

Advance Group is one of the UK's leading providers in freight forwarding and packing, specialising in providing a custom and personalised service to each of their customers. Each of their 23 staff ensures that no job is too big or complex to arrive safely and swiftly at its destination.

Advances owners were becoming increasingly worried about their email system. As any person that's involved in business knows that email is now as essential as a telephone, and is a vital communications channel. Businesses can lose hundreds if not thousands of pounds for every minute their email is down in lost business, and Advance is no different.

The current email setup was fine for what Advance wanted while it was working however cracks showed in the regularity of it going down and the slow response to problems. Emails were stored off site on a single server managed by an email provider without any Service Level Agreement (SLA). With the lack of redundancy problems seemed to arise fairly regularly and staff at the company responsible did not respond fast enough to problems with a system which is essential to fix quickly.

Advances directors asked HJB to look into a more reliable solution that incorporated redundancy with SLA's to give some reassurance. HJB worked closely with Advance to find a solution that met all their needs and would put their minds at ease.

Although Advance did have a server capable of running Microsoft Exchange Email system, this did not ease the concerns that the directors had about better redundancy. With this HJB set about finding the best cloud based solution to suit Advance's needs within the best price range.

The staff and directors were very comfortable with Microsoft Outlook and wanted to continue using it

to save on any training costs. Several packages were considered that integrated in some way with Outlook and provided much redundancy and very highly promised SLAs.

HJB signed up to trials of a couple of the best packages to carry out tests at their offices to see for themselves which one would best suit what Advance's needs. After learning all the features that were most important to Advance HJB ensured that each package met their requirements and worked well with the Outlook features staff used.

After testing was complete there was one stand out choice that gave full functionality to Outlook allowing Advance to use all their features, promised strong reliability and SLAs and did not come with a price tag that included many features that would be no use to Advance's team.

HJB made their recommendations to Advance's directors explaining the results of their tests and were given the green light. HJB then carried out all the preparation in its own office before the install and carried out the entire migration over a weekend to ensure minimal disruption to staff. HJB ensured to be in Advance's office first thing Monday morning to ensure that there were no problems and that all staff were happy their email and contacts had moved over correctly.

Advance now have a reliable email platform that should allow them to keep this vital communications channel open.

"I believe I speak for the whole company in saying that we would recommend him to any small or medium business"

Steve Hodson
Director, Advance Group