Case Study

Secure Data at all Times

«For us as a design agency, our data represent our most important asset. Therefore, it is important to store the data not only locally, but also in the cloud. With Storage Made Easy and Microsoft Azure, we have been able to ensure this in a comfortable and safe way.»

Raphael Geisreiter, Managing Director of gbranded

G·BRANDED

Country
Germany

Industry
Public Relations
and Marketing

Employees
14

Workstations
1–49

Company
The German design agency gbranded is a manufacturer of customized watches, accessories and textiles for the premium segment. Its customers include companies of the industrial sector as well as of the fashion and entertainment industry. gbranded currently has fourteen full-time and several freelance employees.

Initial Situation
For a long time, gbranded provided its corporate documents via a local Windows Server. For remote access and additional data backup, gbranded used online storages. The agency needed a scalable solution in order to improve data control.

Software & Systems
• Microsoft Azure

Solution
gbranded decided to implement the Microsoft Azure cloud service in combination with the enterprise file sharing platform of Storage Made Easy. The decisive factors were the high level of security, maximum user convenience and the efficient use of corporate data.

Improvements
The combined use of Microsoft Azure and Storage Made Easy enabled gbranded to significantly increase data protection and data security. At the same time, employees, customers and partners benefit from additional comfort and a more efficient handling of data.

Watches and accessories have been the most popular corporate gifts since decades, even though in most cases they are more or less of poor quality. Employees of the German design agency gbranded know that there can also be other ways. The company produces customized watches, accessories and textiles for the premium segment. The majority of the produced pieces are marketed by the respective trademark owners, such as companies of the industrial sector or the fashion industry, by selling them via different channels. "We offer a complete range of services – from the initial idea, planning, design & development, quality assurance to production and logistics," emphasizes gbranded managing director Geisreiter. The company currently has fourteen full-time employees, including a diverse number of freelancers and project teams located in Asia, Turkey and Europe.

Online Storage as a Security Risk

For a long time, the gbranded employees have accessed relevant documents and information via a local Windows Server. For remote access during traveling or from the home office, the employees have used online storage solutions. However, there have been limitations as most systems were primarily designed for the B2C channel. But companies have higher requirements, for example to securely exchange data with customers and partners. "From our point of view, growth-oriented companies should decide to use future-proof and scalable solutions. That is the only way to operate globally with a sophisticated, multiple secured infrastructure in an effective way," explains Geisreiter. Finally, the data remain unencrypted at most online services, being protected by a simple password. For this reason, gbranded has looked for a better solution which is customized to the company's needs without compromising on comfort features, such as automatic synchronization.

Secure Data, Efficient Processes

During his researches Geisreiter came across the cloud offer "Storage Made Easy". This cloud solution of the British provider Vehera acts as a middleware between local servers and end devices on one side and online storage services, e. g. provided by Microsoft, on the other side. With this tool, companies can extend the standard functionality of the cloud in several ways:
• Both transfer and storage of data in an encrypted way
• Combining several cloud storages as a virtual drive
• Protocols, indices and version tracking of stored data in accordance with current compliance requirements
• Increased efficiency with user-friendly functions, such as the integrated full text search

Other benefits include collaboration features, roles and access rights for individual users. Geisreiter explains why he chose this product in spring 2015: "In addition to data security, it was crucial to us that we still have the freedom to decide which online storage to use."

Microsoft

A New Security Concept Within One Week

When implementing the new system a short time later, gbranded has also changed its IT infrastructure. Instead of using online storage services they chose Microsoft Azure which was recommended by Storage Made Easy. "Being a flawless B2B service, Azure is simply the best option in terms of data protection. Due to the fact that the data is stored in Europe, the strict European regulations apply. Other features include global availability, scalability and robustness provided by a renowned software company," explains Jim Liddle, founder and CEO of the Storage Made Easy solution.

During the implementation of the system, gbranded replaced its existing infrastructure with the cloud operating system which offers the "Microsoft Azure Blob" storage service. In order to enable continuous access to a local storage, the project team additionally integrated a Network Area Storage (NAS) into the synchronization process by using the "Microsoft Azure Storage App". Storage Made Easy also provides corresponding cloud tools which allow to integrate notebooks, smart phones or tablets into the concept. There is also an add-on available for Microsoft Office. System migration, including data migration, was completed just within one week.

On the Safe Side

Geisreiter is fully satisfied with the new infrastructure: "For us as a design agency, our data represent our most important asset. Therefore, it is important to store the data not only locally, but also in our system

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of choice. With Storage Made Easy and Microsoft Azure, we have been able to introduce a process which simultaneously fulfills each of our requirements." The client-side encryption of data ensures that the data is safe even if a user account is in danger of being attacked by hackers. Geisreiter: "For us, this is the best solution: Maximum data protection by redundant data storage without sacrificing comfort." Another plus for him is that gbranded remains flexible in the future when it comes to choosing online storages and deciding where to store the data.

**For more customer references, visit:
www.microsoft.de/kundenreferenzen**

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