



Silchester, focusing on managing money not systems

Founded in 1994, Silchester International Investors is a long-only value investor. Specialising in international equity asset management, most of their operations are carried out in London, while their client service office is maintained in New York. They have also invested in a number of affiliate organisations, providing them with back office support and IT infrastructure during the initial years of each affiliate's operations.

Historically, Silchester's IT support was rather reactive to problems. Systems had been implemented to resolve issues on a discrete basis, rather than in any grander, more strategic way. Steve Allen, Silchester's IT Manager, was brought on board and challenged in finding new ways of working. **"We weren't happy with the current support we were receiving, and at the same time, everyone's expectation on IT was increasing."** With 24 staff and 15 servers at the time, it was essential to move away from their incumbent partner and progress with a company that could provide strategic IT advice, implementation and support. Silchester looked to Lanware to manage their existing environment, with a view to upgrading initially, then to move to a hosted environment.

 *"By centralising systems and then working in a virtual office environment, we no longer need to have hands on support based in New York."*

Highlights

- Silchester now enjoy a settled, robust and automated system
- With disparate locations, it was important to remove the IT overhead from local offices
- Silchester is now in a total technology outsourced environment
- Silchester continues to focus its business operations on managing money and not managing systems
- Support tasks reduced from between 700 and 800 a year to 5 or 6 a week.

A global virtual office

To achieve the right results, Silchester has their own internal process of researching options and issuing a paper to the key stakeholders to gather a united response. Allen highlights, **"Simplicity was the key, allowing us to concentrate on the focus of our business, investment management. The goal was to outsource everything that wasn't core to Silchester, and move to a managed solution."**



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In 2003 Silchester selected Lanware, following a comprehensive evaluation process. Over time the remit widened to provide a remote working and disaster recovery solution for the organisation. The initial strategy was to maintain a smooth support transition. Lanware rapidly restored support process stability, and established comprehensive documentation. Over the last 3 years, a structured project process has been put in place, and Silchester now enjoy a settled, robust and automated system. It is hosted out of a datacentre, needing minimal hand holding. Allen goes on to say, **"We now run a fully outsourced Citrix environment, providing a full virtual office solution."** Silchester are confident that the Lanware solution is the right one, and enjoy the flexibility of their solution.

With disparate locations, it was important to remove the IT overhead from local offices. **"By centralising systems and then working in a virtual office environment, we no longer need to have hands on support based in New York,"** says Allen. As long as there is a PC with



an internet connection, all employees have access to the entire Silchester infrastructure.



A total technology outsourced environment

Over the last three years, Lanware has taken Silchester to a total technology outsourced environment. Allen is proud of the solution he now has, and says, **"We have invested much time in strengthening our partner relationship with Lanware, and enjoy working with them at a strategic level."** With regular meetings and technology reviews, both Allen and Lanware are focused on supporting the key stakeholders along the journey. **"Lanware is an organisation made up of very good people who act as a great sounding board for strategic thinking,"** continues Allen.

Any place, any time zone

Silchester continues to focus its business operations on managing money and not managing systems. The overall benefit to Silchester has been significant and all their users now enjoy a Citrix virtual office environment giving them total flexibility to use the system in any place and in any time zone. Allen says, **"When meeting with global clients, any member of staff can go to a hotel, hop onto the internet, and gain secure, direct access to their own desk environment."** Continues Allen, **"By outsourcing, we have mentally divorced the business continuity plan from the disaster recovery plan. Our offices and our systems are independent of each other."**

Concentrate on strategic decisions

Silchester used to count the number of support tasks, handling between 700 and 800 a year. Since working with Lanware, this has significantly reduced over the last eighteen months to 5 or 6 a week. Emphasising their improved productivity, Allen explains, **"Fundamentally, our systems work, and the success is the lack of support calls. The business is now afforded time to engage in more strategic discussion, rather than fixing internal IT problems."**



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Speak to us today

+44 (0)20 7150 1190

Send us an email

enquiries@lanware.co.uk

Visit our website

www.lanware.co.uk