

## CASE STUDY

# Pulsant enables Active Voice & Data to **deliver new services and grow revenues through Covid**



Launched in 2002, Active Voice & Data (AVD) is based in Barnsley, South Yorkshire, and has been a Pulsant partner and reseller since 2015. As an award-winning supplier and installer of business telecommunication systems, the company specialises in voice and unified communications solutions and wholesale billing through its platform, putting together best-in-class solutions and partners.

### CHALLENGE:

Rapid shift to remote working during Covid triggered major upsurge in demand for AVD's services

The Delivery Group, a major logistics company needed support from AVD for a new contract to organise collection of 20,000 PCR test kits per day

Sterling Pharma Solutions required AVD to provide a new network and telephony solution to facilitate major expansion in the UK and US

### SOLUTION:

Use of product set with Pulsant Enterprise Cloud to support AVD clients' move into remote working

Delivery by AVD of multi-media contact centre for The Delivery Group within two weeks, with five of the company's main sites working from a PBX centre connected to Pulsant's Newcastle data centre

Provision by AVD and Pulsant of managed services plus geo-diverse routing, hosted telephony and diverse internet break-out in Pulsant Enterprise Cloud for two Sterling Pharma Solutions sites in the UK and USA respectively

### OUTCOME:

AVD grew revenues by 40 per cent in first 16 months of Covid, delivering excellent support for clients' rapid adoption of remote working, including eight NHS health centres and The Prince's Trust

Full support provided by AVD for The Delivery Group's requirements, enabling the logistics company to meet extremely demanding requirements and fulfil a vital role in the UK's fight against Covid

AVD powered Sterling Pharma Solutions' growth through acquisition in the US

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Founder and Managing Director, AVD



### The Challenge

The outbreak of the Covid pandemic and the rapid mass adoption of remote working triggered significant demand for AVD's services and solutions across its client-base. AVD had to respond rapidly, supplying the voice and data solutions its clients required.

Two examples stand out. Firstly, The Delivery Group, a major logistics company and a client of ten years' standing, won an NHS contract to organise collection of up to 20,000 PCR test kits per day from users across the UK. It needed AVD to provide swift implementation of a contact centre to handle a very high volume of inquiries from the public.

Secondly, Sterling Pharma Solutions, which became an AVD client in November 2019, required a new network and telephony solution to facilitate major expansion in the UK and US through acquisition. The compound-manufacturing company had spent a year



looking for a partner capable of supplying its requirements, without success.

"It was through our relationship with Pulsant that we were able to step up and deliver for these people at critical time," said Iain Simpson, AVD founder and MD. "Being a Pulsant value-added reseller, our strengths are in our portfolio and our partnerships."

### Effective solutions across the client-base

AVD was extremely well-positioned to facilitate its clients' sudden move to remote working, as its product set with Pulsant Enterprise Cloud is a perfect fit for such operations. It was, for example, able to support the continued operations of eight large NHS health centres in South Yorkshire that have 1,200 employees.

As part of its continuing innovation and anticipation of customer requirements, AVD commenced delivery of Microsoft Teams Direct solutions. This integrates telephony into Teams, either through the client's PBX or alternatively, straight to Teams with no phone system. The

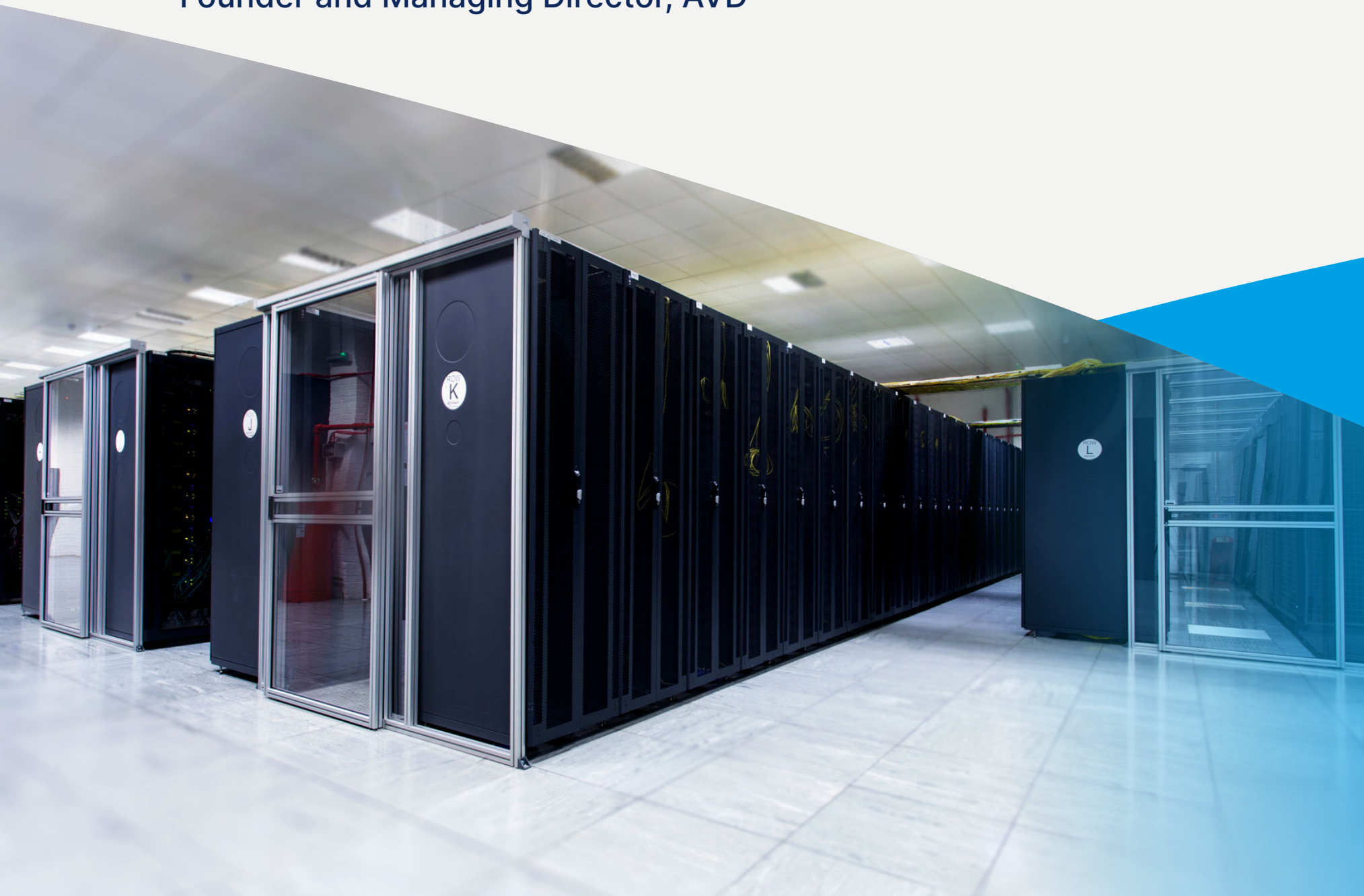
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“ We are sharing knowledge with Pulsant, preparing for not just today but what is coming tomorrow – that’s the strength of the relationship. ”

