

CUSTOMER STORIES

BT wholesale

THE COMPLETE PACKAGE FOR BUSINESS CLASS TELECOMS



“BT Wholesale is our most important supplier. Our relationship with BT Wholesale has propelled our business forward and allowed us to grow our customer base and sales year on year.”

Justin Orde,
Joint Managing Director, Spitfire



SPITFIRE®

Business communications provider
Spitfire counts some of the country's most prestigious brands among its customers. BT Wholesale provides a complete package of products and services – including Ethernet connectivity, Wholesale Calls and IP Exchange – that enables Spitfire to deliver ‘business class’ telecoms to its SME customers.

Spitfire provides complete telecoms and internet solutions for businesses. Some six thousand small and medium sized companies rely on Spitfire to keep their businesses connected. “Customers depend on us,” says Spitfire joint managing director, Justin Orde. “We understand the seriousness of that responsibility.”

It's all about trust, won through consistent performance and customer focus. “Customer service is the thread that runs through our history. It's the core of the Spitfire brand and we are determined that customers can rely on our care, professionalism and our ability to make technology work for their business.”

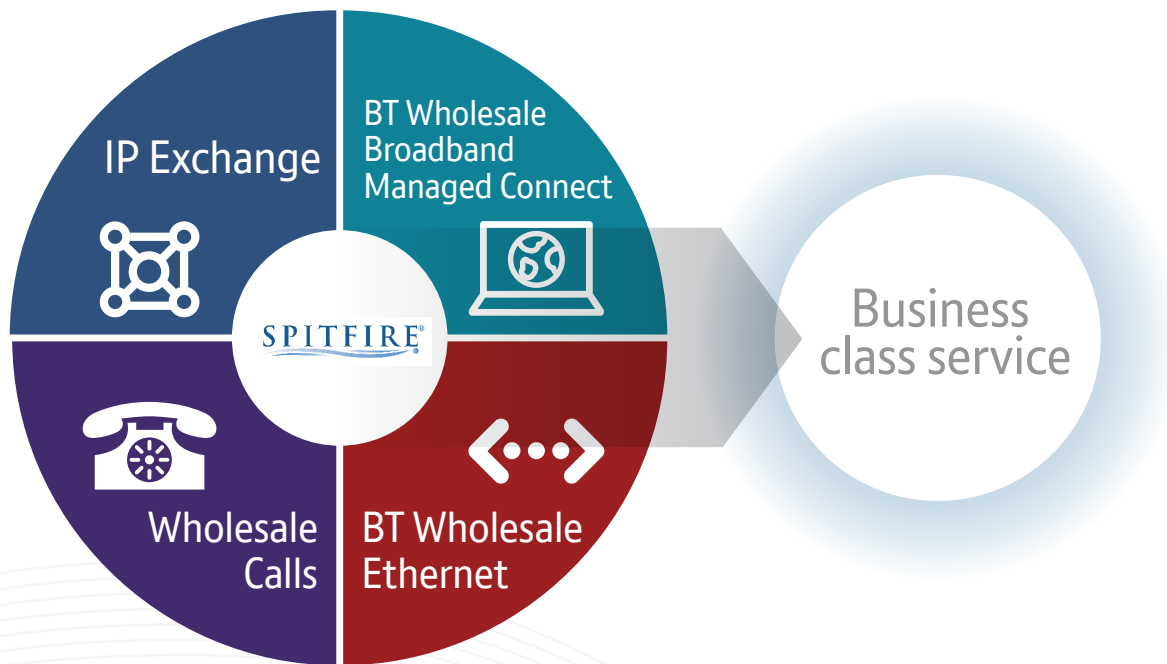
Through twenty-six years, customer word-of-mouth has driven Spitfire's growth. “Customers are our greatest advocates and we have to work every day to keep their trust,” says Justin Orde.

BT Wholesale

The relationship between Spitfire and BT Wholesale sits on strong fundamentals and plays a central role in Spitfire's campaign to win and grow customer trust. “The quality of the BT network and the support we get from BT Wholesale helps us look after our customers in a complex and challenging marketplace. It empowers us to go out and win new business.”

The relationship extends back to Spitfire's founding days, when the provider focused on mobile communications and fax machines. “We realised that our original business was at risk of being commoditised, so we decided to focus on areas with higher engineering content where we could add more value and increase our margin”.

A complete product suite to power Spitfire's business class service



This has seen Spitfire blossom into a complete communications company. Voice telecoms are also an important part of the mix. "Reliability matters to our customers. We promise to provide a consistent business class telecoms service."

A smooth migration to digital

Traditionally, Spitfire delivered voice using BT's Wholesale Calls routed over its own network. Increasingly it is using IP technologies including its own SIP trunks and BT Wholesale's IP Exchange solution. IP Exchange is designed for the growing interoperability requirements of the IP world, enabling seamless operations between different vendor, signaling and media options.

IP Exchange effectively bridges the old and new, giving Spitfire a smooth pathway to digital migration. Its managed number portability service means Spitfire's customers can keep their existing numbers.

"IP Exchange allows us to sell to customers who are using other communication providers' telephone numbers. We port those numbers to IP Exchange and it routes the traffic back to our network over an IP interconnect circuit. It's very important to our business."

Accelerating the customer

Providing Internet access is the other mainstay of Spitfire's business. BT Wholesale Broadband has played a key role in helping SME providers to dip their toes in online and network services.

