

Data#3

McGrath

McGrath Estate Agents Gains Appreciation for New Managed Service

A Data#3 Customer Story



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ABOUT MCGRATH

The business began in 1988 in a small office in Paddington, Sydney, where John McGrath developed a real estate philosophy based on integrity and transparency, and a process to deliver outstanding results for clients.



OBJECTIVE

Source a strategic partner with the managed services capability to support the McGrath brand and maintain its competitive advantage through the provision of 24x7 ICT services including user-based support and infrastructure and applications management.



FUN FACT

56% of business leaders engage with service providers for long-term development and maintenance.

Gartner (2019), Managed Services are Dead, Long Live Managed Services. [Online] <https://blogs.gartner.com/rene-buest/2019/03/29/managed-services-dead-long-live-managed-services/>



COMMENTS

“They were very accommodating to our needs, which made the transition process very smooth. Data#3 has demonstrated precisely the process maturity I was looking for, and they have made my job a lot easier.”

Brett Kelly, ICT Operations Manager, McGrath.



APPROACH

Design an integrated managed service to deliver the technical capabilities, coverage and service management functions to meet McGrath's requirements and defined budget.



BENEFITS

- 24x7 Service Desk
- Onsite Desktop Support
- 24x7 Server Management Monitoring and Support
- Backup Management
- Infrastructure Applications Support
- Improved user satisfaction
- Enhanced level of service responsiveness from the service desk
- Ongoing requirements and services review



TECHNOLOGY

- Infrastructure Application Support
- 24 x 7 Service Desk
- Onsite Desktop Support
- 24 x 7 Server Management and Support
- Backup Management



The Background

The business began in 1988 in a small office in Paddington, Sydney, where John McGrath developed a real estate philosophy based on integrity and transparency, and a process to deliver outstanding results for clients.

Since then, McGrath Estate Agents (“McGrath”) has grown to be one of Australia’s most successful residential real estate groups. The McGrath network currently has 93 offices throughout the East Coast of Australia. It has an established market presence in NSW, QLD and the ACT, and has now expanded into Victoria.

An integrated real estate services business, McGrath operates five business units providing residential property sales, property management, mortgage broking, auction services and career training.

The Challenge

McGrath’s contract with its existing managed service provider was due to expire imminently, and they took the opportunity to go to the market to seek alternate options. Brett Kelly, ICT Operations Manager for McGrath, had a number of specific business requirements that needed to be fulfilled.

The scope for a potential new managed service included everything from service desk to server support, through to backup and recovery management. Key to the success was the ability to leverage the chosen provider’s level 1 to 3 support capabilities. Anything bespoke or above level 3 support would be performed in-house – in particular, application development and support.

Of vital importance to Brett was the skillset of the successful provider. *“I was looking for a partner with strong ITIL skills, one that had the capability to manage high volumes, with good structure and good references,”* he said.

In addition to seeking a provider with credibility and process maturity, Brett anticipated that the provider would be able to strike a suitable balance between risk and service performance in being able to meet the tight timeline for transitioning to the new service.

IT Outcome

Data#3 used its own service design methodology to collaborate with McGrath in the development of an integrated Managed Service. The new service delivered to the technical capabilities, support hours required, including governing processes, and SLA requirements, within McGrath’s budget.

The approach used a tool, which mapped McGrath’s service requirements against their IT landscape. The output was then used as the basis for further refining which functions would be performed by Data#3, and which would be retained by McGrath. This provided McGrath with the visibility of service accountability across its vendors, and served as a roadmap for the future.

McGrath leveraged Data#3’s ITIL-aligned processes and integrated ServiceNow platform to receive consistent and controlled IT services. Brett stated that *“McGrath now has more mature processes than previously. Data#3 also helped us develop a better understanding of what we wanted and needed.”*

When IT services are implemented using ITIL processes, the results tend to be dependable and predictable. As a result, there are no “surprises” that consume IT and management time and attention. This leads to an environment where user experience is greatly improved, and IT can turn its priorities to activities that help the business grow.

Data#3 now provides managed services for all McGrath offices and users consisting of the following services:

- 24 x 7 Service Desk
- Onsite Desktop Support
- 24 x 7 Server Management
- Monitoring and Support
- Backup Management
- Infrastructure Applications Support

To meet McGrath’s requirements and to demonstrate flexibility when transitioning to the new services, Data#3 devised a phased approach, which would ensure core services were delivered ahead of the holiday shutdown period. The remaining non-business critical services were agreed to be implemented at a later date.

Business Outcome

Data#3 has delivered on Brett's challenge to bring a high degree of structure and process to McGrath's operations environment. The Data#3 team ensured the continuity of business as usual during the transition for both staff and customers.

Now with 24 x 7 user support and proactive infrastructure management in place, user satisfaction has improved and the reputation of IT within McGrath is stronger.

From the outset, Data#3 promised to work in partnership with McGrath to deliver business transformation— and this has already been achieved, and more. A practical but non-technical benefit to the efficiencies created as part of the journey, is that McGrath has enjoyed cost reductions within the contract. The early delivery also meant that a partnership built on trust was established, enabling the right environment to drive future conversations and better outcomes.

McGrath now has a contract with Data#3 that establishes a foundation for continued and further success. There is a continuous cycle of review to ensure that service management continues to deliver to the evolving requirements of the business.

Conclusion

From the beginning, McGrath set out to source a partner with the capability to provide user support and infrastructure management services. The challenge for Data#3 to be that partner was to demonstrate to McGrath that they could bring increased rigor, tools and process to the very critical task of supporting the core McGrath infrastructure and its users. That was demonstrated through the transition to Data#3 and is substantiated by improved user satisfaction.

Brett was asked whether he has observed increased user satisfaction as a result of the Data#3 engagement. *"We haven't formally measured that yet, but my strong gut feel is that user satisfaction has definitely ticked upwards."*

Meanwhile, the two parties are carrying out a continual service improvement process for further enhancement of the Data#3 Managed Service.

With respect to the overall experience with Data#3, Brett commented, *"They were very accommodating to our needs, which made the transition process very smooth. Data#3 has demonstrated precisely the process maturity I was looking for, and they have made my job a lot easier."*

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