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The Prince’s Trust, a long-standing client, now has 800 users on Teams Direct through the PBX, giving access from anywhere in the world.

### **Highly-effective solutions for The Delivery Group and Sterling Pharma**

To meet The Delivery Group’s requirements, AVD also turned to Pulsant. This enabled the delivery of a multi-media contact centre for the company within two weeks, using Atos Unify technology. Five of The Delivery Group’s main sites are all now working off a PBX contact centre connected to Pulsant’s Newcastle Central data centre. AVD also provides stand-alone managed internet connections, with voice and data on two different set-ups.

For Sterling Pharma, based in Northumberland, AVD supported the company’s expansion to two new sites in North America and the UK, despite severe constraints during the pandemic. Pulsant Enterprise Cloud was ideal because Sterling wanted geo-diverse routing, hosted



telephony and diverse break-out to the internet. AVD upgraded Sterling’s phone systems and found partners in North America to replicate the service. It has provided connectivity between labs and production sites across the Atlantic.

The partnership between AVD and Pulsant has also provided managed services for Sterling, to link in with third-party services in other data centres and platforms, and to link up other sites. In the UK AVD delivers and manages the Pulsant connections. Out of country, Pulsant manages a network of Cisco ASA firewalls for Sterling.

AVD also supplied and implemented an intrinsically safe telephony solution for Sterling Pharma engineers working in potentially hazardous on-site environments.

### **Results**

Through its partnership with Pulsant, AVD was able to deliver for all its clients, despite the immense challenges of Covid and successive

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successive lockdowns. AVD was able to grow business by approximately 40 per cent in the first 16 months of the pandemic, and its success in meeting client requirements in demanding circumstances means it has developed a significant pipeline of new business.

The results for AVD's clients speak for themselves. The Delivery Group was able to expedite collection of hundreds of thousands of test samples and answer as many as 4,000 queries per day in its new contact centre. This is significant for an organisation that places heavy emphasis on customer service.

For Sterling, AVD fully supported its 400 employees and delivered solutions to help power the company through a dramatic period of expansion within the UK and US.

AVD is also rightly proud of the technology support it provided for key workers and vital elements of the health infrastructure at the height of the Covid pandemic, including NHS health centres.



It was through its established partnership with Pulsant, a Microsoft Gold Partner, that AVD could meet the explosion of demand for secure, private networks. For Iain Simpson, this has shown voice is not just a commodity in multi-tenancy platforms. Mid-market customers are turning away from that approach and prefer a secure, private network and the ability to connect with that service anywhere in the world, with a single point-of-contact.

“Our strength is in our partners and portfolio. Without Pulsant we would not be offering these services,” said Simpson.

#### **More services in an evolving set of relationships**

Looking further ahead, The Delivery Group, which handles a billion items a year and has many high-profile clients, is so impressed with the Pulsant-based AVD solution it wants to roll it out to other parts of the business, deploying a resilient, converged network, with 24/7 support and monitoring based on strict SLAs.

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The relationship between AVD and Pulsant is stronger than ever. Pulsant provides AVD with a vital reseller relationship, offering enterprise cloud linked to Tier 1 telcos. For AVD, the next step is to develop a proposition as an official Pulsant partner to open up more opportunities and provide a voice or unified communications solution.

“Our partnership with Microsoft Gold Partner Pulsant enhances what we do and makes us stronger. We both bring value-added to it,” said Simpson. “We are sharing knowledge with Pulsant, preparing for not just today but what is coming tomorrow – that’s the strength of the relationship.”

Edge computing is increasingly “part of the conversation” for AVD with its partners. Although early days, AVD sees increasing demand for

corporate networks to be on public internet, which will boost interest in SD-WAN and new connectivity. Computer telephony integration (CTI) is also likely to be a driver, along with the overall integration of voice with computers and database look-ups in contact centres. “We have a fantastic opportunity here,” added Simpson. “There are a lot of upstarts renting rack space in someone else’s data centre, but Pulsant, from the ground up is a network and data centre provider that is best-in-class.”

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