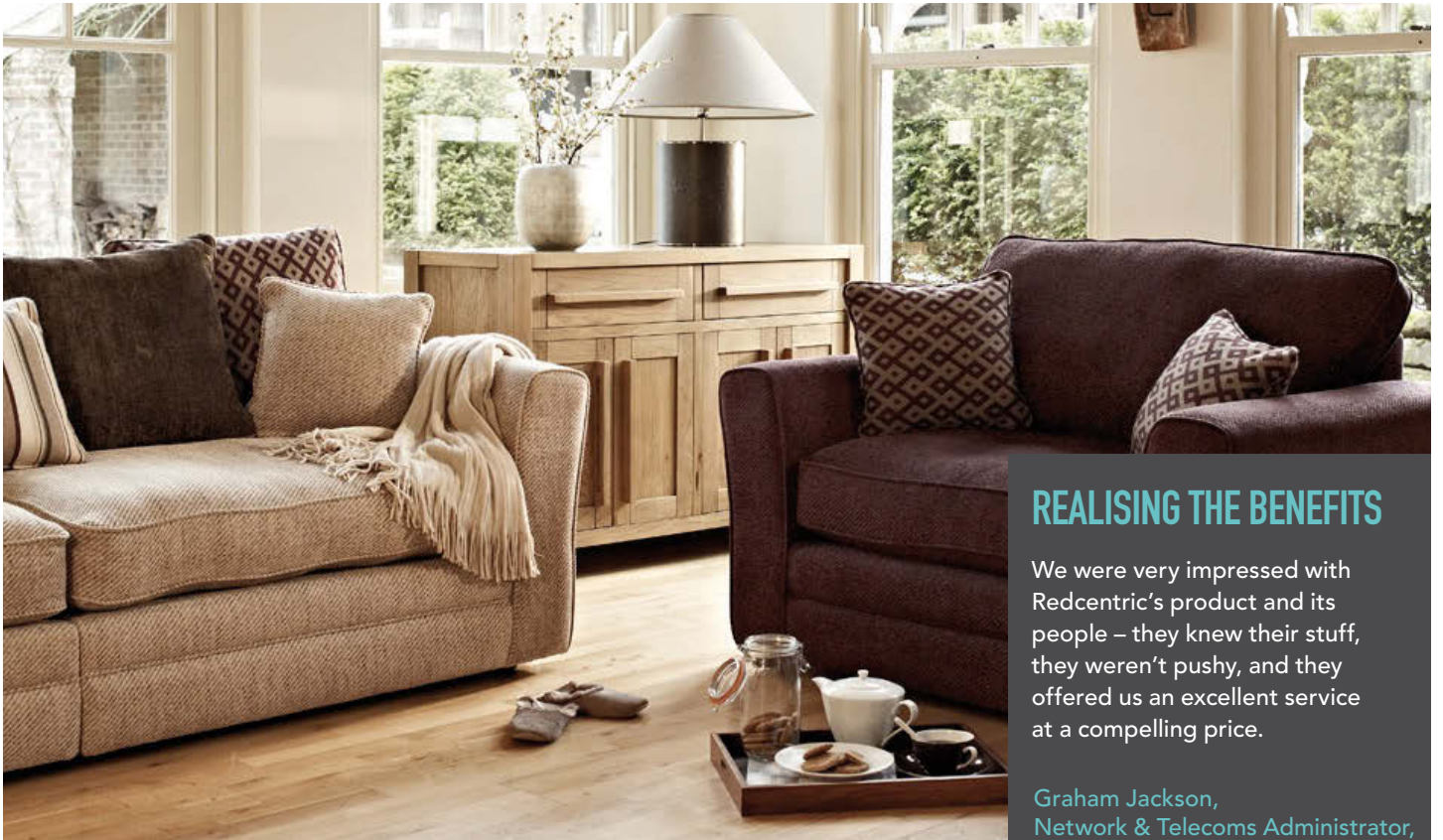


CASE STUDY

RETAIL SECTOR

BARKER AND STONEHOUSE



REALISING THE BENEFITS

We were very impressed with Redcentric's product and its people – they knew their stuff, they weren't pushy, and they offered us an excellent service at a compelling price.

Graham Jackson,
Network & Telecoms Administrator,
Barker and Stonehouse

Barker and Stonehouse is the largest independent family-run furniture retailer and online store in the UK and has been providing high-quality furniture for over 60 years. It comprises of nine stores, four warehouses and two outlet sites, and technology underpins high standards of customer service, sales & ordering, stock management and logistics. Over the years it has engaged more and more with managed services, entrusting Redcentric to support the company's growth and help it derive maximum value and operational advantage from its IT investment.

CHALLENGES

In 2005, Barker and Stonehouse was looking to upgrade its network to solve a number of performance problems. In particular, they wanted to resolve the difficulties of sending very large graphics files between locations.

The company therefore approached a number of network vendors with a view to replacing its existing network with one that would provide a high-performance, rapid connection between its various sites.



HOW REDCENTRIC HELPED

Having evaluated the different vendors' proposals, Barker and Stonehouse chose Redcentric. Graham Jackson, Network & Telecoms Administrator, says, "We were very impressed with Redcentric's product and its people – they knew their stuff, they weren't pushy, and they offered us an excellent service at a compelling price."

Barker and Stonehouse initially installed the Redcentric network on its smaller sites and then, confident in its resilience and performance, overhauled the entire network across all stores and warehouses. During this process two new stores were opened and the company decided to add Redcentric's IP telephony into these sites at the same time. Again, it subsequently rolled the service out to more sites, so solving the growing problem of unsustainable maintenance and administration costs associated with its corporate PBX.

Graham Jackson comments: "The annual charges, coupled with the disproportionate costs associated with simple moves and changes, made us seriously re-evaluate our telephony infrastructure. IP telephony services gave us real value for money alongside the instant cash savings – and the control we have and the redundancy we enjoy as a result of Cloud-based IP telephony have helped secure a real step-change in our voice provision."

TECHNICAL INFO

- Managed Network Services – MPLS network and routers
- IP Telephony – VoIP across most locations
- Server colocation – hosted in Redcentric's data centre
- Virtual Server Hosting – for all network domain controllers, email and application servers

The company has continued to add more Redcentric services over time. Graham Jackson again: "We got to a point where we were so happy with the network and voice services from Redcentric that we decided to look into its data hosting and management services."

As a result, Barker and Stonehouse has now co-located its physical servers in Redcentric's Harrogate data centre; and adopted virtual server hosting for all its network domain controllers, email and application servers.

BUSINESS BENEFITS

As the retailer has grown, Redcentric's services have helped it streamline its IT and customer service functions, taking on many of the back-end IT operations and freeing up the department to concentrate on core, business-critical activities.

Cost savings

For less than it was paying BT, Barker and Stonehouse now has at least three times the previous network bandwidth. In addition, there have been significant savings on telephone calls as all inter-branch calls are free with IP telephony services.

Business efficiencies

Redcentric's managed services have made day-to-day business activities, such as file transfer and data management, much easier, and enabled painless consolidation of many business operations.

Streamlined supply

Having a single provider for a wide-range of services has brought a high degree of operational and contractual efficiency, as well as strong accountability and a sense of ownership from Redcentric.

Enhanced support

Barker and Stonehouse need high availability across networks, data and voice. The pre-emptive monitoring of systems and 24/7/365 supply of UK-based support professionals helps secure the requisite levels of performance and uptime.

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Strategic gains

With growing confidence in its Cloud journey, the company can look to develop its IT strategy based on agility, security, resilience and value, with potentially more services to be leveraged going forward.

