

CASE STUDY



UNITED
KINGDOM



SERVICES

**LEADING UK LAW FIRM ACCELERATES
APPLICATION PERFORMANCE ON PUBLIC IAAS TO
ENHANCE PRODUCTIVITY AND CLIENT SERVICES**

FARRER & Co

Improve performance for applications running in Microsoft Azure to enable lawyers to serve clients more effectively and responsively



In a rare move among legal firms, Farrers moved its entire IT infrastructure from its own private data center into Microsoft Azure, transforming how the applications and resources supporting client services are managed and delivered. However, when testing applications running in Azure, some did not perform as well as they did in the previous on-premises data center due to latency across Azure ExpressRoute circuits.

Andy Beech, IT Director with Farrers, notes, “Lawyers record their time for everything and if something is slower, it affects their ability to be efficient with their time, which is how most lawyers are appraised and rewarded. Therefore, it was absolutely critical that we address the application performance issues.”

MAXIMIZING APPLICATION PERFORMANCE IN THE CLOUD

Having worked with technology partner, SystemUp, to deploy the Azure environment and ExpressRoute connectivity, Beech and his team consulted with them again on options to improve application performance. Very quickly, SystemsUp got back to the team, recommending the Aruba EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform as the right solution.

Beech recalls, “We were in the late testing stages when the performance issues came up, so we needed a solution that would just work and work



REQUIREMENTS

- Deliver reliable, high-performance access to cloud-hosted applications
- Support connectivity to Azure ExpressRoute
- Ensure protection of private client information across ExpressRoute circuits

SOLUTION

- Aruba EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform
- Aruba Boost WAN optimization performance pack
- Aruba Orchestrator centralized management console

OUTCOMES

- Increased application performance by up to 60 per cent
- Ensured uptime of network connectivity with sub-millisecond failover across four links
- Tripled available bandwidth from 200 to 600 Mbps
- Increased headroom for future growth, avoiding expense of upgrading MPLS circuits
- Enabled legal teams to focus solely on client service without network impediments
- Simplified the WAN edge and streamlined network administration and troubleshooting

quickly. Within a few days of installing the EdgeConnect appliances, all our application performance issues were wiped out.”

He adds, “We were amazed how quickly and with such little effort EdgeConnect was able to optimize our application traffic. It’s a true plug-and-play solution.”

UNIFIED SD-WAN FROM ON-PREMISES TO THE CLOUD

Farrers deployed EdgeConnect appliances in each of its London office buildings, along with virtual



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ANDY BEECH
IT Director, Farrer & Co.

EdgeConnect appliances in its primary Azure cloud environment. An additional virtual EdgeConnect appliance is deployed in a secondary Azure environment for backup.

Each EdgeConnect appliance is terminated with an Azure ExpressRoute circuit, which is comprised of dual 200 Mbps MPLS-based VPN connections. The EdgeConnect platform manages connectivity and automated sub-millisecond failover across both ExpressRoute circuits—across all connections—to ensure the highest levels of performance for Farrers’ lawyers and staff connecting to the Azure cloud.

“The network configuration is seamless,” says Beech. “With EdgeConnect managing the failovers,

if there’s any loss of a circuit, our end users are none the wiser.”

In addition, Farrers uses the standard data encryption capabilities provided by EdgeConnect to ensure protection of confidential client information as it traverses across the ExpressRoute circuits. This eliminated the need for separate firewall appliances previously used for encryption, reducing complexity and simplifying administration at the WAN edge.

BOOSTS APPLICATION PERFORMANCE OUT OF THE BOX

One of the most important capabilities the IT team implemented was the optional Aruba Boost WAN optimization performance pack, unified within the EdgeConnect platform. Beech reports that out of the box Boost delivered the WAN optimization needed across Farrers’ application mix to increase performance dramatically.

“Since implementing Boost, we’ve seen application performance increases between 6 and 60 per cent,” Beech affirms. “We also tripled our available bandwidth from 200 to 600 Mbps through the data compression and deduplication provided by Boost. The compression is just staggering.”

He continues, “Instead of needing to go out and upgrade our Azure connections in the next three or four years, we have plenty of headroom for growth right now with our existing 200 Mbps ExpressRoute circuits due the network efficiencies gained from EdgeConnect and Boost.”

VISIBLE ASSURANCE THAT THE NETWORK IS PERFORMING

The EdgeConnect SD-WAN edge platform also provided the Farrers IT team with operational benefits, thanks to the Aruba Orchestrator management console.





“Orchestrator gives us a detailed view into the network that’s better than any other monitoring tool we have,” says Beech. “Straightaway you can see what’s happening with your traffic—it’s very comprehensive, yet easy to interpret. If we’re troubleshooting a particular issue, it’s straightforward to get to the root of it.”

Beech concludes, “We can see the performance we’re getting across the links with a measurable quality of service. It gives us comfort that we can rely on the infrastructure, so we can focus more on delivering services that benefit our lawyers and our clients. Ultimately, that’s what Farrers is all about—providing outstanding service to our clients.”

