**cosurica**
Supporting people powering business

The changing face of IT

With business booming in the beauty industry, Yorkshire-based cosmetics company Badgequo certainly knows a thing or two about business growth. The last ten years have seen the company quadruple its turnover; something that's only been possible because of its continued investment in improving and upgrading its IT infrastructure.
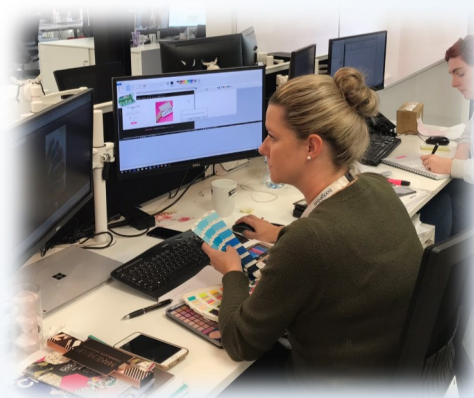
At Badgequo's newly refurbished offices in Silsden, Kai and Linda Arter have much to celebrate. After taking ownership the business in 2006, they now oversee a company with a turnover of more than £20 million. Manufacturing a range of cosmetics and grooming products under their own label brands Technic, Body Collection and Mans'tuff, they also produce private label cosmetics for a number of high street retailers and have offices in Hong Kong and Germany.

Cosurica's managing director, Gareth Harrison first met with Kai Arter in 2012. With a strong technology background, Kai had been managing the company's IT, but with his focus now on facilitating rapid business growth, IT was an area that needed to be put under new guardianship. With a number of unresolved IT problems, Badgequo was looking for an IT provider with a broad range of experience that could not only help them resolve their issues quickly, but also guide them in making the right IT investments for the future.

"In the initial meeting with Gareth I focussed solely on our immediate priorities" says Kai, Badgequo's MD. "We had some unresolved issues that were having a serious impact on our day-to-day work and we had to get them fixed, and fast. For example, we'd just made a large financial investment in upgrading to a 50Mbps connection, but the most we were seeing was 10Mbps. It was incredibly frustrating for everyone to still be experiencing slow internet connectivity. We also wanted to switch to iPhones, but our server wouldn't give the devices access to emails as it was only set up for Blackberry."

Within the space of an afternoon, Cosurica modified the Exchange Server, so that it would allow email access for any device, and the team immediately began testing the internet connection to determine the reason for the bottleneck. The problem was quickly isolated to the Cisco Small Business Security Gateway, a great product, but implemented in an inappropriate situation. By replacing it with a Draytek router, the speed was immediately increased to 50Mbps and the improvement was made permanent within a week.

"I was so impressed by Cosurica's knowledge and problem solving ability that I quickly invited Gareth back to do a review of our server and IT infrastructure," says Kai.

badgequo

"Over a number of weeks we worked together to design a new environment that included Microsoft Office 365 in the cloud, and on-premise Microsoft Windows Server 2012 R2 with Hyper-V virtualisation.

When we went live in late 2013 it made a huge difference, the biggest advantage being rapid scalability. Additional server infrastructure could be deployed without us needing to wait on installation of additional hardware. "Another challenge faced by Badgequo had been how to manage and secure email for the international territory managers based abroad. In response to earlier growth, a number of Badgequo domains and email hosting had been set up outside the UK. These were neither centrally manageable, or easy to keep secure and so created unnecessary risk. With Office 365 now deployed for all users, wherever in the world they are based, Badgequo can efficiently manage & secure all users' email as well as keep track of Office productivity software licensing.

After a year of providing day-to day support and management of the server infrastructure, Cosurica's remit was extended to also include provision of end-user IT support.

Supporting Rapid Growth

In 2013 Badgequo had embarked on an enterprise resource planning (ERP) software migration project. Eighteen months in, the project was running behind schedule when Cosurica stepped in to work with the new ERP system vendor to deliver a robust hybrid backup system, hosted in Microsoft Azure and on-premise. This would facilitate full and rapid recovery in the event of disaster. "We still needed to access historical data from the old system too" says Kai, "but, since it was hosted on aging and increasingly unreliable hardware we had concerns. Cosurica quickly migrated the physical machine into the recently deployed Hyper-V virtual environment, giving us peace of mind without any additional hardware investment".

