Case Story
Accounting Services

extech cloud

Extech Cloud helps create a modern workplace for Chartered Accountants
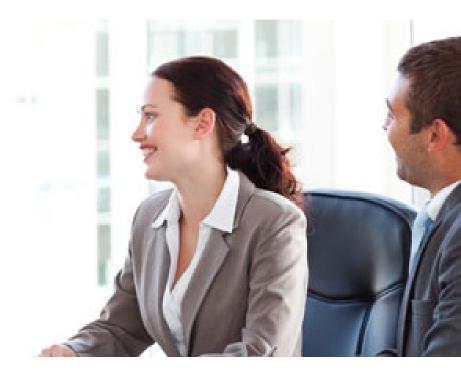
Situated in Crawley and East Grinstead on the Surrey/Sussex border, Richard Place Dobson Chartered Accountants and Business Advisors have been focusing on providing exceptional client service for over 100 years.

RPD's reputation has been built on integrity and strong business partnerships with clients, nurturing and sustaining positive, robust long-term relationships.

Background

Before Extech Cloud started working with Richard Place Dobson in October 2019, RPD was at a point where it needed to upgrade its servers and infrastructure, and was looking to mitigate any hardware replacement costs.

With almost 50 staff members across the Crawley and East Grinstead offices, the company was also facing significant IT licencing costs and wanted to change. Extech Cloud had the perfect solution.

"We approached Extech Cloud to provide us with a modernised, more efficient IT system. Extech Cloud has designed a hosted desktop solution that works with all the range of software that we use, and is a lot faster and easier to use than our old system.
Throughout the project the people we have worked with have managed to complete a very complicated build, during a very stressful time (lockdown and working remotely presented its own challenges) and at all times communicated with a lot of people with little understanding of IT, in a way that we understood. In undertaking this project I anticipated a lot more problems but any problems that arose were dealt with by Extech Cloud and never became my problems. "
Karen Corduff, Director

Journey to the cloud

When Richard Place Dobson (RPD) first approached Extech Cloud, the IT system was fragmented and, with slow VPN performance, it was providing an increasingly frustrating experience for staff. They needed a new strategic IT plan for the business and there were several key issues looming:

- They were on countdown to Windows 7 end-of-life on January 14, 2020
- The database software was end-of-life and RPD was facing huge upgrade bills
- RPD also couldn't update some of the software without significant cost.

"The new system works like a dream and our team are able to work more efficiently."
Karen Corduff, Director

RPD was looking at tens of thousands of pounds on **licensing costs** alone, so they decided that enough was enough, they had to **break the cycle**. Extech Cloud audited the whole IT infrastructure and assets, and then spent 6 months modernising everything including all the user PCs and laptops.

Staff stopped using the old on-premise system one day and the next day logged in on the new system and carried on working – with greatly improved performance. RPD now takes full advantage of the benefits offered by **Microsoft 365** and **Azure,** with the very latest security and exceptional performance levels.

Amazingly, there are now 16 pieces of **legacy software running on the cloud** thanks to Extech's pioneering implementation of the latest **Windows Virtual Desktop (WVD)**. These include IRIS Tax Expense, Share Register, Tax Expense, Star Payroll, IRIS Accountancy Suite, CCH Central, CCH Audit Automation, Sage Line 50 [24, 25, 26], Office and more.

Modern security mechanisms such as Multi-Factor Authentication (MFA) have been applied to legacy systems. In addition, usernames and passwords for PC's in the office and office applications in 365 are now unified which previously caused confusion, along with having different credentials for VPN. Application updates also don't need to be conducted on every single workstation and staff now have access to systems even in a web browser and tablet.

New processes have also developed. For example, Excel was previously used over the on-premise network with documents being updated by multiple staff which led to regular file corruption. Now they collaborate on Excel files through MS Teams giving stability, and a more efficient workflow.

Microsoft
Windows Virtual Desktop

"Extech Cloud has the experience to put almost any application or software into a cloud environment. In 2020, we are pioneering the use of **WVD** and work with Microsoft as part of their own development programme. This is cutting-edge digital transformation meaning there are now no compelling reasons why companies need to have on-premise servers. Even workloads traditionally not suitable for cloud like CAD and video editing are possible in WVD.**"**
Richard Phillips, CTO, Extech Cloud

Day-to-day support

Today, Extech Cloud provides operational management of the cloud infrastructure, users across multiple locations and endpoints, along with advice and guidance on emerging products to make RPD even more efficient. Extech Cloud also provides **service desk support**, **IT equipment procurement** and ensures continuous **security compliance** across the whole business.

In March 2020, the team were sent to work from home due to Covid-19 lockdown. This was prior to system changes and with RPD's old systems was difficult to achieve. The Extech Cloud team enabled temporary VPN services, which was slow and frustrating to use. When the work on the new system was completed in May, it revitalised the way people are working from home.

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If you need one-off **IT support** to get your team working from home (#WFH) more effectively, **Extech Cloud** can help. We can also take your whole business operation into **the Cloud**, giving you the freedom you need with affordable monthly payments. Break the IT CAPEX cycle!

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