get regular statistics about service levels, any issues are worked through openly and efficiently, and there's never any hassle about escalating issues to get them resolved. All of this means I don't have to worry."

## FUTURE

Cumberland plans to enhance its network by installing a new router from Redcentric with 3G fallback capability. The router, already successfully tested, will provide improved network recovery at all sites should any problems occur. Gary Richardson says, "This confirms we made the right decision by choosing a supplier that can deliver ongoing benefits to us."

Right from the initial pilot study, Redcentric knocked the socks off everyone else. They understood our needs, provided a commercially viable solution and have offered stellar support throughout our partnership.

Gary Richardson  
Assistant General Manager for IT