Further rapid growth in 2015-16 led to a second ERP migration project, this time to a product called Apprise. Cosurica delivered a more complex network infrastructure and additional server infrastructure, again on Hyper-V, enabling Kai and his team to complete the migration in just nine months this time.

"The new ERP solution fits Badgequo much more closely" says Kai. "Cosurica adapted the infrastructure in our warehouse, so it's easier for the end user to access Apprise. The team also worked with us, and the Apprise vendor, to provide a wireless network suitable for our 30,000 square foot warehouse. This was delivered quickly, provides high performance and gives us 100 per cent coverage of the space."

## Creating a vibrant, new working space

By January 2017, Badgequo had run out of office space, but they were keen to remain at their existing location. With 50 staff already based in Silsden, and more recruitment planned in the coming months, Badgequo engaged an office design company to redevelop the buildings into a larger open plan environment, suitable for up to 80 employees. The project commenced in June, lasting 12 weeks, and involved moving staff into eight on-site portacabins.

Cosurica delivered the temporary network infrastructure to ensure business operations were not interrupted during the building works. They also implemented further network infrastructure improvements and assisted with the move back into the main office building once the redevelopment was completed.

Further IT investments for the new office suite included secure wi-fi, a meeting room management system and a variety of multimedia display screen solutions suitable for various purposes, including Microsoft Surface Hubs, all supplied and/or installed by Cosurica, with some equipment funded via a leasing arrangement.

"By choosing to lease some of our IT hardware, such as desktops and laptops, we can place high quality and innovative equipment in the hands of our employees, so they're immediately more productive and better able to help us keep up the momentum on our growth. The Microsoft Surface Hubs were a huge investment for us," says Kai. "Initially, I was a bit uncertain about them, but Cosurica invited us to try one on one of their customer's sites. I was sold on it straight away. No more flipcharts or messy sheets of paper for us! We've already seen how it can improve collaboration and the sharing of ideas and I'm confident that over the next year we'll see a huge return on investment in terms of our productivity."

Cosurica is continuing to work closely with Badgequo, to support their rapid growth. "Having Cosurica is like having our own IT team, but far more flexible," says Kai. "Their extensive knowledge and remote support and infrastructure management services ensure we're fully supported, yet their elasticity and that of Office 365 and Azure, ensures services can be scaled up and down as needed, so costs are easier to manage. This would not be possible with a small internal IT department and, although we could use contractors for project work they wouldn't provide the continuity of service that we have come to expect and rely upon. I see our partnership continuing to thrive over the many busy years ahead."
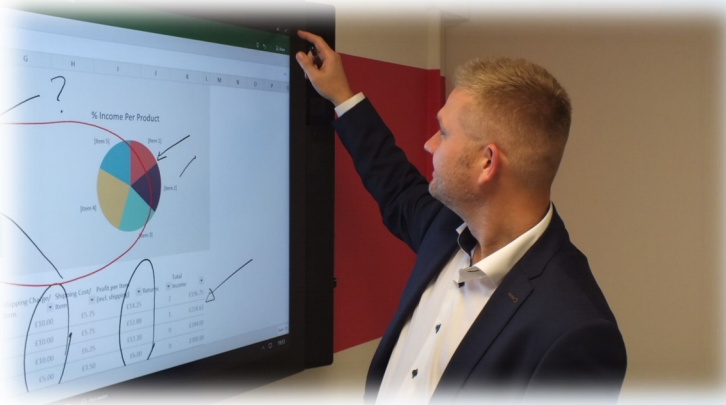
cosurica

Supporting people powering business

To find out how we can help your organisation call us now on 01535 358161

email us at info@cosurica.com   **visit www.cosurica.com**