

## CUSTOMER STORIES

# OPENING THE ROAD TO RICH HOSTED COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES



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Adrian Auld,  
Managing Director, VSL



**Customers trust VSL to come up with solutions, based on the best technology for their needs. With BT Wholesale, VSL is providing solutions that let customers take their first steps to Unified Communications.**

VSL Managing Director Adrian Auld is proud that many of his 1300 customers have been with the company since it started trading in 1996.

“We’ve always wanted to be known as a company that really understands the customer. We aren’t here to push the latest product. We provide solutions that are designed to meet real customer needs.”

Customer education is integral to the VSL approach “We explain to customers how the communications world is changing. Technology creates new opportunities all the time. We talk to customers about the benefits it could bring, and how they could realistically harness those benefits for their business.”

### **Taking the first steps**

The most significant development in recent years is, what Adrian Auld calls, “the great shift” to digital. “We saw this big transition happening and we knew we had to be ready with IP connectivity.”

VSL set out to find a connectivity vendor: Adrian Auld needed to find an IP connection his team could sell with complete confidence: “We talked to everyone in the market and BT Wholesale’s Ethernet solution was head and shoulders above the rest.”

VSL’s Wholesale Ethernet-based IP product has struck a chord with customers, who are pleased with its speed and resilience. But for Adrian Auld, the really exciting thing about the connectivity solution are the opportunities it opens up. “BT Wholesale Ethernet means we can package new IP-based solutions for customers, built on BT’s powerful 21CN backbone.”

## The complete package from BT Wholesale

One of the immediate opportunities was voice over Ethernet, using SIP trunking technology to replace outdated ISDN circuits. “Customers are very quick to see the advantages of SIP trunking. It’s better value for money. It gives them more flexibility, for example with the per-second call billing.”

While many vendors have SIP offers, only BT Wholesale could deliver Ethernet and SIP trunking from a single provider. And finding a complete package was important, as Adrian Auld explains: “Introducing this technology was a big investment for us. We needed to make the decision with the right people. By far, BT Wholesale had the best overall offer. Only BT Wholesale could bring us the dream combination of Wholesale Ethernet with Wholesale SIP Trunking. We believe it’s the strongest SIP trunking offer on the market, in terms of quality, service and flexibility. We’ve never regretted our decision: it’s good business sense.”

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### Wholesale SIP Trunking

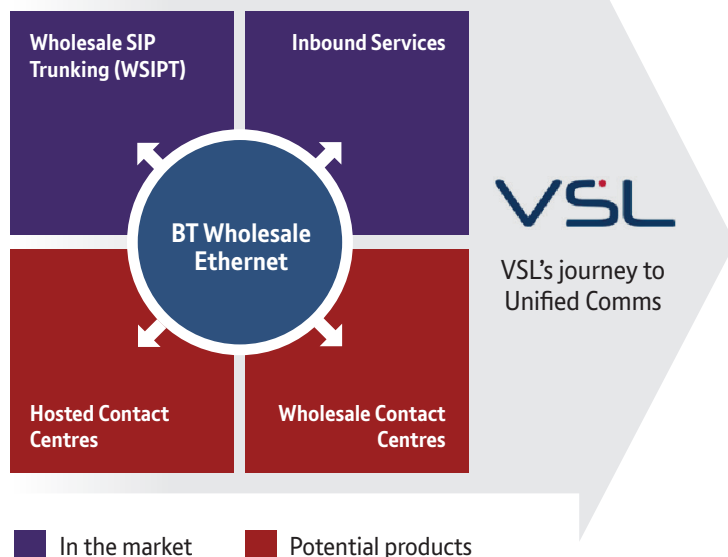
Wholesale SIP Trunking – or WSIPT – certainly makes sense to VSL’s customers. “WSIPT is a big leap up from ISDN in terms of capacity and reliability,” says Adrian Auld. “It’s much more resilient and much more cost-effective for our customers.” And these benefits mean a strong sales performance. “We like WSIPT because we can sell loads of it! In the first month we easily made our targeted sales.”

Adrian Auld also likes how WSIPT fits with VSL’s product strategy. “We sell complete solutions with connectivity, service and products all part of the package. WSIPT is fully tested for interoperability with the MITEL telephone systems we offer.” He adds that WSIPT works seamlessly with VSL’s existing business systems. Billing data, for example, uses the same format as the old ISDN-based technology. “The seamless integration meant we could go forward with a new product that our back office took in its stride.”

