

Case Study

BROWNS

RESTAURANT GROUP

MICROSERVE MANAGED SERVICES



The Initial Challenge

In 2016, Browns Restaurant Group (BRG) was facing a significant hurdle: their business growth had outgrown their IT capabilities. They needed reliable IT systems to support their expanding business, while keeping data and devices secure. With a growing number of restaurant locations and employees, they lacked the necessary IT support to address challenges efficiently. BRG recognized the need for an IT partner with a long-term vision and capacity to support their plans for continued business growth.

Updating outdated systems

With a reliance on outdated, consumer-level NAS storage devices, individual networks, and Access Point equipment, they didn't have a cohesive data solution that provided the stability and scalability BRG desperately required. Their aging company server frequently crashed, causing extended downtime and lost user productivity. Information wasn't easily retrievable when it was needed. BRG needed an IT partner capable of efficiently addressing increased storage capacity needs and faster systems.

Improving security

As their business grew, BRG needed to enhance cybersecurity measures. Their team wanted to quickly identify and efficiently remediate security threats, while adhering to compliance regulations. Network security improvements were crucial, and above all, they had to ensure customer data remained secure. BRG also needed help to implement the necessary security measures to qualify for cyber insurance.

Transforming IT for the future

BRG had many IT support challenges that weren't addressed in a timely manner, causing downtime that impacted employee productivity. Recognizing the need for comprehensive support and cohesive IT infrastructure, BRG wanted to partner with an MSP (Managed Services Provider) that had the vision and strategic planning capabilities to support their business growth. They needed a partner with the operational excellence required to deliver critical services when needed.

Addressing the core problem

Overall, a strong process wasn't in place to deal with BRG's mounting challenges as they arose. And when solutions were eventually provided, they were only temporary or ad-hoc fixes and didn't address the core issue that was creating the problems in the first place.

THE SEARCH BEGINS

Browns Restaurant Group knew that something had to change. The company started to search for an IT support provider who could address current IT issues, as well as strategically transform their IT strategy to support future growth.

After casting a wide net through a formal RFP process, BRG narrowed the field to three potential IT managed service providers. The chosen provider needed to offer 24/7 monitoring and support, have expertise in high-level planning, assist in meeting compliance requirements like PCI, and provide guidance in areas such as cyber insurance applications.

BRG also wanted a provider who had a high level of technical expertise to support their complex business requirements. They preferred a partner with a hands-on approach, so they could occasionally collaborate onsite. BRG realized early on that they would be highly dependent on their selected IT partner because of their self-admitted lack of knowledge concerning IT, compliance, and cybersecurity.

After a thorough selection process, BRG chose Microserve as an ideal partner because Microserve met their requirements for location, capacity, technical skills, and strategic vision.



THE WORK BEGINS WITH MICROSERVE

Once the decision was made, an initial assessment confirmed that BRG didn't have an adequate IT solution in place to meet their business needs. The assessment revealed several concerns: BRG had unreliable networks at several of their locations, multiple security vulnerabilities at the head office, and a mishmash of systems that didn't have a dependable backup and recovery plan. They had outdated equipment and lacked a server solution that aligned to their business requirements. Network failures were a constant threat, and their systems were susceptible to attacks at any time.

Starting with a plan

Building upon the insights from the initial assessment, Microserve created a strategy to fortify cybersecurity measures and build more reliable IT systems. Working closely with BRG, Microserve evaluated existing systems and created a detailed plan to not only meet their IT goals, but also lay the groundwork for future growth. With the goal of a one-month turnaround from kickoff to implementation, Microserve began working quickly.





THE SOLUTIONS

Microserve quickly implemented solutions to address urgent concerns. To respond to storage concerns, Microserve **deployed a new production server that helped the business continue operations effectively**. Additionally, Microserve implemented its Backup-as-a-Service cloud offering, which established a proper backup and disaster recovery strategy for both on-premises server data and cloud-based data, adding peace of mind in case systems went down.

After that, **advanced next-generation Fortinet firewalls were installed** not only at the head offices, but also across several corporate restaurant locations. This strategic measure addressed network security concerns that had been keeping them up at night. In addition, Microserve played a key role in the **implementation of a second ISP that relieved dependence on a single provider**, improved uptime, and ensured load balancing.

"From a security perspective, Microserve gave us increased confidence in our ability to handle security issues. If a security threat does come up, we know Microserve is there to help us investigate and remediate any security concerns, and our data backups are critical to ensuring uptime."

Matthew Hoag - Director of Special Projects at Browns Restaurant Group



WHAT WE DID FOR BRG

- Achieved a one-month turnaround time from initial onboarding kickoff meeting to implementation
- Provided collaborative IT strategic planning that will position them for the future
- Upgraded IT infrastructure to keep applications and hardware stable throughout the organization
- Developed a cybersecurity maturity strategy and implemented security controls to reduce attack surface and meet compliance needs
- Facilitated business initiatives, such as SharePoint online redesign and implementation
- Ensured a smooth transition for employees, all accomplished in a timely manner

THE TAKEAWAY

Since partnering with Microserve more than seven years ago, BRG's IT management and security improved dramatically. Today, Browns Restaurant Group operates without business interruption because they achieved consistency and reliability across their IT infrastructure that aligns with their business strategy and needs. More importantly, Microserve's technical expertise and professionalism provided BRG with increased confidence in their cybersecurity measures and improved network security.

"We appreciate the ability to draw on Microserve's technical expertise, whether it be for cyber insurance requirements, or other needs in that regard. Microserve has a level for competency, professionalism, and bandwidth that has certainly benefited us in knowing that we're not pushing up against the wall at any time in the near future."

Matthew Hoag - Director of Special Projects at Browns Restaurant Group

Microserve is Browns Restaurant Group's chosen managed service provider and partner in IT. BRG plans to continue their relationship with Microserve in their ongoing effort to shift towards cloud-based services. By continuing to modernize their technology with Microserve, BRG aims to maintain a strong security posture and excellent user experience ratings.



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