



# CASE STUDY 1

Revision 1.0

Our customer is a successful training company, focusing on leadership, management development and coaching. They have an impressive track record of helping organisations in the voluntary, public and private sectors achieve real and sustainable change.

### Original IT setup

The customer originally worked out of a central office, with a few PCs and laptops operating independently of each other, sharing files and folders through 1 PC. Emails were delivered via IMAP and POP3 boxes and there was no central email management.

When we were asked to assess their systems, we found a few issues:

1. There was no central data store that was accessible for all users. There was no way to effectively manage permissions across the users and no way to access data if the PC it was hosted on was off or developed a fault.
2. There were no backups of either data or email. Any kind of hard drive fault on the sharing PC would have led to catastrophic data loss.
3. Users were unable to effectively collaborate.
4. Data and user profiles could only be accessed on-site. There was no remote access, which for a company whose coaches were often travelling, was a limiting factor.
5. There was no central security and user management. User accounts were tied to individual computers and there was no organisation-wide security system in place to prevent un-authorized data access.

The customer then provided us with a general idea of what they were looking to get out of their IT systems. Their main aim was to have a central data store, accessible to all users both on and off-site. They also wanted to be able to collaborate more effectively and wanted the ability to work remotely. Above all, they wanted all of this completed on a tight-budget.

## The Solution – Stage 1

We worked with the customer to develop a balanced and scalable IT system that would exceed their expectations and increase employee productivity whilst reducing downtime due to IT problems. The customer was sold a Microsoft server which was configured to meet their needs and resolve the issues that were highlighted above.

1. A local domain was created and all users migrated to Active Directory. Creating new users and assigning relevant security permissions was now centralised and simplified.
2. All data was migrated from the sharing PC to the server. Access was provided via mapped network locations and permissions set via Active Directory.
3. Company data was backed up regularly using enterprise level backup software.
4. Email was moved from web-based POP and IMAP boxes to Microsoft Exchange. New mailboxes were tied to Active Directory users and historical email transferred.
5. Distribution groups, shared contacts and shared calendars were set up, which allowed staff to collaborate more effectively and allowed for company-wide scheduling and communications.
6. VPN and webmail were configured to allow remote workers access to data and emails from anywhere with an internet connection. Some users were also set up with Offline File and Folder syncing, so that they could access company data without an internet connection.
7. The server and client computers were set up with enterprise level anti-virus and firewall software to minimise the risk of viruses, malware and unauthorised network intrusions.

The project was completed successfully and delivered within the project time frame and on budget. The customer was now able to work remotely in a way that they could not before. Staff were able to collaborate effectively due to the upgrades, even when out of the office. All issues with the original system were addressed and resolved.

## Stage 2

Several years later, the customer streamlined their operations and as all staff were now working remotely due to the success of the new IT system, decided a central office was no longer necessary. We discussed this with the customer and suggested that they move to a virtual office.

As the IT system was correctly configured from the start, migrating to a virtual office proved to be very straight-forward. Their server was moved from their old office to our datacentre and other than changing a couple of IP addresses, no other work was required.

This switch to our datacentre provided the customer with the following benefits:

1. Office costs reduced to zero but with the same functionality as the customer previously enjoyed.
2. Data availability and access speed increased due to high-availability broadband lines at the data centre.
3. Mail and data backups were switched from local backups to cloud without increasing costs.

The customer was so impressed with the new set up that they moved all web hosting to us, including their main training portal. PC People UK staff were on hand to manage the migration project and provide specialised expertise when reconfiguring the training portal, which used a mix of Moodle (for e-learning) and Joomla (for content management).