



Grand Canal Square, Dublin
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At a Glance

Company: Bannon
Industry: Commercial Property and Asset Management

Customer Profile

Supported by the latest communications technologies, Bannon provides an efficient and cost effective service to developers, investors and occupiers. With over 40 years of experience, the firm focuses on active asset management and property development offering the full range of services including sales; lettings; rent reviews; valuations; compulsory purchase and property management.

Business Challenge

To design and deploy a technology refresh for the company's core IT infrastructure, making it more robust, more secure and enabling Bannon to successfully compete with larger organisations.

Solution

- Virtualisation of the network infrastructure, reducing the number of physical servers from 10 to 2.
- Deployment of HP SAN solution with a total of 5TB of data storage capacity.
- Installation of Veeam enabling offsite daily backups and replication to an adjacent site.
- Citrix upgrade providing remote access to critical line of business applications for large clients.
- Deployment of Mimecast email management, offering full email filtering and archiving for all email traffic.
- Full Managed Service monitoring PCs, servers and communications links.

Benefits

- A more secure, reliable and robust infrastructure.
- Reduced IT administration overheads.
- Offers high availability of computing services to staff and external clients.
- Scope for growth with easy addition of new servers and applications to the network.

Technology Refresh Boosts Competitive Advantage for Leading Property Consultants

A technology refresh at leading property consultants, Bannon has significantly reduced IT administration costs and boosted competitive advantage. The refresh, designed and deployed by MJ Flood Technology has resulted in a more robust, secure IT infrastructure for Bannon and helps the company to boost enterprise agility and successfully challenge larger competitors.

Bannon manages some of the country's largest and most successful retail centres such as the Pavilions in Swords, Co. Dublin, Athlone Town Centre and Whitewater in Newbridge, Co. Kildare. The company openly embraces technology to run its business and is committed to using its power to better service its client base and support team of over 50 people.

"The property market has undergone a radical transformation in a relatively short period of time," according to Damian Bannon, IT Manager with Bannon. "Bannon has had to adapt in line with those changes. Our focus on the twin strands of property management and asset management has put our company firmly back on a path of growth and this has been one of the chief factors driving our technology refresh," he adds.

A Virtualised Core Infrastructure

As part of the project, staff at MJ Flood Technology re-designed a new network core to serve the company's 50 users. The server farm was virtualised using VMware technology, reducing the number of servers from 10 to just 2. This has resulted in reduced administration overheads and an improvement in speed and performance. "New applications can be easily added by simply firing up a new virtual server," according to Bannon. "We no longer have to worry about purchasing or provisioning new hardware. It's as easy as point and click."

A Citrix upgrade provides secure remote access to the company's line of business application, the lifeblood of Bannon's business model. Remote access to "TRAMPS" allows Bannon's largest retail operators to raise service orders and/or purchase orders in the field, covering everything from cleaning services and security to signmakers and utilities. The invoice is then dealt with and paid by Bannon. The entire process is paperless and replaces the use of couriers between offices which was both costly and time-consuming.



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“Technology enables us to successfully challenge larger competitors. We have a long-standing relationship with staff at MJ Flood Technology, who deliver for us time and time again.”

Damian Bannon, IT Manager,
Bannon

“Our innovative technology footprint allows us to compete with much larger organisations,” explains Bannon. “Thanks to online property management, we can also provide property owners with real-time financial reports. This will be extended to a web interface later this year and we have the confidence of knowing that our back-end systems are secure and robust enough to protect the integrity of data as it passes across the Internet.”

Plenty of Scope for Data Growth with Assured Protection

“HP storage technology plays a key role in the overall virtualisation strategy we defined for Bannon,” explains Declan Owens, Sales Account Manager with MJ Flood Technology. “We chose a HP Storage Area Network (SAN) as it provides a consolidated approach to their virtualised infrastructure with efficient data management and provides 5TB of raw storage capacity, leaving plenty of scope for data growth,” he adds.

“Data growth has slowed somewhat,” comments Bannon. “Previously 60% of our data would have consisted of very large Photoshop files, some of which could have been 2GB in size. However, the re-focus of our business to property and asset management has resulted in a more linear growth which can be comfortably catered for by the capacity, resiliency and reliability of the HP SAN.”

Disaster recovery was also addressed as part of the overall project. Full or incremental backups can be taken daily using a Veeam backup and replication solution. Bannon have moved away from tape, which had let them down in the past and now perform reliable back-ups of mission-critical data to another site, adjacent to Bannon’s headquarters.

“Always On” Email Management

In an effort to address the challenges associated with managing email, Bannon chose Mimecast, a cloud-based unified email management system which provides continuity, archiving and email filtering. “Mimecast was absolutely invaluable to us during the technology refresh,” explains Bannon. “Email communication was always available to staff even if our servers were down. In addition, the self-service mechanism of allowing individual users to release or block mails as required, ensures I no longer have to get involved processing requests to unblock legitimate email traffic. I can spend my time on much more strategic tasks such as our project to help retail clients use the power of social media to drive their business.”

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