

CROFT



Case Study



Managed IT Services and Support

Groundworks and Civil Engineering



The Challenge



Birmingham-headquartered McDermotts provides groundworks that typically span from below the ground up to building fabrics (infrastructure, RC works, frames). It serves trade customers operating in the civils, commercial, and residential housing segments, as well as other construction contractors. It is also a supplier to large-scale infrastructure projects.

Staff working in the field had been using on-prem servers, remote desktops, and 3G/4G dongles to dial into central systems. However, remote desktops can be volatile and project managers/contract managers in particular were struggling with stable access to centrally stored data and drawings, some of which include graphical images that need to be manipulated.

Users were craving a remote desktop and an office desktop that looked the same wherever they work.

The Solution



After initial discussions in 2019, and a final decision in Summer 2020, Croft migrated McDermotts to Microsoft Azure and Office 365. Existing on-premise servers were coming to the end of a five year lifecycle, and McDermotts had already pushed out a move to cloud by extending the warranties on the kit. The concept of moving to the cloud was a “strange” one for McDermotts to take on given the nature of its business is so physical. “We’re the type of company that likes to see things,” says O’Donnell. However, there was clear acknowledgement that the firm would have to “evolve or die”.

The starting point was to deliver core apps from the cloud platform (e.g., SharePoint and Office 365). Much time was spent on taxonomy to “ensure SharePoint made sense”. O’Donnell and Croft then started to assess Microsoft Power Platform and how it could be used to make the firm’s processes more efficient. A simple example was the holiday request form whereby what had been a four-part manual process became an automated workflow. Many more workflows have been put in place, and now O’Donnell is looking to help HR further by creating workflows around new joiners, for example.

The Results



Croft has enabled McDermotts to transform the mobile working experience for its staff and to unleash the power of automation across a variety of processes.

McDermotts now only has one small on-premise server (at a site in Aston) for local admin and printer drivers. Everything else has been moved to Azure by Croft. O'Donnell is also now looking at how Power BI can be applied to bring intelligence into financial reporting – bringing visualisation and interaction to what has historically been a very static app.

As a company, Croft has given much greater mobility to McDermotts. “People are now not restricted, and access is a lot easier; it just doesn’t matter where they are. Advancements in 4G/5G and a browser-based experience have given us some great advancements,” says O'Donnell.

Moving Forward



McDermott's has just closed its financial year and its strategy for 2024 is currently being finalised. Key aspects include examining which improvements can be made to central business functions. For example, ascertaining which improvements could be made to further increase the productivity of HR processes.


More broadly, the ultimate aim is to have all platforms and software communicating much better with one another and to introduce APIs that help the company to do fewer things manually. Not surprisingly, security and data management also feature highly, particularly in light of the firm's ultimate aim to become ISO 27001 certified.

What our **client** has to say ...



“ Croft has helped us realise the power of automation. Now things are more automated and talking to one another, it means we can work smarter not harder. End users have been very grateful of the improvements to the ability to access information and data while in the field. ”

Dean O'Donnell
IT Director at McDermotts



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