The hotgroup recruits Wavex for Managed IT Services

Wavex's cost-effective services
underpin rapid growth at
innovative recruitment company

About hotgroup

Today more than half of UK organisations use the Internet for recruitment, compared with just 17% in 1999, and searching for work is the fourth most popular activity on the Web.

With that level of activity, it's small wonder that the hotgroup plc has become one of the fastest-growing recruitment companies in the UK. Founded in 1999, and acquired by Trinity Mirror plc in 2005, the hotgroup is achieving rapid growth both organically and through acquiring a range of recruitment websites and traditional recruitment consultancy businesses.

The hotgroup's strategy is to combine the high value aspects of a personalised service from its specialist recruitment business with the speed and efficiency of its online sites. This integration strategy relies heavily on its IT systems, which have to be robust and scaleable enough to support the company's growth.

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Traditional and online

Mark Dooley, the hotgroup's IT director for its traditional recruitment consultancies, explained: "We have grown mainly by acquisition and become the largest recruitment job site in the UK in terms of unique visitors every month. Two years ago we started to buy more traditional recruitment companies and this gave us a challenge in terms of how we supported those companies from an IT perspective. In the online world we host web servers in a data centre and all our web development is done at our headquarters. In the traditional recruitment division of the business we have around 20 offices all over the UK, some with between 2 and 5 staff, others with 20-30 people, all of which need to be linked up to a central corporate network and be looked after. The challenges are very different."

Move to new HQ

Rapid growth at the hotgroup prompted the move of its headquarters to a larger building in Kensington Village, London – a move which involved the recruitment of Wavex to look after the IT logistics. "Basically, Wavex managed the whole project, liaising with cablers, builders, telephony people, and drove the steering committee. The whole move went like a Swiss watch. Wavex demonstrated a high level of professionalism and attention to detail – that showed in the documentation they were putting in place."

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WAVEX CASE STUDY: **HOTGROUP**

IT support

It soon became apparent that the hotgroup needed Wavex's help to implement an IT Support Helpdesk for the traditional businesses. However, the company didn't have the in-house resources and expertise to support its headquarters and 20 regional offices – so Wavex was invited to, not only implement, but run a helpdesk facility.

Mark explained: "Wavex reviewed our support issues, visited our offices, audited our systems and provided documentation on all our sites – it was very thorough. Initially, Wavex provided Level 1 and 2 support for some of our businesses, with the rest being handled internally. We didn't have a call logging system so Wavex set that up - it would have cost much more if we had developed that ourselves. After three months we looked at the monthly stats that Wavex produced so that we could see response times to support calls, how quickly they were being resolved, etc. That led us to alter the way we deal with our businesses from a support perspective. The key for us was being able to get our own internal IT support team working much more effectively by using the call-logging system and combining with Wavex's specialist skills."

The result was that Level 1 and 2 support for all the hotgroup's traditional recruitment businesses are being transitioned over to Wavex over the next few months, enabling the internal IT team to focus more on project based activities, supported by Wavex's senior engineers and project managers.

Project work

As well as ongoing support and maintenance, the hotgroup also utilises Wavex's skills on a project basis. "We're moving to a Terminal Services network, which Wavex is helping to architect and implement. This will provide a centralised server, thin client computing model for all our offices to share data and applications," said Mark. "Remote workers will also be able to log in from client sites as if they were in the office. This model also makes it much easier to roll out new applications as our business grows."

In addition to Wavex's development, implementation and project management skills, the hotgroup has also implemented Wavex's NETi™ and MonX™ network monitoring and server monitoring tools. "Both Wavex and our internal IT team can see what's going on with our systems and act accordingly to fix any glitches before they affect our businesses," added Mark.

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He concluded: "Wavex has helped implement an IT infrastructure that can change 'on demand' to meet our growing business needs. Wavex always seems to act in our best interests and isn't just out to make a buck out of problems. On a personal level all the people we have dealt with at Wavex have been absolutely fantastic. The intention is to continue a long relationship with Wavex as we continue to transition and grow our business."

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