

Total Merchandise

Creating a disaster-proof infrastructure with cloud enablement



In a nutshell...

Who are they?

Total Merchandise are one of the UK's leading independent suppliers of printed promotional merchandise.

What did they need?

Total Merchandise were using an office move as an opportunity to overhaul their infrastructure, introducing device management, hardware redundancy, a faster network and offsite backup protocols, as well as updating their core hardware.

How did we help?

We worked with Total Merchandise to design a new infrastructure with switch networking onsite and offsite hosted backup and a redundant server setup that ensured business continuity in the event of a major failure. We also provide Jamf Pro Mac management as a managed service.

What were the benefits?

- Any time, anywhere access to email and corporate apps with Office 365.
- Offsite hosted Backup24 solution to ensure all their digital assets are protected.
- Faster network performance for Total Merchandise, meaning a smoother, faster workflow.
- Access to key business resources in event of disaster, ensuring business continuity.
- Increased uptime and resilience of key hardware and systems.
- Decreased time and effort needed to support end users.
- Device management of 28 Mac computers to ensure corporate policies are adhered to and updates are managed.

Since their inception in 2004, Total Merchandise have grown continuously to become one of the UK's largest suppliers of promotional merchandise. However, the rural location of their original office meant that they couldn't take advantage of the latest cloud services from Jigsaw24 and Microsoft. When they moved to a new location, they called in our team to get them up to speed.

"Our old office was in a farm in the middle of nowhere, and while that's very pretty, it meant we couldn't get fibre or high speed broadband or anything like that," explained Systems Director Dave Stoddart. "When we moved offices, I was finally able to take advantage of the modern solutions that Jigsaw24 had been offering us, and get a bigger, better system up and running."

Working with Total Merchandise, we specced up and designed a new system that would enable them to transact sales 24/7/365 – no matter what.

Ensuring business continuity

A key part of Total Merchandise's success is their ability to deliver tight turnarounds on a range of products, including a 48 hour express service. As their response time is so important to their customer relationships, they absolutely can't afford any downtime. This made incorporating a robust infrastructure and backup strategy into their new IT setup extremely important, as they needed guaranteed data speeds and access to all their key files and applications.

"The Jigsaw24 guys have initiated offsite backups and made sure that everything gets backed up overnight, which is great for us. We also have a mirror of our Filemaker server running in the cloud, so if we go down we can instantly log on to that and carry on working.

"It's really good to know that if one server goes down, [end clients] automatically flip to the other server – the staff don't even know something's gone wrong, everyone just carries on working. It's fantastic." (Our consultants would like you to know that this is a 'fully resilient virtual server solution, optimised for fast transactional database', should you ever need to ask them for one.)



Every problem we've had, Jigsaw24 have come up with a solution for it. I'd definitely recommend them. No question.



Dave Stoddart, Systems Director, Total Merchandise.

We also arranged for the team to start backing up their Filemaker server to hosted storage every hour, so they'll never lose more than an hour's work should it crash. The senior leadership team have access to laptops with the login for these backup servers, so should Total Merchandise's main site become inaccessible, they can simply log in remotely and continue working as normal.

Increasing productivity with cloud based tools

We also migrated Total Merchandise from an in-house email server to Office 365, as this offers 99.999% uptime for company email accounts, and means key applications are available online from any location, regardless of whether the company's own network is functional.

"The feeling of security, of knowing that if everything suddenly goes, we've got another one of everything ready to go back up straight away so the business doesn't suffer, that's what I like," said Dave. "Our work is very time-critical. We can't afford for anything to go down, so having that peace of mind stops me lying awake at three in the morning."



Jigsaw24 advised on what we needed to speed up workflow – the network, the staff, the backups and everything else, and when we moved office everything was already set up and the new system was already there and working.



Dave Stoddart, Systems Director, Total Merchandise.

Simplifying Mac management with a managed Jamf Pro deployment

In the early days of Total Merchandise, Dave used to perform all the users' software updates and IT troubleshooting himself. However, expansion has meant that Total Merchandise have found themselves too large for Dave to manage all their IT, but not large enough to employ a full-time IT technician.

To fix this, Dave took advantage of our managed support contract, which has features like 24/7/365 monitoring hardware break/fix, remote and onsite support and a Mac management solution from Jamf, all provided by us. Among other features, this allows our admin teams to trigger updates remotely, so that Dave and the Total Merchandise team can simply specify what policies, reports and changes they need, and our engineers will take care of the admin and automation of those services. We can also provide phone, email, remote and onsite support as needed through our fully qualified helpdesk and engineering teams.

"We can't really warrant a full-time IT guy in house all the time, so to have a managed service where Jigsaw24 just log in and automate things and do stuff for us is perfect, because then all I have to do is walk around and check everything's OK," Dave told us. "I'm really happy with the support. The team are very good, and after seven years it's more of a personal relationship, which is nice. They're very willing to check stuff overnight, so you have the peace of mind of knowing something's working even if you're not in the office."

For more on our networking and infrastructure solutions, get in touch with the team on the details below.

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