

# Case Study



## Syplex assists EIS mobile professionals

*"We needed advice and assistance from a company that really understood how our business operated."*

Stephen Davies – Managing Director, EIS.

### Introduction

European Intermediary Services Limited (EIS) is a marketing company for Irish Life International, part of the Irish Life & Permanent Group, which is the largest insurance, investment and pension group in Ireland and one of the largest quoted Insurers in Europe. Irish Life International was established in 1994 to service the requirements of international, corporate and institutional investors and offers an innovative range of investment and life assurance products. Rapid expansion necessitated the creation of separate marketing divisions for the UK and Europe, with UK-Tadlow-based EIS dealing solely in Europe. The company, which has eight employees, also draws on the resources of the Irish Life International head office in Dublin to service clients in countries as diverse as Finland and Luxembourg.

### The Challenge

EIS faced a number of interesting technology issues at its formation in 1999, as Director Stephen Davies recalled:

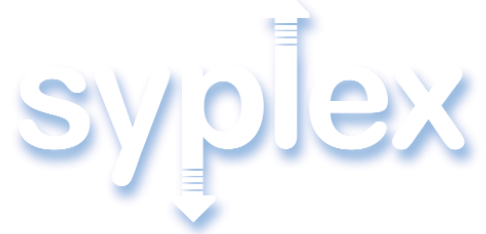
*"We are a classic mobile worker company. We have to accommodate staff working in the office, at home, on the move and in foreign hotels, and our satellite offices in Marbella and London need support from Tadlow and from Dublin. Travel features a great deal in our work, and not always to locations where communications are simple and straightforward. The majority of our customer base is in Scandinavia, and they expect sophisticated communications - making a robust e-mail system a priority. We also wanted to operate a paperless office. We had the luxury of being able to start from scratch in terms of our technology infrastructure when we were established, so we needed advice and assistance from a company that really understood how our business operated."*



### Key Features:

- Mobile professionals working remotely
- Integration of data and email
- Communications solution for data, voice and fax
- Paperless office
- Microsoft Small Business Server 2000

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## The Solution

Simon Foote of Syplex Ltd was asked to work with EIS to specify a complete IT infrastructure for the company when it moved to its current premises in Tadlow, near Royston in Hertfordshire. Simon and Stephen together agreed on the provision of a Windows 2000 Small Business Server, which incorporated e-mail, fax, firewall, ISDN Internet connection, cabling and network switch. The need to access email, MS Office files and large quantities of digitally scanned documents together was satisfied by storing them in Exchange 2000 Public Folders accessed through Microsoft Outlook. This system also ensured that any vital document could be downloaded to laptops for foreign travel.

Effective overseas communications was an essential component of the new system. Some territories operate on different telephone systems to those in the UK, other locations where EIS operate may have no reliable telephone system, making it crucial to have wireless capability. Integrated voicemail was subsequently added to the system, again to facilitate overseas work, and all the mobile staff were equipped with personalised fax numbers, e-mail addresses and telephone numbers.

Stephen Davies remarked on one of the more unexpected issues that had to be overcome:

*"We had to interface with Irish Life in Dublin, but discovered that we had more recent versions of some software than they did. This should not have been surprising, as with several thousand staff it's a big deal to upgrade everyone. As a small organisation, we can implement the latest versions of anything we like without a major upheaval. There was some additional work involved in ensuring we could talk to their main server operation."*

## The Benefits

Stephen is highly satisfied with the solution that Syplex specified:

*"Microsoft Small Business Server 2000 is an ideal product for small companies, and the integration of data with Exchange 2000 is excellent. We are very pleased with the entire infrastructure as it enables us to be totally flexible in the way we work. It has proved highly reliable, whether we are based in the office or on the move. The implementation went very smoothly, apart from the inevitable minor glitches you always get, but the Syplex team are immensely knowledgeable and continue to support us whenever we need them."*

*Our next major challenge will be videoconferencing - we would like to reduce the amount of travel we have to do. Syplex will implement that technology for us, but we may have to relocate offices to find high speed data links that will enable us to have a system suitable for our needs."*

For further details on how Syplex Ltd can help you achieve your IT objectives:

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