

GRAFTON GROUP CASE STUDY

Leading international building materials distributor and DIY retailer Grafton Group enlists Six Degrees for hardware refresh.

Grafton Group plc is a leading international business operating in the distribution, retailing and manufacturing sectors of the building materials industry.

The Challenge

As an international brand with a large operating footprint, Grafton Group must ensure resilient connectivity to its operating locations. Tim Connop, Head of Group Technical Services, Grafton Group, says: "Grafton Group comprises 12 businesses based in the UK, the Republic of Ireland, the Netherlands, Finland and most recently Spain. Of those 12 businesses, seven use a shared network. For these seven businesses we provide a secure network that delivers protected browsing, internal and external communications, a DMZ, and general communications between systems. The network also supports line of business apps, Office 365, and so on.

"Importantly, the network also needs to separate the seven businesses so that an issue with one business doesn't bring down the other six through lateral spread."

Grafton Group has been working with Six Degrees for some time, as Tim explains: "We first started working with Six Degrees in 2016 following a tender, to migrate internet services away from the incumbent."

Tim approached Six Degrees as Grafton Group's firewall licences were due to expire. Although this could have been a straightforward licence renewal, Tim explains how Six Degrees proposed an alternative solution: "The support and maintenance for the firewall devices we'd bought through Six Degrees was coming to an end. We approached our Account Manager about extending the licences, and they came back to us with a compelling alternative proposition to replace the hardware."

The Solution

Rather than simply renewing its firewall licences, Six Degrees proposed a hardware refresh that would enhance and future-proof Grafton Group's network— at no extra cost.

Benefits at a Glance



Enhanced network protection.

With the additional security functionality available through its new firewall hardware, Grafton Group has enhanced its network protection.



Future-proofed hardware and licencing.

New firewall hardware and licencing is future-proofed and should be fit for purpose for years to come.



Seamless transition to BAU.

A closely managed transition from project to BAU meant that Grafton Group experienced no degradation in service or support.



Cost efficiencies realised through vendor relationship.

By working closely with the vendor, Grafton Group and Six Degrees realised cost efficiencies that made the entire project cost equivalent to a straightforward licence renewal.

Six Degrees leveraged its relationship with the firewall vendor to ensure they were very involved in making the solution just right for Grafton Group, and Tim had a close working relationship directly with the vendor's Account Manager. Tim explains: "The new hardware was better, smaller, faster, more capable equipment, and provided additional licence features. The new hardware and the professional services time to carry out the migration came to the same cost as renewing the licences, so it really was a no brainer."

Tim explains that working with Six Degrees on the project was a natural choice for Grafton Group: "Six Degrees knows and understands our environment and our needs. It was a really time sensitive piece of work, and the deadline was immovable because the licences were due to expire. That put a little bit of pressure on us to pick someone that we had confidence in. Working with Six Degrees was the obvious choice, and we trusted them to carry out the project to deadline and to a high standard."

Tim's experience of the project and handover was excellent: "Our Project Manager was superb, as was the engineering. There was a really high level of control and process around the project, and communication was excellent, which ensured that we hit deadlines and any minor issues were resolved quickly."

"Sometimes you run a project and the project team are great, but then it goes into BAU support and you get a problem and the world just ends. One of the good things about this project was the level of due diligence in transitioning to away from the project and to BAU support made the whole thing seamless."

The Outcome

Grafton Group has future-proofed its network by investing in the latest hardware and licencing.

Tim says: "We have a really good relationship with Six Degrees. We have a really competent Account Management team supporting us, and we also have great oversight from the Chief Operating Officer. Six Degrees is proactive in suggesting things to us, which I value – it's a sign of the sort of relationship you get when you have been together for a number of years."

Our Solutions



Cyber Services

Enhance your cyber security and safeguard your organisation with our cyber security strategy and advisory, consultancy, and managed services.



Hybrid Cloud

Host all of your workloads in the most appropriate location while experiencing the simplicity of one cloud from Six Degrees.



Connected Workspace

Access the smarter, faster technology needed to make the most of your hybrid working future.

About Six Degrees

Six Degrees is a leading secure, integrated cloud services provider. We protect UK organisations and help them thrive in the cloud by giving them secure platforms to innovate and grow.

We put our exceptional people in a position to succeed, and along with our robust capabilities and strategic vendor partnerships this enables us to support customers on their digital transformation journeys regardless of their maturity, with the goal of enabling them to operate effectively and securely in the cloud.

Our intelligence-led security services provide the most appropriate detection and response capabilities versus evolving cyber threats, ongoing assurance, and rapid response, allowing us to mitigate attacks quickly.

We've aligned all our services to allow customers to navigate the complexities they face today – enabling them to solve their digital transformation challenges and succeed as businesses.

Our vision is to be the UK's number one provider of secure, integrated cloud services.



Establish the stable infrastructure foundations you need to underpin your business' digital transformation. Speak to an expert: hub.6dg.co.uk/schedule-call-core