

Jacksons has three dealership locations in the Channel Islands with franchises - Aston Martin, Audi, Bentley, BMW, Mercedes-Benz, MINI, Porsche, Smart, Volkswagen. Their Isle of Wight dealership represents Audi, Mercedes-Benz, Smart, Volkswagen. They have been partnering with RDS since 2014.

The Situation

With multiple franchises sharing just four locations on three islands, Jacksons is used to thinking outside the box to find the best and most cost-effective way to run their business.

In 2014, the company's IT director left and instead of recruiting a replacement, Jacksons made the decision to consider alternatives that would not only be more cost-effective, but add value to the company's capabilities. James Toothill, Chief Financial Officer explained, "One option was to outsource IT management and system hosting to a Channel Islands based provider - most likely a company that would have experience with the banking, finance and insurance sectors. We needed a partner who understood the retail motor industry."

Jacksons made enquiries and established that RDS not only had expertise in networks, IT support and cloud services for the automotive sector, but also offered the outsourced 'IT department' functions that the company needed. "From our first discussions, RDS clearly understood our requirements. We were particularly pleased that rather than having to make any new investments, RDS advised us that to begin with, we should keep our existing technologies and infrastructure in place. No changes for changes sake. For us, there were also no real concerns about 'physicality' - we are used to remote service delivery. We were confident that RDS would ensure that the distance factor would not be a significant disadvantage for the business."

The Solution

The business case for moving to an externally-managed IT facility was quite straightforward for Jacksons - a simple and clear cut cost comparison exercise and that the resulting savings would be generated from day one. Essentially, once a remote access line was in place, RDS only needed a login and Jacksons had its new IT department.

"Essentially, RDS Global is the company's IT department and our professional IT advisors. They understand how our business operates as an island-based, multi-franchise operation and provide us with a multi-discipline, support service. Essentially, if we have an IT issue, we know that RDS will take care of it."

James Toothill,
Chief Financial Officer



A critical area for Jacksons is manufacturer- dealer communications. Representing multiple franchises, it means that there's a wide range of file transfers and interfaces involved, with many brand-specific details to maintain. For Jacksons, being supported by RDS not only brings with it the knowledge of the technologies, but also the business impact of any failure or outage. "With so much now web-enabled, it's imperative that all the interfaces and price file updates run smoothly and on schedule. By partnering with RDS, we certainly have the support we need in this crucial area. Moreover, if we took on another franchise or added another location, we could leave the IT to RDS and concentrate on the operational detail."

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The Result

One of the biggest gains for Jacksons is that by working with RDS, the company has gained access to a much greater range of IT skillsets and technical experience. It also means that there no more concerns about absence cover.

Did the move to RDS present any problems? "There was a something of a cultural change for a few staff in the move to a remotely managed IT function. But soon, a stronger sense of empowerment developed. If anyone has an IT issue then they know that they can call RDS for support, we also have regular review meetings with RDS to work on any specific issues and to keep things moving forward."

When Jacksons were faced with the need to look at how they managed their IT, they knew that it was a question of finding the best solution for the business. The acid test - was this the right decision? "Yes absolutely. RDS Global is not only meeting our needs for today but we also have a partner to support future developments."

With RDS, we also have a much better set of eyes and ears to take care of our IT
and there are no additional risks during holiday periods or absence through sickness.

James Toothill, Chief Financial Officer

