

Imagine Homes



Imagine Homes is a pioneering property investment company, offering a unique approach to help its customers build or start their investment property portfolio. The company offers the client 7.5% guaranteed annual rental return for two years from the day of completion. Imagine Homes also furnish the property, find the tenant and manage the apartment for the two year rental period.

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Grant Bovey, Director at Imagine Homes

Imagine's own investment model is to acquire top class developments in prime locations throughout the UK, ensuring investors are offered the best possible chance for capital growth.

The company currently employs over 100 people in the UK, and also has offices established in Ireland, Dubai and Singapore.

Grant Bovey, Director at Imagine Homes explains, "At Imagine Homes, we are offering a new way for people to build, or start to build, an investment property portfolio. We make all the arrangements to fully furnish the apartments with high quality furniture, inclusive of all white goods, making it a hassle free solution. Whether you're a regular property investor, or are looking to get on the first rung of the investment property ladder, you'll receive the same high standard of service."

As with any successful company, IT plays a strategic role in Imagine

Home's business operations. Grant Bovey explains, "Our IT infrastructure provides the platform for our business. As an international company working across many different time zones, nearly all of our business transactions are carried out over email so it is vital that we have a system that we can rely on at all times."

However, as the company enjoyed rapid growth, it became obvious that its IT systems needed urgent attention to keep pace.

"Working across different continents, we need access to the most up to date live information on the status of each property and development site. We needed a system that was updated in real time at all our offices."

In early 2005, Imagine Homes relocated to new international headquarters in Farnborough. This seemed the obvious time to re-think the company's IT strategy, and Imagine Homes sought advice from specialist IT outsourcing consultants, ramsac, based in Surrey.

Continued Bovey, "Our whole business philosophy is based heavily around service and we look to our suppliers to match this belief. One of our business partners recommended that we spoke to ramsac about our IT issues."

After an initial hardware and systems security health check of Imagine's current IT infrastructure, ramsac went through a consultative process to understand what Imagine's business needs and aspirations were, in order that they could suggest the most appropriate IT solutions.

"We needed a system that initially would be set-up for 25 users in our head office, but could easily and quickly expand to 150 users with full support, and provide access to the national and international remote sites. We also needed to ensure that mobile and home workers would have full access to their systems wherever they were. Sometimes they would be situated in places with limited communication options."

The Citrix Presentation Server allowed ramsac to web enable the complete network and provide access to all 150 users wherever they happened to be, across multiple sites and time zones. In addition a distributed file system was added, providing access to the company files from anywhere in the world. Token-based security keys were

introduced along with user pin codes to ensure that access was completely secure and a communications strategy designed and delivered.

"I wasn't familiar with Citrix, but I was easily sold on its remote access and security benefits," said Grant Bovey. "The Citrix system now supplies live information to numerous satellite bases across the world in different time zones from a centralised information source. We have been able to streamline all the IT systems to create one coherent system that everyone can use - resulting in the perfect cost-effective solution for our business."

In order to improve the speed and overall capability of the company's network, ramsac also implemented a 10 Gigabyte network backbone increasing network availability and building a foundation for future growth.

To ensure that the system was fully secure and able to function in the face of an unlikely event, ramsac applied a disaster recovery solution, implemented Mimecast's email archiving software and protected the multi-site network by installing Netscreen Firewalls. In addition, to further enhance the system's security, ramsac's Server Guard was implemented on Internet facing servers, enabling live information on service

breaches, unauthorised login attempts, hacker attacks, antivirus and other suspicious server activities to be identified as they happen, 24/7.

To enable seamless communication across the multiple sites and locations, ramsac also provided an exchange mobile solution for Imagine's staff to securely access company emails via their mobile device.

Imagine continues to outsource all of its IT functions to ramsac, who deliver rapid solutions as and when they are needed. ramsac's award winning proactive range of services, together with the cost effectiveness and benefits of Citrix, ensure a very stable, easy to use and commercially viable total IT solution without any headaches.

Bovey concludes, "ramzac looks after every aspect of IT for us, from hardware to software and offer advice on all strategic IT issues. I now believe that we have a solid and secure IT infrastructure in place, able to grow alongside our business. We have been delighted with service and support from ramsac. All the staff are very good at what they do and take the time to fully understand my business, and what IT support is needed to make it successful. I would have no hesitation in recommending ramsac to other companies in my position."