And going forward, WSIPT lets VSL have conversations with its customers about how their businesses can benefit from hosted services, call recording or diverse routing. The inherent flexibility of WSIPT makes it easy to deliver these kinds of value-added voice services.

**“We believe BT’s WSIPT is the strongest SIP trunking offer on the market, in terms of quality, service and flexibility.”**

**Adrian Auld,**  
Managing Director, VSL



### Working together

Adrian Auld attributes the success of its SIP trunk product to its close working relationship with BT Wholesale. “VSL was the first reseller to get WSIPT into the market and to make it happen we worked together as a team,” says Adrian Auld. “Our BT Wholesale Account Manager and his team were fantastic. They were always fighting for us to make sure we came up with a really strong offer. And they were with us to sell that offer to our customers.”

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Aiman Hamad, BT Wholesale’s Account Manager for VSL, explains: “We understand that success for BT Wholesale is completely bound up with success for VSL.” He points to a strong cultural fit between VSL and BT Wholesale: both companies focused on building long-term relationships and thinking strategically. “We work very closely to meet our commercial objectives today. But we’re also always looking ahead to the next move on the journey: how we can deploy IP-based and hosted services to build solutions that let us unlock emerging opportunities like Unified Communications (UC).”

For VSL, WSIPT is the first step in this strategic journey based on BT Wholesale’s Hosted Communications Services (HCS). HCS is a portfolio of services that makes it fast and simple for resellers to grow their offering. Designed for flexibility, HCS makes it easy for providers like VSL to build the rich hosted services into their solutions, as and when it makes sense for their business.

## The next move: Inbound Services

For VSL, the next move will see it add Inbound Services to its offer. With Inbound Services, calls are routed off TDM networks and onto digital circuits. Because IP-based solutions are cheaper to operate and more flexible than other technologies, VSL can create competitive offers.

As with the rollout of SIP trunking, the introduction of Inbound Services sees VSL and BT Wholesale combining their strengths, as Adrian Auld explains: “The account team at BT Wholesale told us about the Inbound Services opportunity and how our customers could benefit. BT Wholesale also came up with some good prices which helped us package up attractive offers.”

## “BT Wholesale makes it easier for us to do business”

**Adrian Auld,**  
Managing Director, VSL

## The right tools for the job

As a solutions provider, VSL is always seeking new ways it can help its customers harness technology to tackle business challenges. “We investigate our customer’s needs and we come up with real communication solutions that meet their needs. With BT Wholesale’s HCS we have a big toolbox of the products we need to do that.”

Other hosted products, available to VSL, include Hosted Contact Centres (HCC) and Wholesale Hosted Centrex (WHC). Together with WSIPT and Inbound Services, BT Wholesale’s HCS portfolio gives resellers everything they need to explore the UC sales opportunity.

“When BT Wholesale provides the product you know it’s good,” concludes Adrian Auld. “But the human side is as important. Our BT Wholesale account team works with us, helping us get on top of technology. In short, BT Wholesale makes it easier for us to do business.”

## Solution overview

**VSL resells BT Wholesale Ethernet and offers key solutions from BT Wholesale’s HCS. Designed for complete flexibility, customers can deploy any or all of the BT Wholesale’s solutions within the HCS portfolio.**

- **BT Wholesale Ethernet:** VSL’s journey to UC begins with BT Wholesale Ethernet. With connectivity right across the UK, Wholesale Ethernet means unrivalled geographical coverage and cost-effective, secure high-speed connectivity at speeds of up to 10Gbps. Next-generation fibre (GEA), Ethernet in the First Mile (EFM) and dedicated fibre access options are available.
- **WSIPT:** our solution offers customers all the benefits of next-generation voice technology, without having to replace their existing PBX systems. WSIPT is a secure, flexible and scalable service that’s available on a ‘pay as you grow’ basis – with solutions available for businesses of all sizes. It handles anything from one to 10,000 channels, from a single online portal.
- **Inbound Services:** our IP Inbound solution is a non-geographic number-based service offering all the traditional Inbound features you would expect from an Inbound Service, which can be integrated with other products from our HCS portfolio to provide complete solutions with efficient call termination.



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