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A UK Business Leaders survey by V12 Telecom and conducted by Larato in January 2021 looked at how businesses are approaching their technology needs over the next 12 months. Whilst everyone expects to be working from a mix of the office, home or hub, no one is yet sure where it will land.

The big picture is that Covid-19 has forced people to work in a different way. At the start of the pandemic, everyone did what they could to make it work. All string and sticking plasters. For the longer term, businesses now need to formalise the technology they provide to their workers.



The homeworking package from V12 Telecom supported by Highlight is the perfect solution.

V12 Telecom has specialised in providing managed voice, data, and mobile services to enterprise users and partners globally for over 20 years. From the outset, its MD and founder, Charles Rickett, wanted to differentiate V12 by providing and sustaining the best customer experience. Highlight assists V12's continued delivery of a great customer experience by providing a platform that identifies the best network solutions for end users alongside maximum transparency between V12 and its customers.

Challenge

According to Charles: *“One of the major lessons of lockdown is that without the right connectivity nothing works. What was once seen as a commodity is now far better understood and highly valued.”*



V12's survey revealed that to manage their main telephone lines during the initial lockdown, 54 per cent of businesses forwarded calls to mobiles and 52 per cent relied on expensive third-party call centres. Neither are sustainable solutions. Businesses need to have solid connectivity and a telecoms strategy that fits their business. With the right connectivity, businesses will be able to retain valuable customers as well as access new clients and markets.

“One of the biggest issues is that homeworkers are having major problems with their connectivity.”

The use of collaboration technology and video have put a considerable strain on inadequate systems. Users are suffering from telecom faults due to using the wrong technology or having to share a home network. And a patchwork of domestic routers and Wi-Fi repeaters distributed around a home is another major concern considering a reported 30 per cent increase in cyber-crime.

“Most businesses appreciate the tangible benefits in having a distributed workforce,” he adds. “It can save money, make teams more productive and it can improve customer service. Not least, if a business fails to offer flexible working in today's market, they are unlikely to attract or retain the best people and those with scarcer skills. This was reflected in our survey when over half of the companies said they are looking to invest in business-grade connectivity for their homeworkers. They want their staff to have a secure, managed connection to the corporate network.”

However, businesses cannot simply go to a website and buy the technology they need. The difficulty with homeworking is that every location is different, so a one-size-fits-all solution will not work. For a home office, the user needs a reliable and secure connection to the company network. This may include all manner of technologies from virtual private networks, broadband, encrypted mobile connections and other options.

The bottom line is that it needs to be always available, high quality and it needs to be secure.

Solution

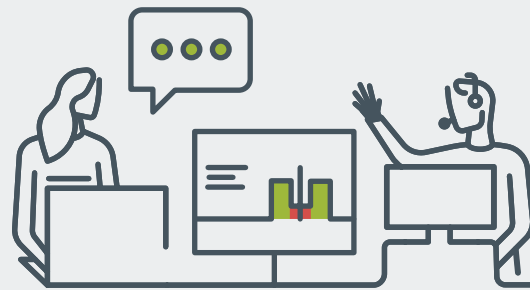
V12 has developed a connectivity package for the homeworker. Charles and his team make sure that customers buy and use the right solution for their needs. These can be complex, and V12's expertise is in ensuring a customer gets the outcomes they need for their business.

Charles is very familiar with challenging telecoms requirements having clients located in remote rainforests and ocean swept oil rigs. Whilst homeworkers rarely present such tricky conditions, he knows the best telecoms strategy to deploy and works with the best providers and IT partners alongside Highlight to ensure the underlying infrastructure is resilient.

As an example, the CEO of a large company was sharing his home broadband with three others in his household. Video calls were poor quality and would often freeze during important discussions. By creating a bespoke solution (any details?) V12 was able to save him money and increase his security.

"Every homeworking proposition is unique. Users live in different places where the connectivity is always variable. We need to be flexible in how we put services together. Highlight ensures that the technology we select delivers the outcomes our customers want from a business and service perspective. It helps us ensure users get the right experience across the various suppliers."

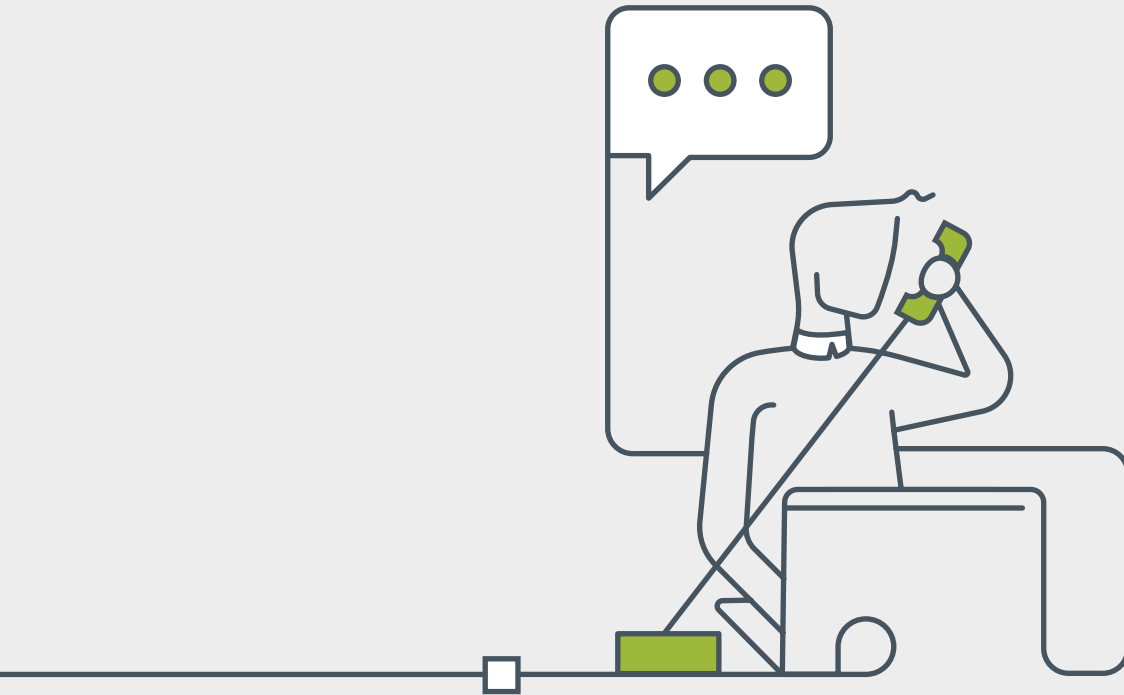
"Many people might describe Highlight as monitoring. It's much more! Monitoring in the telecoms sector tends to be very technical and intangible. With Highlight, I get a rounded picture of the services my customers are getting. This enables me to deliver the right services, the right equipment and the very best of service and support. It also allows me to mix and match the providers and connectivity for each customer. The strength of Highlight is that the system doesn't care what we use."



Decisions need to be made about getting businesses in the right shape to support a distributed workforce. Businesses need to consider if the technology being purchased today will need changing in a few years. For example, BT is switching off the analogue telephone network in 2025. This will impact things like pagers, burglar alarms and fire alarms which will need to be connected to a different technology.

Businesses need to have a simple and effective solution for both business customers and their users. When a single mass solution will not work for every home user, the best route is expert advice and recommendation from a trust supplier.





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