



Case Study

Tourism Ireland makes connections around the world



Customer

Tourism Ireland

Industry

Tourism

Project

To unify voice and data communications into a single, global network from a single provider

Products and services

SD WAN

Colt SD WAN supports Tourism Ireland's operations at home and abroad

There are endless reasons why tourists from all over the world visit the island of Ireland. To soak up its history and culture; indulge in its cuisine; enjoy its spectacular scenery and golf courses; visit popular TV show and film locations — and much more besides.

Overseas tourism was worth around €6bn in 2023, and helps sustain some 300,000 jobs across the island. Tourism Ireland is responsible for marketing the island of Ireland overseas as a compelling holiday and business events destination. It works in partnership with Fáilte Ireland (the National Tourism Development Authority) and Tourism Northern Ireland, as well as international tour operators, travel agents, air and sea carriers, and other key stakeholders.

Making the complex simple

Tourism Ireland has 16 offices overseas and is active in 14 markets across Great Britain, North America, mainland Europe and Australia. The organisation's head offices are in Dublin and Coleraine. Previously, the offices were connected using an MPLS-based IP VPN from Colt. Local providers supplied internet breakout and firewalls at each site, along with traditional phone lines for inbound and outbound calls.

"Managing all those separate contracts was complex and time consuming for our small team," recalls Conor Marshall, Head of ICT

and Data Protection at Tourism Ireland. "We wanted to reduce the burden by working with a provider who could consolidate everything onto a single, more flexible and cost-effective network, covered by a single contract."

During their research into alternative solutions, Conor and his team attended Colt innovation workshops that showed how SD WAN could solve their challenges. "Our relationship with Colt dates back 15 years," says Conor. "With Colt as our trusted advisor, we felt well informed before going out to tender."

A seamless transition to SD WAN

After a competitive tender process, Tourism Ireland appointed Colt to provide its SD WAN based on cost and other factors. "It was clear that Colt had plenty of wholly owned fibre connection points around the world, as well as the skills and expertise to roll out and manage the solution. Colt's actions on sustainability also met our requirements," says Conor.

A Colt project manager planned the SD WAN rollout in consultation with Conor and his team. "Colt phased the rollout to meet our needs, including the relocation of our Paris and New York offices," says Conor. "The transition from MPLS to SD WAN, including billing, was seamless, and having full rollout support from Colt helped to speed up the process."

“Since switching to SD WAN, we’re saving over £100,000 a year, which equates to at least 30% of our previous spending on connectivity. The solution also offers options for the future, such as connecting directly to Azure as we look to move the last of our applications from the data centre to the cloud.”

Conor Marshall,
Head of ICT and
Data Protection,
Tourism Ireland



At each site, Colt installed new firewalls and IP Access circuits. Bandwidth has been upped from 20Mbit/s to 100Mbit/s and dual circuits in active/active configuration ensure resilient connectivity. Colt SIP Trunking provides VoIP integrated into the SD WAN, replacing the previous phone lines.

“With Colt SD WAN we have a better service altogether that delivers better experiences,” says Conor. “In particular, everyone’s benefiting from faster internet access and higher-quality video for Microsoft Teams calls.”

The convenience of a single provider

The Colt portal gives Conor and his team a single pane of glass for accessing invoices and reporting, reconfiguring connections, and monitoring network and firewall health and performance in near-real time.

“The management information available with the portal was another factor in choosing Colt SD WAN,” says Conor. “We can see at a glance if there are any issues on the network and, if necessary, report them to Colt.” He points out that having a single provider makes fault reporting much easier than before, when it was often difficult to work out where a problem lay and which supplier to call to get it fixed.

Conor and his team feel well supported by Colt at all levels, from the help desk to the head of Colt’s operations in Ireland. “Whether we need help right now, or want to know what new developments are in the pipeline, we can count on Colt to bring the right people to the table,” says Conor. They’re currently looking at ways to use their firewalls to protect users working from home, and are involved in testing multifactor authentication on the Colt portal.

Cost-savings and future-proofing

In addition to improved quality, increased flexibility and simplified management, SD WAN is delivering cost savings.

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**For more information,
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