



*Dynamic disruption  
through applied innovation*

**Retna Pictures Case Study:**

**Converged Communications support  
perfect picture delivery**

"Our voice costs are down 25% and we've saved 10% off Internet costs, and that's without any negative impact on the quality."

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# Exponential-e - the UK's thought leader in Ethernet-based WAN solutions

**Retna Pictures** is one of the largest independent photo agencies in the world, with its collection of celebrity, music, lifestyle and fashion images being used by publishers and commercial organisations on a daily basis. Retna has built its reputation on providing quality images quickly. With photos being received and sent digitally the company's network infrastructure is vitally important. So when Retna moved from serviced offices in Pinewood to a Greenfield site in Fulham Broadway last year it provided an opportunity to invest in the very latest technology.

**The Business Challenge:** To Provide the Latest Images Quickly and Reliably to Customers and Reduce Operational Costs

Retna receives digital images from photographers located all over the world. The company has to download the pictures as quickly as possible before trying to sell them for commercial and editorial use. In this highly competitive marketplace speed and reliability are of the essence. In addition, Retna hosts 1.75million pictures in its digitised archive which have to be accessible to customers to browse and download 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. High bandwidth, fast speeds and total reliability of its connection are therefore critical to Retna's business success. At any one time hundreds of people may be trying to view images while photographers are also sending more pictures.

**The Solution:** Converged Access for Voice, Internet and Data back-up using a PureEthernet™ VPLS-enabled Next Generation Network

Having considered a number of operators, Retna selected PureEthernet™ provider Exponential-e. The company designed a bespoke solution which incorporated converged access to its hosted voice service and business-grade Internet, along with providing space in its 'on.net' colocation facility for data back-up. Internet optimisation tools ensured low latency, packet loss and jitter, while an Ethernet Demarcation Device (EDD) at the customer premise gave full, end to end management of the service as well as allowing the voice and data to be presented on physically separate cables in the office.

The solution was delivered over Exponential-e's 10Gig-E Next Generation Network, known as the Service Creation Platform (SCP).



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*"Moving to a Greenfield site meant we had no legacy network or existing supplier contracts to consider when looking for the new solution. We knew we wanted to reduce our operational costs, but this could not be at the expense of the quality of service. We also wanted the solution to be scalable in order to meet our future growth and changing needs"* **Graham Stewart, Head of IT, Retna.**

A 10Mb optical circuit connected Retna's London office onto the SCP, from where VLANs were created and 'pointed' at the required services. One VLAN connected Retna to Exponential-e's hosted VoIP solution, PowerVoice Centrex. This provided them with all the advanced features of VoIP but without them having to recruit a VoIP specialist or find the capital funding for a full VoIP project. Exponential-e then provided Retna with a number range, including DDI's, fax, analogue and group 'pick-up' numbers.

Another VLAN 'pointed' to Exponential-e's business-grade Internet service PowerServe. With an Internet route optimisation platform, Route 1, within Exponential-e's core network, and IP Transit taken from 5 Tier 1 providers, PowerServe offers the fastest routes on the Internet by dynamically selecting the optimum routes in real time. In addition, the use of multiple IP Gateways ensured total reliability of the solution since it removed the single point of failure.

With the colocation facility 'on-net', Retna's back-up process is also straightforward, using the same converged access circuit as the voice and Internet traffic.

**Commercial Benefits:** Reduced Communications Costs, Faster Delivery of Images, Enhanced Functionality, Greater Control, Reduced IT Maintenance, Scalable Infrastructure

**Enhanced Functionality/Greater Control:** While Retna had access to some voice functionality from the serviced office solution, the hosted VoIP approach had delivered many more features and given Retna greater control of those tools.

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As well as delivering low cost PSTN calls, unified messaging and a user web portal, from where Retna can manage its own redirects, a number of the directors are using the 'find me, follow me' single number feature, which has given them greater flexibility to work on the move.

*"We are already witnessing some dramatic benefits from its new converged solution, not least of which is the huge cost savings. Moving out of serviced offices I would have expected us to be able to reduce costs, but I'm genuinely surprised by the amount we have saved. Our voice costs are down 25% and we've saved 10% off Internet costs, and that's without any negative impact on the quality", said Stewart. "In fact the best testament to the solution is that people don't even know we use a VoIP system."*

**Reduced IT Maintenance:** The use of a single communications network has reduced IT maintenance requirements, freeing up IT resource for more productive work.

**Scalable Infrastructure:** Importantly for Retna the new converged solution will support the company's continued growth. As more employees join the company the bandwidth can be easily scaled-up and new VoIP numbers introduced. In addition, now that Retna is connected onto the SCP, accessing any of the other services and applications which Exponential-e hosts on its network is simple.

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