PROGRESSIVE

CASE STUDY
ENCORE OIL PLC
IT REVIEW & INFRASTRUCTURE
IMPLEMENTATION

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EnCore
OIL plc

Background

Encore Oil is a UK based oil and gas exploration and development company, best known for their discovery of the Catcher field, the largest North Sea Discovery of the last decade.

Having previously been the operator in the development phase, Encore Oil's overarching objective to increase shareholder value had led to the bold decision to take the next logical step of a move into development.

Overview

Encore Oil approached Progressive in early 2010, having had past experience of working with our staff, and being confident of our professionalism and credentials.

Due to the complexity of the project, the client was keen to work with an IT partner fluent in the language of oil and gas.

Recognising that they would need a sophisticated IT infrastructure capable of supporting new ways of working, Encore Oil commissioned a review to identify where changes needed to be made. Progressive then designed a concept and successfully managed the implementation of the new IT infrastructure, providing ongoing support, both during and following roll-out.

Problem

Although adequate during the exploration phase, the existing IT infrastructure would not support Encore Oil's ambitious growth plans. Top level staff were being hindered by IT issues that were interfering with the smooth operation of the business.

The planned move into development meant that geologists would be employed who would be using specialist, data intensive seismic modelling packages. Encore Oil did not have the necessary equipment to securely store and backup the increased volumes of sensitive data.

Solution

We designed a concept to address Encore Oil's problems, and assigned our top IT specialist to manage the project and act as a single point of contact for the client. We also called in one of our niche experts to work on the project at ground level, taking care of the practicalities of the transition to new systems and software.

Secure Data Storage

We installed centralised, high capacity data storage servers at each of the client's two London offices, facilitating internal file sharing by making files accessible to staff at both locations. Security was strengthened through the creation of user accounts with different access levels and advanced managed firewalls. As an additional safeguard against external security threats, data stored on the server was fully encrypted.

We also developed the infrastructure for a new suite of robust servers to support the planned future implementation of a new finance application, SunSystems.

Backups & Disaster Recovery Procedure

Encore Oil needed a robust solution to minimise data loss in the event of hardware failure or an unforeseen event such as fire. We planned and implemented a backup regime, including taking data offsite, to protect the client's data against every potentially damaging scenario.

To provide high levels of redundancy in connectivity, we installed dual internet connectivity in each of Encore Oil's offices to eliminate any potential single point of failure. Upon failure, the system will automatically revert to the second connection to avoid disruption, significantly reducing the risk of network downtime.

Remote Working

With staff working from various locations around the UK and abroad, a robust email solution was required to enable senior staff to respond instantly to changing conditions. We implemented a system that would facilitate remote email access, empowering staff by providing access to synchronised calendars and a digital contact database, all accessible via computer or smart phone, from anywhere in the world.

Standardisation

The standardisation of hardware and software was necessary to ensure that all systems behaved in the same way and to support collaborative working practices. Standardising both hardware and software platforms increases reliability, and predictability when support is required.

System Networking

Standardisation also made the advanced networking of PCs more feasible. Networking has enabled staff to access their own files from any of the PCs across the two offices, providing a flexible working environment.

Ongoing Support

As Encore Oil continues to grow, Progressive are providing ongoing proactive support, and as systems bed in, our time onsite decreases.

Monitoring software installed on the client's server allows us to respond quickly to any problems. In the event of any unusual activity, a report is sent to Progressive via text message and email. Progressive maintains remote access to the client's systems, which enables us to act immediately to minimise disruption. We always keep the client informed of any activity, but the majority of issues are resolved before disruption is caused.

We supplied a suite of technical manuals on completion of the project, detailing all aspects of Encore Oil's new technical infrastructure. This gives the client the option to take control for all of their IT should the need ever arise.

Results

The project was successfully completed over four months, as scheduled and on budget, enabling the client to proceed with the planned move into development.

Progressive's after hours working pattern ensured minimal disruption. Whilst Encore Oil's staff might not have been aware of all the work taking place behind the scenes, they certainly noticed the marked change in IT facilities that made their working practices more efficient.

The work carried out by Progressive has led to the creation of key documents; a record of backup procedures and systems configuration. As the company grows and is subject to audit, these documents will be essential requirements.

With a robust and fit-for-purpose IT infrastructure in place, Encore Oil's senior management are free to focus on core business activities with the confidence that everything is in hand.

To discuss a customised solution to meet your requirements call the Progressive team on +44 (0) 20 7642 0228.

"Progressive know the language of oil and gas, so instructing them is easy. The team is a pleasure to work with, providing a personal service and always making us feel like we're their only client. Because Progressive are on hand to tackle any problems remotely, they're dealt with immediately. Progressive's speed of response and relevance of solution is worth its weight in gold."

Alan Booth
Chief Executive Officer
Encore Oil

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Progressive is the only finance and IT consultancy dedicated to the oil and gas industry. We specialise in the delivery of customised, automated systems that streamline processes, increase financial control and support change for E&P companies with ambitious growth targets.

From selection through to implementation and operational support, we'll design and create a best-in-class solution that is exactly right for your company's requirements.

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