Spitfire has effectively democratised Ethernet. Ten years ago the speed and resilience of Ethernet technology were the sole preserve of big corporations. Six years ago, Spitfire decided to change that and make the benefits of Ethernet affordable for small and medium sized customers. Justin Orde believes this gives a boost to customers who, increasingly, need to succeed online. "The Internet is a very powerful marketplace and UK businesses just won't tolerate slow speeds and low capacity any more."

BT Wholesale and its suite of Ethernet products are central to Spitfire's strategy to accelerate its customer base. In testament to this, Spitfire has just extended its Ethernet exclusivity contract with BT Wholesale for another two years.

"BT Wholesale Ethernet is a very important product for us. It's totally stable and lets us host services within our core and deliver them over top-quality circuits.

For many Spitfire customers the first step on the Ethernet journey was BT Wholesale EFM (Ethernet in the First Mile). "We pioneered EFM with BT Wholesale. We were one of the first into the market with it and we worked with BT Wholesale to perfect it. EFM meant SME customers who traditionally couldn't afford fibre could increase their bandwidth, get really stable connections to the core network and power ahead."

This first taste of Ethernet speed and resilience generated a lot of goodwill and trust. "Our success with EFM has given us the confidence to upgrade our customers to fibre Ethernet."

"BT Wholesale is very flexible about our commercial needs. There's no one-size-fits-all and there's sufficient trust in the relationship that we can go to BT Wholesale and suggest commercial offers that would really help us. It's a win – win for both sides."

Justin Orde,
Joint Managing Director, Spitfire

Targeted support on promotions

Spitfire has chosen a long term strategic approach to nurture and grow its market share of Ethernet services. But Justin Orde knows they also need to be agile, ready to react to take new opportunities: BT Wholesale is quick to come up with answers.

“BT Wholesale is very good at putting together timely tactical offers that allow us to accelerate our growth in a given sector.” Timing is everything with promotions. “When a new product is launched it can take time for customers to adopt it. BT Wholesale come in with incentives that get the oil round the engine and encourage people to give a new service a try.”

Justin Orde cites two instances where BT Wholesale stepped in at the right time with Ethernet interventions. When Spitfire was rolling out its FTTC (Fibre to the Cabinet) offer last year, BT Wholesale came up with a six-month free connection offer that helped Spitfire quadruple sales. Then BT Wholesale got on board to support a customer drive on EFM, providing a substantial reduction on price.

“BT Wholesale is very flexible about our commercial needs. There’s no one-size-fits-all and there’s sufficient trust in the relationship that we can go to BT Wholesale and suggest commercial offers that will really help us.”

These incentives make sense to both Spitfire and BT Wholesale. For Spitfire, lower costs make it easier to entice customers with attractive offers. For BT Wholesale, promotions on EFM mean it can monetize its major investment in EFM roll-out. As Justin Orde comments: “It’s a win – win for both sides.”

“BT Wholesale Ethernet is a very important product for us. It enables us to deliver our hosted PBX service and provide data connectivity solutions over fast top quality circuits with maximum uptime.”

Justin Orde,
Joint Managing Director, Spitfire

No better supplier, now and for the future

And BT Wholesale’s Account Manager, Andrew Boyce makes sure the day to day relationship works.

“There’s so much engagement at all levels and that means we can think about the next move. This approach works: it’s allowed us to work with Spitfire to migrate customers up the value chain from Broadband and EFM and ultimately to fibre.”

Spitfire and BT Wholesale want to make it as easy as possible for the customer to enjoy the resilience and speed of fibre. “We manage the transition and we aim to make it seamless.”

Spitfire is now one of BT Wholesale’s top-rated customers for fibre conversions: Over 20 per cent of Spitfire’s customer base has made the move up to fibre broadband technology.

Fibre brings a new dimension to ‘business quality’ service and delivering this level of service is the basis of the relationship between Spitfire and BT Wholesale. Justin Orde concludes: “There’s no better supplier to work with than BT Wholesale. They’ve always been with us as new challenges and opportunities have emerged. Now we’re working together to grow the future of our business.”

Solution overview

BT Wholesale provides a broad product portfolio – underpinned by expert support – to help Spitfire deliver business class service.

- BT Wholesale Ethernet: with connectivity right across the UK, our BT Wholesale solution means unrivalled geographical coverage and cost effective, secure high-speed connectivity which supports bandwidth options from 0.2Mbps to 10Gbps. Our Fibre, EFM, GEA and Wholesale Ethernet ELAN solutions allow Spitfire to give customers exactly the right combination of performance and price.
- BT Wholesale Broadband Managed Connect: fast, high-quality broadband connectivity and complete control over how you deliver it to customers. With our broadband, you can shape solutions to suit your customers’ exact needs. We offer a variety of access options with speeds from 8Mbps (ADSL), up to 20Mbps (ADSL2+), through to 80Mbps for fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC) and up to 300Mbps for fibre-to-the-premises (FTTP).
- Wholesale Calls: our white-labelled telephony solution that lets you offer your own high quality branded telephone service without major upfront investment or high running costs.
- IP Exchange: fully interconnected, interoperable and scalable our IP Exchange service allows you to route national, international, non-geographic, mobile and freephone calls that originate as IP calls from a broadband connection, in and out of your networks. It enables you to take full advantage of IP voice, to integrate traditional voice services and exciting new multimedia services like HD voice and video.



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British Telecommunications plc 2015.
Registered Office: 81 Newgate Street, London,
England EC1A 7AJ.
Produced by BT Wholesale.

Email clientreception@bt.com or call

0800 671 045

www.btwholesale.com/marketing