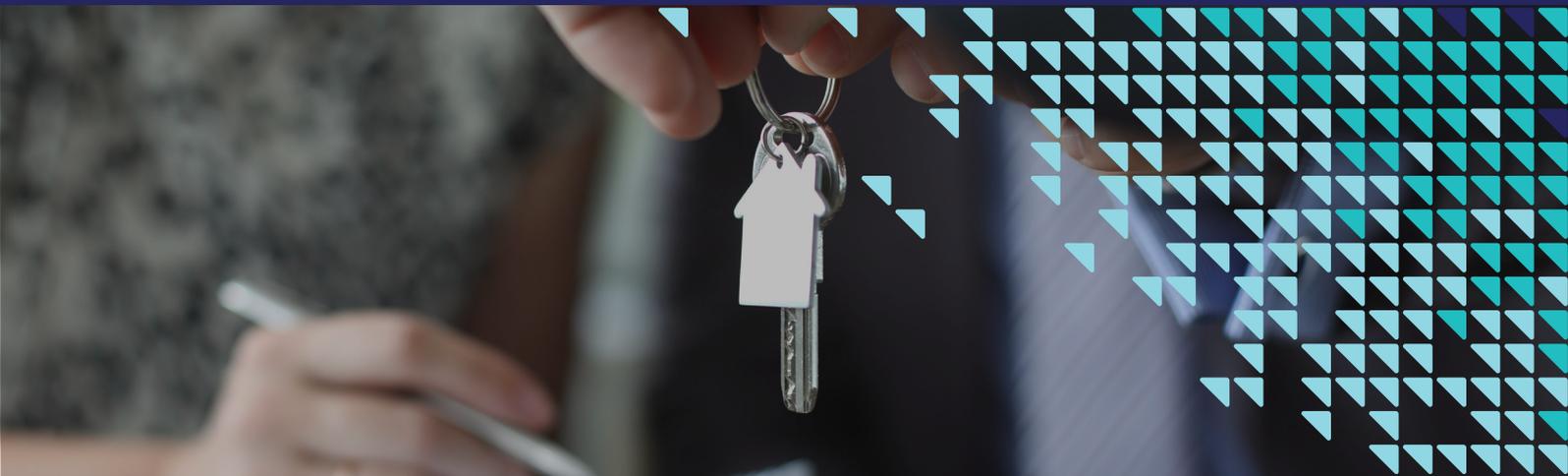




RfM Case Study

IT strategy for the future



About RfM

RfM is one of the North West's leading firms of chartered accountants, employing over 60 staff, with its head office in Preston and a total of six offices throughout the region as well as a presence in London. The firm offers a wide range of business advisory and accounting services, from end of year audits to tax advice and long-term financial planning. HW Technology has been RfM's IT partner for many years and has supported the firm along its growth path.

Challenges

As the practice has expanded, RfM realised they needed to upgrade the technology platform to support more flexible working practices and enable staff to work from different locations. With six offices in the region, fee earners often need to move around to other offices within the firm, or work at client sites or from home. The firm's IT servers were nearing end of life and it was becoming evident that onsite servers were not the right solution for a growing accountancy practice.

As RfM partner Gillian Telford observed: "As technology has developed over the years, we needed a more modern, streamlined IT solution. A cloud-based hosted system was the obvious route, not only to support our current needs but also to give us a consistent and stable upgrade path for the future."

Our solution

As RfM's strategic technology partner, Orca has advised and guided RfM through the next phase of its IT strategy. Orca recommended that the firm move to a hosted desktop platform that will support the firm now and in the longer-term.

RfM uses standard business applications such as MS Office, IRIS, Sage and Xero, which are now hosted in the cloud to facilitate scalability as the firm grows, as well as better cross-practice collaboration. Orca's web development services host RfM's website and provide support to ensure that the site is stable and secure.

With the hosted desktop, the firm now has a uniform platform installed for all six offices, so that no matter where a member of staff maybe working, they can log in to their usual desktop screen to access the same suite of products – this includes home and clients' premises. Staff can hot-desk from any office and don't need to carry a laptop to the office as all applications and files are stored in the cloud. The platform is scalable, so new staff can be added to the system without upfront costs, as this is all taken care of within the hosted desktop environment. System scalability means that new office acquisitions or office moves become easier and more streamlined.

Security is vitally important for RfM, so another benefit of hosted desktop is that data is stored offsite in Orca's secure ISO 27001-compliant data centre. As part of RfM's data security strategy, Orca provides on-going cyber security consultancy and works with the firm to maintain best practice security processes.

There are so many plus points to adoption of the hosted desktop. The hosted platform has given us much better flexibility to adapt to the changing accountancy business environment as processes become more digital. We have received excellent advice from HW Technology who really understand our business and what we need to support the firm now and as we expand in the future. "The standard of service that we receive from HW Technology is excellent and they always go the extra mile.

Gillian Telford
RfM
Partner

Technology you can count on

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