



Case Study

How TDM Group delivers a stable and scalable IT infrastructure that supports Total Media's digital media business

Company profile

Total Media is an independent media agency specialising in providing media planning and buying campaigns. The agency supports the launch and sustained growth of brands with planning and buying space in media, ranging from press and outdoor, through to digital and direct response media.

Total Media opened for business in 1982. Today it employs over 100 people in its London and Solihull offices and bills £60 million a year. It has a broad base of clients operating in sectors ranging from publishing to leisure and tourism, not-for-profit and consumer goods. IT Manager Ged O'Loughlin says, "With high levels of growth and a diverse business, we need our IT infrastructure to be fast, fit for purpose and, above all, stable. It has to be there for us at all times."

Going virtual

Total Media invited TDM Group to propose a new on-premise virtual server infrastructure, including backup and management services. The driver for this project was to use computing resources more efficiently by reducing and consolidating the physical servers located on-site.

Demand for storage and processing resources can increase at short notice in response to client requests; moving to a virtual environment would give the ability to scale up quickly and provision new IT resources easily, rather than incurring the time delays of implementing new hardware.



With continued expansion of the Total Media business, data volumes are also growing exponentially. The IT solution needed to take into account long-term capacity requirements, as well as supporting the continuous drive to improving IT performance and service to the business and its clients.

How TDM Group supports



Easily scalable

A flexible service to meet the requirements of the growing, diverse business

Expert IT support on-demand

The skills and experience to build a cost-effective, virtualised IT infrastructure

Moving from re-active to pro-active IT support

Outsourcing infrastructure management to TDM Group releases time for strategic projects

Professional advice

A consultative approach to identifying technologies that add further value to the business



A consultative approach

TDM Group was chosen from a shortlist of four potential technology partners to provide the virtual environment. Ged explains why the decision went in TDM Group's favour, "From the start, we were impressed by TDM Group's consultative approach. They are extremely knowledgeable and were very focused on proposing the right solution for our business, rather than giving us the hard sell. At a personal level too, we felt that they gelled with our business and would be easy to work with." He adds, "Our initial impressions have proved well founded and we've had excellent service ever since."

In addition to increasing agility, the virtual environment has brought the benefits of lowering costs and simplifying management. Furthermore, space is always a premium at the company's Kensington High Street offices, and virtualisation has streamlined the physical environment, with consolidation of three physical servers onto one virtual host.

As part of this partnership, TDM Group has also taken on the day-to-day operation of the virtual environment, freeing Total Media's technical team for more strategic initiatives. TDM Group handles the monitoring and management of the company's critical servers, as well as licensing and other important but time-consuming tasks. The second phase of the project is now under way, with the addition of a third VMware ESX host to expand the virtual environment. Total Media is looking to bring more servers currently hosted with third-parties in-house onto the managed virtual platform.

“ It's a relief having TDM Group working away in the background. They take on many of the day-to-day headaches and we have the confidence of knowing that the environment on which we rely is in safe hands. We can take it for granted that everything will work, and are able to focus on our business and clients.

Ged O'Loughlin , IT Manager, Total Media

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Organic development

Over time, the relationship between media agency and IT partner has become even closer. TDM Group helps Total Media to gain maximum return on its IT investment, working within budget constraints and adopting a step-by-step approach to developing the IT infrastructure. This relationship ensures Total Media operates a lean and effective IT infrastructure that meets the current requirements of the business, without sacrificing agility or future scalability. Ged comments, "It's about having regular conversations about where we want to be long-term and what we want to achieve."

One future project under consideration is to give Total Media employees greater freedom to work from home by providing access to virtual desktops. Not only will this enable Total Media to offer flexible working, as a forward-thinking employer, it will bring the advantage of easing the pressure on limited office space as the team continues to expand.

Business resilience will also improve. As a central London agency with a commuting workforce, Total Media will be able to maintain business as usual if employees can work remotely in the event of bad weather or transport problems. Ged notes, "TDM Group's knowledge of best practice is very helpful in new initiatives such as this, as they know what's worked well in other businesses."

Storing big data

Storage is another challenge facing the business. Demand for disk space continues to grow in line with data growth across all departments. The challenge is to implement a data storage and retention strategy that balances accessibility with affordability. Ged comments, "Once again, we'll be relying on TDM Group's expertise to implement a hierarchy of storage that matches cost to store with the value of the data to the business and the frequency with which it is accessed. They have been able to suggest ways of bringing the cost of near-line storage, holding a week's worth of data, within our budget."

A trusted sounding board

Throughout current and planned projects, Total Media can rely on TDM Group's knowledge of the changing technology landscape. Ged says, "I really don't have the time to go out and constantly research the market. In TDM Group, we have experts who can keep an eye on what's out there to help our business. They are alert to the innovations that will further improve the infrastructure underlying our business."

Ged sums it up, "There are excellent people at TDM Group and they are a great resource to have on your side."

Find out more

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