

CASE STUDY

Haslers Chartered Accountants



A PRIVATE CLOUD SOLUTION TO COUNT ON

Haslers appoints Ignite to add resilience and a new cloud infrastructure

CLIENT:

Haslers Chartered Accountants

WEBSITE:

www.haslers.com

REQUIREMENTS:

Outsourced cloud services partner for management and 24-hour support of business network infrastructure.

SOLUTION:

- Ignite private cloud solution offering resilient virtual servers replicated across two independent UK data centres.
- Onsite engineer Monday to Friday backed up by 24/7/365 Ignite helpdesk support for all users.
- 2 x high-speed, ultra stable 100MB MPLS lines.

HASLERS

BACKGROUND

Haslers is a North East London and Essex-based accountancy firm, providing accountancy, taxation and business advisory services to SMEs across the county and throughout Greater London.

The firm offers specialist support to owner-managed and family businesses, whose annual turnover ranges from a few thousand to over £200 million. It also supports entrepreneurs, charities and not-for-profit organisations, dealing with all types of businesses, from sole traders and partnerships, to PLCs and limited companies, across a wide range of industry sectors.

In order to provide a close, personal service to its clients, up to 30 of its 80-plus headcount can be working away from the office at any given time. Therefore, cloud computing has become an essential part of Haslers' business model in recent years. So when the firm felt it had outgrown its previous solution provider, Ignite was invited to tender for the management, upgrade and on-going support of Haslers' business-critical network.

THE CHALLENGE

Haslers relies upon a multitude of computer systems and technologies - some physical and some virtual - to carry out its daily business. This prestigious accountancy and business advisory firm runs almost 20 different software packages which need to be accessed by office staff and remote workers via tablets and smartphones as well as standard PC desktops.

The firm needed to consolidate its cloud infrastructure, both contractually and technically, since its systems had become sprawling, being delivered by different providers. Some services were hosted in a data centre whilst others were onsite. The firm ran a virtual VMWare Platform as well as numerous physical servers. What Haslers needed was a stable infrastructure, which could be scaled up or down quickly to accommodate new users and business processes.

Included in this review would be internet connectivity. Haslers wished to strengthen its disaster recovery with redundant and load balanced lines. With so much of its business in the cloud, the firm wanted to examine every aspect of its operations.

Ignite was delighted to be appointed as Haslers' communications partner in early 2014, a decision which was based on its technical expertise, credibility, attention to detail and ability to communicate complex ideas in plain English.

“Our operations are complex and Ignite have been incredibly diligent, presiding over a smooth and controlled transfer in difficult circumstances. This six-month operation was well planned and well executed with virtually no downtime.”

Laura Ambrose
Business Services Group
Partner and IT Partner,
Haslers

HASLERS

THE SOLUTION

When Haslers appointed Ignite to manage and support its IT infrastructure, the company was looking for a clear plan to consolidate an array of different systems, minimise downtime and bolster its disaster recovery planning. Ignite had been consulting with the firm for almost 2 years prior to contracts being signed and, during this time, had performed detailed audits of the firm's network. Now it was ready to begin rolling out a new private cloud solution which would see Haslers migrate its systems to a new platform, replicated across two data centres and accessed via two separate 100MB MPLS links for extra redundancy.

Laura Ambrose, Business Services Group Partner and IT Partner at Haslers commented: “Our operations are complex and Ignite have been incredibly diligent, presiding over a smooth and controlled transfer in difficult circumstances. This six-month operation was well planned and well executed with virtually no downtime.”

Ignite used imaging technology to transfer all data across to the new platform with around 15 servers being copied in total. The entire system was replicated in the new hosting location and migrated across to the new servers one step at a time. In all, the process took 6 months.

Haslers' data now resides in two separate state-of-the-art UK data centres with live replication between the two. Coupled with a comprehensive 'point in time' backup regime, the new solution provides Haslers with comprehensive business continuity and disaster recovery contingencies.

Testing was essential at every stage of this project in order to ensure users suffered no downtime. Ignite performed these tests at the weekend with new system components going live in time for Monday morning, only when all checks had been made. In this way, the transition was seamless with users continuing to operate throughout this process, unaware that major system changes were taking place in the background.

Ignite continues to manage and support Haslers daily IT operations with 24/7/365 monitoring of all critical networking components.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

Haslers now benefit from a simpler, consolidated network infrastructure, which is fully documented and managed by Ignite. This new private cloud solution is more robust than what went before with redundancy included at every level from internet connectivity through to server and even data centre replication.

The solution is fully scalable with Ignite now able to deploy additional users and other resources wherever and whenever required.

Laura Ambrose commented: “Ignite staff are really supportive. We feel sure there will always be someone there when a problem arises and the engineers speak to us in plain English”.

- **STABILITY**

Since Ignite migrated Haslers to its new private cloud solution, users have experienced virtually no system downtime. Redundant 100MB lease lines and server replication between two separate UK data centres provide comprehensive business continuity and disaster recovery contingencies.

- **FLEXIBILITY**

Haslers' mobile workforce now enjoys the same access to email and business applications as local users with the system allowing new users to be added and resources provisioned seamlessly.

- **FIRST-CLASS SUPPORT**

Haslers can rest assured its new cloud solution is being managed and supported by a credible communications partner with proven technical expertise in this area.

ABOUT IGNITE BUSINESS COMMUNICATIONS

Discover a range of business-quality telecoms, connectivity and managed IT services backed with expert advice every step of the way. With Ignite, all of your business communications are delivered by the same quality provider with prices that guarantee a competitive advantage and outstanding technical support included as standard.

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