



HARGREAVES DESIGN GROUP



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- Daryl Hargreaves

Founder, Hargreaves Design Group

THE CLIENT

Established in 1999 and head quartered in Pakenham, Victoria, Hargreaves Design Group provides residential and commercial building design services to clients across Australia. In recent years, the company has grown through acquisition and opened new offices in Melbourne Perth and Bunbury, all of which operate under the Hargreaves Design Group banner.

THE NEED

As the company grew during the past 21 years, the need for support for its information technology systems increased. While management was initially undertaken by business founder Daryl Hargreaves, as staff and client numbers grew, he realised that external support was required.



While it had been possible for me to keep our technology functioning well when we were a smaller firm, I found it was taking too much of my time away from other activities,” said Daryl. “I was also keen to explore the potential of new advances such as cloud computing and recognised I needed the assistance of technology experts.”

Daryl said he could also see that the growth-through-acquisition strategy he had planned for the company would create further challenges when it came to technology. Without significant changes, It would be very difficult to have a centralised store for data and staff would find it challenging to share and work on files.

“We realised we needed to get a centralised IT resource in place before the acquisitions were made,” he said.

“As a result, in late 2017, we started examining various alternative technology options.”

THE SOLUTION

After evaluating a number of external IT support providers, a decision was taken in November 2019 to sign an ongoing contract with Viatek.

The first project undertaken was to commission a cloud-based server, on the Microsoft Azure platform, that could act as a central repository for the company’s digital files. All files that had been created since company operations began 21 years ago were then uploaded to this server.



Azure then became the single data storage location for the entire company,” said Daryl. “It meant we would be able to decommission individual servers in offices, simplifying our infrastructure and reducing costs.”

- Daryl Hargreaves | Founder

Once acquisition of the two new businesses had been completed and a new site opened in Perth, Viatek worked to deploy Microsoft Office 365 and a voice-over-IP (VoIP) phone system across all office locations. This was to ensure a consistent platform was available for all staff regardless of their geographic location.

THE RESULT

With the Azure-based file server, Office 365, and the VoIP phone systems in place, Hargreaves Design Group was soon realising some significant business benefits.

Staff are able to access and work on files from a central location, knowing that they are the most recent version. Each file is constantly being back up during the working day to ensure changes are not lost if there is a localised IT issue. The Azure server is also backed up to a second cloud service each night to provide complete data security at all times.

DARYL SAID THE FLEXIBILITY OF HAVING CLOUD STORAGE AND TELEPHONY RESOURCES HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY EVIDENT DURING THE COVID-19 LOCK-DOWNS. STAFF HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TAKE THEIR COMPUTER HOME AND CONTINUE WORKING JUST AS THEY HAD BEEN IN THE OFFICE.



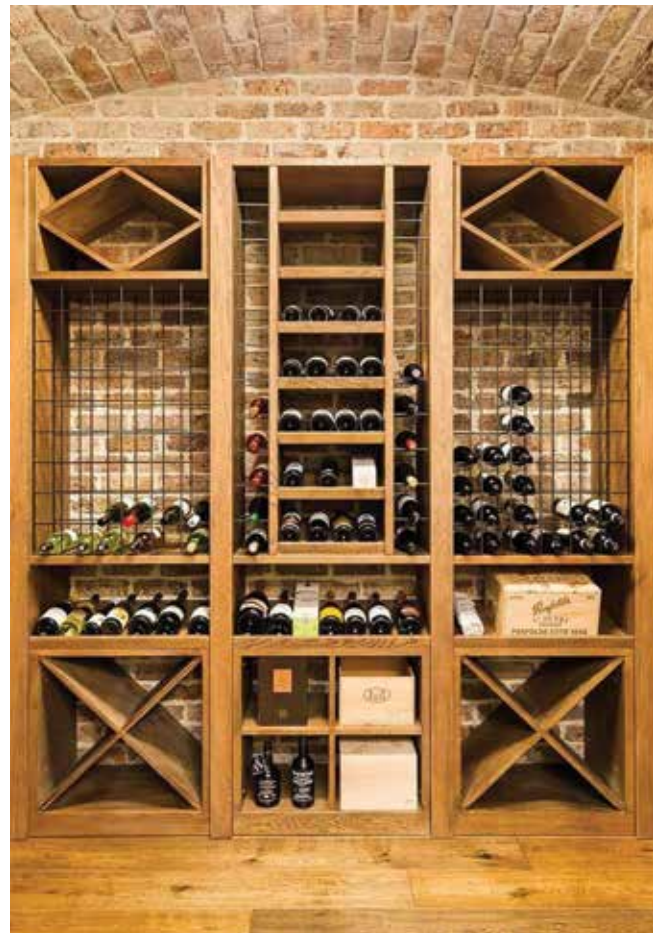
“The cloud data store can be accessed from any location which has been a boon during the current disruptions,” said Daryl. “Also, the VoIP phone system means I can speak to a staff member in Western Australia as easily as I could if they were in the next room. Incoming calls can be routed to staff even when they are working from home.”

WE'D LOVE TO HELP

Get in touch today by calling 1300 842 835
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THE FUTURE

Daryl admits that, with all the expansion activity which has taken place within the company during the past couple of years, there has been little time left to plan for the future. He is confident, however, that when virus-related restrictions are removed the business will continue to grow and evolve.

“When it comes to technology, we now have no restrictions on our growth,” he said. “We could establish a new office or support remote workers and Viatek would have them up and running in a day.”

TESTIMONIALS

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Daryl Hargreaves – founder, Hargreaves Design Group