

# Case Studies

## Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership

### What they do

Cheshire and Warrington Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) is a private sector-led, publicly funded organisation that is essentially an economic facilitator which ensures that public sector funding is used appropriately in the local region. They work on a wide variety of ventures including large infrastructure projects and incorporate Marketing Cheshire, which promotes the area to visitors and businesses, as well as the Visitor Information Centre in Chester.

*I am entirely happy with Ben and his team – they were really aware of and sensitive to the human aspect of the project. The ongoing weekly meetings are very valuable, discussing not just technical, but cultural issues. The LEP made the investment, with the intention of maximising the efficiencies that it can bring, with links to other applications, as appropriate. It's done a lot for user adoption, despite the change. You always have champions and strugglers, but the feedback has been really positive, which is a huge compliment to Blaze.*

Finance and Commercial Director | Cheshire and Warrington LEP



### The challenge

The LEP has grown rapidly as an entity in the last couple of years, from a small strategic unit, to one which now runs numerous development programmes and has in total about 30 staff, along with the “Marketing Cheshire” team, which has another 10 to 15 staff. The LEP’s legacy infrastructure was ageing which was causing capacity and continuity issues. The infrastructure was on site, with no segregation and no failover options. In addition, the staff head count has increased in the past two years and there was insufficient internal resource to properly induct them in the technology.

The legacy networks of the LEP’s three locations were set up as completely separate tenants, making it impossible for the different groups to share things like call routing, central identity management, file sharing and application access.

### The solution

Blaze delivered a comprehensive, multi-layered solution, the first step being to build an **SD-WAN** network using **Fortinet** technology that provides the ability to identify and route applications based on the business needs. Once the network infrastructure was consolidated, the server infrastructure for all three entities was also consolidated and migrated to **Blaze Cloud** for central hosting. This included all files, authentication and line of business applications (such as Sage financial system).

**Unified threat management (UTM)** was provided to protect the entire attack surface. This is monitored with the **Blaze Network security information and event management** platform and service.

Three separate **Microsoft 365** organisational tenants were also consolidated into one share tenancy enhancing communication sharing and collaboration, and the business’ **Mitel Unified Communications** platform was also moved from on-premises into Blaze Cloud to provide a single unified communication platform across all three locations -addressing all telephony requirements.

Finally, a **BlazeVault backup solution** utilising Veeam technology provides business continuity and disaster recovery services for all information stored within the organisation.

The results have been good: SD-WAN has created seamless communication across all three sites prioritising application traffic flows and voice. Future-proofed, scalable and resilient infrastructure is now in place, enabling the LEP to improve productivity, and cost savings have been made on voice communications, infrastructure IT support and **Microsoft 365** subscriptions. Blaze Networks now provides a single point of contact for support, acting as a completely **outsourced IT department**.

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