# Haines Watts Greater London Case Study

## Improving business efficiency with technology

## About Haines Watts Greater London

Efficiency is the keyword for accountancy firm Haines Watts' Operations Manager, Mike Keanly. The firm's Greater London practice is made up of 9 offices spread across the South-East from Hornchurch, Essex to Esher, Surrey, and including offices in central London. The group has grown by acquisition and now has over 270 staff who use the firm's IT system on a daily basis.

## Challenges

The acquisition of different accountants firms with disparate IT platforms and working processes has been a challenge for the Haines Watts group. One of the objectives of integrating new firms into the fast-growing group has been to create a consistent IT platform, improve working practices and achieve better efficiency, while at the same time adopting more stringent data security policies. Working with Orca as the firm's IT partner has been a key element of the process improvement strategy.

> Working with Orca gives us a stable basis for us to drive greater efficiencies, enabling us to work smarter and provide better services for our clients.
>
> **Mike Keanly**
> **Haines Watts Greater London**
> **Regional Operations Manager**

## Our solution

On advice from Orca, Haines Watts has adopted a cloud-based hosted desktop IT strategy to provide a standardised system that can be applied across all firms within the Greater London group. Centralisation is another key focus, to enable the firm to apply the same standards across the practice. Haines Watts' aim is to create a centralised service portfolio for clients – so that for example, audit services are consistent across the group and auditors can easily move to different sites as and when they are required. With a variety of firms spread across the group, it is also important to create consistent back office processes such as HR and payroll.

The firm uses standard office and accounting systems such as IRIS, Sage, MyWorkPapers, CCH and MS Office 365. Apart from IRIS, which is filed on dedicated local servers, the main applications are cloud-based, hosted in Orca's secure data centre. All IT users access the system via Orca's hosted desktop system, allowing them to work remotely, wherever they are needed. According to Mike Keanly, the hosted desktop platform provides much more flexibility, freeing the fee earners from being tied to a specific office. Adding new users to the system is an integral part of the hosted desktop system, so computing capacity is not an issue for the firm and Mike Keanly doesn't have to think about buying additional licences.

## Security improvements

When looking after sensitive client data, security is always a concern for an accountancy firm, but with the adoption of the hosted desktop, Haines Watts no longer has any worries. No data is kept locally on PCs, laptops and personal devices. Data is stored offsite in Orca's highly secure ISO 27001 compliant data centre, with backups automated so that if a device is lost or fails, the data is safely stored and backed up offsite. Automated backup also frees up administrative time. Storage of data on the hosted platform means that USB storage devices are now prohibited – contributing to better security processes.

> Orca's service is consistently outstanding. They take care of our technology platform so we don't have to worry about the IT systems. This is particularly important when we acquire a new firm, as Orca makes the integration much easier. Whenever we have done a new acquisition, we don't have to be concerned about any IT challenges, as Orca takes care of all the technical issues and enables us to streamline all of our IT platforms so that we can achieve consistency throughout the practice.

**Mike Keanly**
**Haines Watts Greater London**
**Regional Operations Manager**