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we make IT possible

Case Study	How TDM Group supports Arqaam Capital's global growth in the finance industry with expert advice and strategic IT investment

Company profile

Arqaam Capital is a specialist emerging markets investment bank and was formed in London in 2004 with just four people. The firm has proved a fast growing player in the investment banking world and has around 120 employees across offices in Dubai, London, Beirut, Cairo, Tripoli and Johannesburg. TDM Group is a long-standing technology partner of Arqaam Capital, helping to set up and support the original London-based operation with an IT infrastructure of servers, desktops and network connectivity.

Supporting international expansion

When Arqaam Capital subsequently established its headquarters within the Dubai International Financial Centre (DIFC) in the United Arab Emirates, the company once again called on TDM Group to specify, design and implement a resilient IT infrastructure.

TDM Group continues to monitor and manage Arqaam Capital's virtual server infrastructure and wider network, both the virtual environment running on the company's own hardware in the Dubai International Financial Centre, and systems located in TDM Group's data centre suites.

In addition, Arqaam Capital draws on TDM Group's experience and expertise for strategic consultancy. Arqaam Capital IT Director Jesus Polo comments, "In this relationship TDM Group provides a trusted sounding board. I'm very comfortable discussing our issues, plans and projects with them, knowing they'll help us to make the right decision and devise an effective solution. They're able to offer guidance on the technology we need to address new business opportunities."

Refreshing core infrastructure

Through its Professional Services team, TDM Group provides an end-to-end service for strategic IT projects. A current example of TDM Group's contribution is the extensive refresh of the company's network and server infrastructure taking place in Dubai.

How TDM Group supports

arqaam CAPITAL

Easily scalable
Infrastructure that will accommodate the company's growth requirements for the next three to five years

Professional consultancy & expertise
An efficient, tested and proven blueprint for implementing critical IT infrastructure in new sites

Reducing business risk
Bringing proven project management skills to minimise potential impact during business change

Expertise on-demand
A technology partner who can take full ownership of local installation and support

Professional Services   Project Management   Global 24/7 Support   On-site Support

Jesus explains, "Our goal is to have a server and storage infrastructure that can cope with increased performance and storage requirements for the next three to five years. The underlying architecture implemented by TDM Group in 2007 has stood the test of time and supported our roll-out into new territories without any issues. We have no plans for radical change and are undertaking a refresh to ensure the most up-to-date, supported product models are in place."

Outlining the role of TDM Group, Jesus says, "They have handled all the quotes from vendors and suppliers and made recommendations for our final decisions in regard to the refresh, advising on new, robust and often lower cost technologies, and checking that everything is in order and fit for purpose. The refreshed technology will be purchased, shipped, configured and implemented by TDM Group. Any final necessary adjustments will also be made by TDM Group, either on-site or remotely. This has become our standard process for implementation."

A blueprint for growth

Part of Arqaam Capital's emerging market's growth strategy is to expand into sub-Saharan Africa, a move driven by the economic growth prospects in markets such as South Africa, Kenya and Nigeria. The firm completed the first stage of its planned expansion, adding to its operations in Dubai, London, Beirut, Tripoli and Cairo by opening a new regional office with 10 employees in Johannesburg.

Jesus comments, "International expansion is our core focus going forward and our new operations need to be fully integrated into the existing environment, to enable them to operate seamlessly. TDM Group has contributed extensively to this strategy. When they helped us to establish our Beirut office, they created a framework that can be deployed as the basis for quickly bringing new remote offices on stream and connecting them to our Dubai operation. The core solution in Johannesburg is the same set-up as in Beirut, from firewalls to switches to servers. Having a successful technology blueprint enables us to efficiently establish a presence in new countries from a standing start, and takes risk out of the local solution."

As with the company's other branch offices, Johannesburg will be served by the Dubai-based infrastructure through a virtualised solution, accessed via a VPN connection, with only a small infrastructure being required within the branch. Customisation for the local market is, of course, essential, not least to ensure compliance with the prevailing regulatory framework for data retention and encryption. In the case of the South African office, the OMS (order management system) trading system must be housed on a separate server.

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>
> Jesus Polo, IT Director, Arqaam Capital "

A single point of accountability

Once again, the IT components for the Johannesburg solution were handled by TDM Group. As well as physical installation and bespoke configuration, all third-parties are managed by TDM Group, who is accountable for their performance. As with Arqaam Capital's existing locations, SmartSupport provide day-to-day IT support to users in Johannesburg through remote monitoring, diagnosis and resolution. Having one point of accountability and unified IT management allows Arqaam to rely on a proven, professional standard of IT support from a trusted partner.

A newly acquired company in Tripoli, Libya, is about to be also brought on board and connected to Dubai. All the systems currently in place will be replaced by the tried and tested solution developed for Beirut and already rolled out for Arqaam Capital's other offices.

From strength to strength

Reflecting on the relationship with TDM Group, now a long-standing partnership, Jesus sums up, "Growth brings its own challenges and needs careful management. TDM Group has helped us to build a robust, compliant infrastructure that has stood the test of time and given us the ability to go forward with confidence, knowing we have a proven, flexible infrastructure in place."

He adds, "The TDM Group team plays an important part in our success and we have come to value their flexibility in meeting our requirements. They go far beyond simply being an IT supplier to being a trusted technology partner."

Find out more

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