

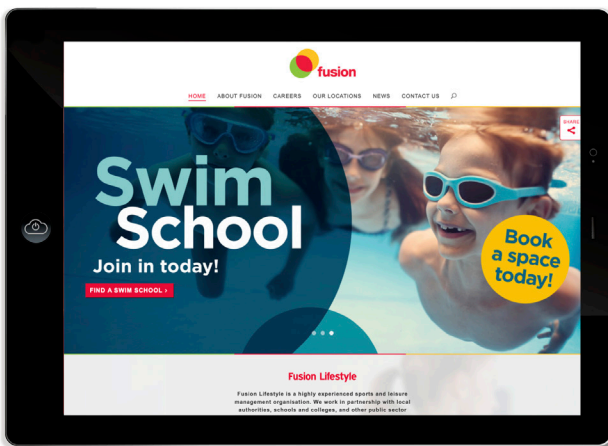


Fusion Lifestyle gets leaner and fitter with SoGEA connectivity from Claranet

Fusion Lifestyle

Fusion Lifestyle is a sport and leisure management organisation that runs facilities across the UK. Fusion's sites include 60 health and fitness centres, 40 indoor swimming pools, 26 sports halls, and more. Since being founded in April 2000, Fusion has completed over £170m of investment projects with local authority partners and funding bodies, with a focus on empowering local communities and providing high-quality facilities for everyone to enjoy.

www.fusion-lifestyle.com



The challenge

Fusion Lifestyle's leadership wanted to make sure that the organisation was fighting fit post-lockdown, ready for whatever the future might bring. As part of this exercise, the IT team turned to its partner, Claranet, for help identifying key areas to reduce costs and future-proof the organisation. Alongside hosted voice, Fusion's network was identified as a major opportunity for improvement. Fusion primarily used FTTC broadband, with a few sites still running on ADSL, all of which would be affected by the ISDN switch-off in 2025.

Keiron Butcher, Chief Technology Officer at Fusion, explains:

“ On the one hand, the ISDN switch-off is a looming deadline that everyone needs to respond to. On the other, that has presented an opportunity for us to improve how we do things - both from a cost and a functionality perspective.”

The solution

Thanks to the work of the Claranet team, Fusion realised that they could convert 50 of their sites from their existing PSTN and FTTC configurations to SoGEA (single order generic ethernet access). SoGEA allows organisations to pay for internet access without having to pay for an accompanying phone line - meaning that, if the organisation uses a VoIP system instead of traditional PBX telephony, they can reduce costs.

“The switch to SoGEO and Hosted Voice from Claranet also makes our organisation more flexible,” Keiron adds. “Hosted Voice enables our employees to make phone calls from anywhere - ideal in this age of hybrid working. And we know that the network powering that functionality is built for purpose, and not costing us any more than we need it to.”

With the decision made, Claranet's project team swung into action, and quickly identified 102 circuits that would need upgrading. Claranet was responsible for all aspects of the project, including checking the configuration of Fusion's routers to ensure they were ready to accept a SoGEO connection, and the project team had to work on the sites in a very specific order. Through weekly calls with Kieron, the project was completed in six weeks.

“Claranet's professionalism and expertise meant that the upgrade didn't impact our frontline or back office services at all, which I'm very grateful for.”

Keiron Butcher
CTO, Fusion Lifestyle

The results

All the circuits and sites in scope have now been upgraded to SoGEO, ensuring that they can continue to operate well into the future. As a result, Fusion expects to save £16,000 per annum - and to save even more by switching to Hosted Voice. “It's made us much leaner,” Keiron says, “which gives us crucial flexibility to grow into the future and continue to meet the needs of the people and communities Fusion serves.”

Fusion was particularly impressed with the quality of the project rollout, and the proactivity of the team. “Not all of our sites were eligible for SoGEO. Where that was the case, Claranet moved us to an FTTP connection instead to provide us with the best possible connectivity.”

Across the six weeks, Fusion saw no disruption or loss of service, enabling the organisation to continue functioning and generating revenue. Each site had two circuits that needed upgrading; the public network that provided guest WiFi, and the private network that the business systems run on.

“If either of those systems was out of action, it could have serious consequences for us - either in the quality of service we provide to our customers, or in our ability to accept bookings, receive payments, and ensure the smooth running of the operation. Claranet's professionalism and expertise meant that the upgrade didn't impact our frontline or back office services at all, which I'm very grateful for.”

Looking to the future, Keiron knows that Fusion is ready for whatever the world can throw at it - with Claranet by its side. “The team at Claranet were the ones who suggested we make the upgrade now. They're true partners to our organisation, and it's great having them on my team.”



PSTN 2025 switch off How prepared are you?

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