

IONIX SYSTEMS LTD MOVE HOSTING TO UK BASED FRONTLINE CONSULTANCY AND SAVE 50% ON THEIR HOSTING COSTS.

Ionix Systems Limited specialises in the design, manufacture and service support of high performance wiring systems for aerospace, defence and commercial applications. Customers include BAE, Rolls Royce and a key project has been the manufacture of engine harnesses for the Airbus A380.

Ionix is headquartered in Lancashire and employs 530 people at its UK site and two offshore manufacturing facilities based in Croatia and Estonia. These offshore locations give them a competitive advantage in being able to deliver lower cost solutions.

Ionix Systems Limited was formed as a result of a management buyout in April 2009. Prior to this the company was a division of the Volex Group plc. When Ionix was formed it engaged in a 12 month agreement with a 3rd party for its hosting requirements to use BPCS software running on an IBM iSeries system. During this time the hardware was situated in the USA.

Due to lack of support, high ongoing costs and logistical issues it very quickly became clear that Ionix needed to source an alternative option. For example if there was a hardware problem Ionix had to wait until midday before anything was addressed due to the time difference. They needed a new solution and quickly.

Ian Bilsland, Information Technology Manager, Ionix Systems Ltd, recalls he had two options; either they could source a system and host in-house or find someone else with the required expertise to host for them.

The Ionix board was keen to invest in business growth rather than IT hardware and it was also concluded that it would be more expensive for Ionix to host it themselves.

This left Ian with the task of sourcing a hosting provider. A number of hosting companies were approached but none provided a solution that fitted or inspired Ian with the confidence that they could look after Ionix's mission critical functions.

An ex colleague recommended Frontline to Ian and when he researched the website Frontline clearly possessed extensive iSeries expertise.

"I Looked at a number of hosting providers and Frontline came out top for data facilities, 24/7 coverage, expertise and value for money."

IAN BILSLAND, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER, IONIX SYSTEMS LTD



INDUSTRY SECTOR:

Specialist Harness and Cable Manufacturer.

CUSTOMER PROFILE:

Design, manufacture and service support of high performance wiring systems for aerospace, defence and commercial applications.

THE REQUIREMENT:

A fully hosted solution in the UK.

THE SOLUTION:

Hosting at Frontline Consultancy's secure data centre in the North West.

BUSINESS BENEFITS:

- 50% cost savings on hosting charge.
- Improved performance.
- Minimal downtime.
- Improved Disaster Recovery time from 1 week to 24hrs.

Ian recalls "I found the Frontline team to be very friendly and extremely professional people. We visited their Data Centre and were very impressed. We spoke to a couple of existing Frontline customers who gave glowing references. Frontline were very competitive in terms of what they could offer".

There was an initial project meeting where the scope was defined and a schedule set. Very quickly the network infrastructure was in place with the help of the Frontline team working in conjunction with Ionix. Backup tapes were obtained and a test system was up and running in a very short space of time.

The time scale did slip a little due to the infrastructure taking a bit longer to set up than anticipated, however, any issues were quickly resolved by Frontline's knowledgeable technical team.

Ian was particularly impressed by Frontline staff going 'the extra mile' for their business. He explains that the smooth implementation was down to the problem free transition of data from the USA to the UK. Ionix had to retrieve their data from the USA. Using a courier was ruled out and the data was brought on a commercial flight to Manchester airport. Frontline staff were prepared to do whatever was required over the 'go live' weekend to get things up and running; including collecting the tapes from Manchester Airport.

Additional benefits the solution has brought to Ionix include a Disaster Recovery option. The 'warm standby' version gets everything up and running in 24-48hrs after a downtime. Previously this would take Ionix one week. Now the cost is the same but the restore is a lot quicker and more predictable.

"Frontline's operators monitor the system 24hrs a day, if any system is down this is addressed immediately. We have never had any instances where we have come to the site and the systems are not fully operational." Ian adds.

As well as the managed hosting solution, Ian found it reassuring talking to Frontline people who were knowledgeable about iSeries as it was relatively new technology to him. Also, as Ionix runs a lean IT department it relied on the Frontline team to ensure the migration went smoothly.

Ian concludes "Frontline have provided us with a secure, reliable hosting solution which has provided a 50% cost saving on our hosting spend. I found the Frontline staff knowledgeable, professional and friendly people and recommend them highly."

"The Frontline hosting Solution has reduced our hosting costs significantly; we have achieved 50% savings. Performance is excellent and downtime minimal"

IAN BILSLAND, INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY MANAGER, IONIX SYSTEMS LIMITED.

