

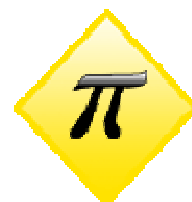
Case Study

Securing a Cool \$2.5 Million with Virtual.Offis



Virtual.Offis
INSTANT INFRASTRUCTURE

Client: Mobbixpress International
Industry: Mobile Micro Payment Facilitator
Location: Online
Revenue: \$2.5 Million





Overview

As a start-up business, speed to market and your ability to keep overheads low are critical. When the business you are launching is an e-commerce, high volume transaction based model, of equal importance is the security of your operation, which is why Sydney-based Mobiexpress International chose to outsource network and infrastructure security to Managed Service Provider, Virtual.Offis.

Less than two years following launch, Mobiexpress Group has confidently transacted over \$2.5m and identifies the relationship with Virtual.Offis playing a pivotal role in the early success of the business.

Background

Mobiexpress founder, Mr. Jace Lai is an industry vet of over 35 years who has specialised in infrastructure and logistics implementation, including spending six years in programming for Cabcharge and project management in Malaysia for the Hong Leong Group.

During this time, Jace has learned the challenge of managing any mobile field force is vastly compounded when economic transactions are part of the equation. It was his experience working with a huge mobile field force with Hong Leong, and his awareness of systems limitations and ICT overruns, when working for Cabcharge, that gave Jace the idea for an innovative new mobile solution.

Jace spoke with a number of banks and financial institutions regarding backing but most struggled to get their heads around the technology. He then undertook to set up a parallel business in a sheer vertical market in order to prove the model, choosing the highly competitive taxi / limousine services niche to demonstrate his technology and establishing Cabbixpress.

The Technology

Mobiexpress technology, as used by Cabbixpress customers, uses mobile Internet Protocol and allows common digital products like a PDA phone to act as a mobile mini cash register. The system accepts cash and credit card payments, simply using key entry or a swipe if a mobile magnetic reader and printer unit is purchased.

The service is economical to run and also has a merchant or user log in facility, where customers can pull down all their transactions and securely import this information into their accounting application.

Ideal for small business operators like cab drivers, the Mobiexpress platform does not necessitate expensive equipment or even more expensive private infrastructure to operate. At the same time, Mobiexpress can innovate new services for customers and roll them out to market very quickly, as Jace Lai explains:

“Since a PDA phone is also a pocket computer with data communication capability, many new on-line applications or services can be easily integrated into Mobiexpress’ back office system making the mobile device real time, live, versatile, polymetrically secured, and geographically independent. Our distinct advantage over the traditional EFTPOS terminals is the capability to develop and launch new services quickly compared to assembly language coded EFTPOS terminals.”

Speed to market is of the essence for a start up and as Jace points out, it takes an average of 12 months for new services to be deployed on standard EFTPOS machines, where his service can roll out upgrades, updates and innovative new offerings within a month.

The Challenge

To be able to focus on driving and growing the business, Jace decided to outsource the entire back-end network administration of his business, including all the technical management of systems and security. This allowed for a leaner, more efficient and secure business.

As an SME company, it was vital to ensure that the communication and system infrastructure services could be offered at a rate which would compete effectively with large corporations and would be trusted to manage millions of dollars of transactions. Affordable, heavy weight hosting, security and continuous system availability was therefore vital in allowing them to compete and positioning them as a competitive player in the market place.

The last challenge remained to find a suitable provider to host the e-Commerce environment and manage the operation of the systems driving it. Moreover, Jace needed a provider that would allow him to fully plan, test and cut over his service within the host environment without attracting onerous charges ahead of the business launch date.

Tapping into his well developed IT network, Jace began investigating his options and Managed Service Provider (MSP), Virtual.Offis came back as a highly rated recommendation from several sources.

The Decision

As an industry veteran with years of experience, Jace is no slouch when it comes to understanding the requirements of service providers, so he put a number of companies through their paces.

According to Jace, he settled on working with Virtual.Offis because of their professionalism, knowledge, easy working relationship, and a model that did not rake his business with onerous charges.

The MSP stood out from the crowd by offering a highly personalised approach to servicing the Mobbixpress business model. Virtual.Offis demonstrated a superior level of operations management capacity and proved the ability to deliver on key service levels in the contract before any payment for services commenced.

Not only was Virtual.Offis able to provide a competitive rate for fully managed services, Mobbixpress was given an immensely valuable cost free window to setup and test the applications prior to launch.

The Solution - Fully Managed Services

For Mobbixpress, security was the main priority as they handle customers' financial information. Most of the gateway and infrastructure transactions are securely managed and monitored by Virtual.Offis, with two-way encryption and decryption. They have a custom firewall, extensive virus scanning, vulnerability scanning, OS management and lockdown and security alerts.

Virtual.Offis now provides Mobbixpress with all the system, network and infrastructure security requirements for their payment gateway, with 24-hour managed operations, security and a dedicated server hardware to run software and business applications.

The cutover was smooth and efficient, with Virtual.Offis taking over systems, network and infrastructure management in just two weeks.

The Outcomes and Benefits – The Customer Speaks

The Mobbixpress service has been running under the Cabbiexpress business banner for just under two years. The fledging business has over 100 customers and has achieved over \$2.5m in transactions with every aspect of the business being kept fully secure by Virtual.Offis.

Jace attributes much of the confidence, with which he has grown his business, to his relationship with Virtual.Offis, saying: “Virtual.Offis had an honest and positive attitude, which I really value in business. They offered great advice and I was really confident that they knew their stuff and could offer the security and the 24/7 service that we needed.”

In the future, the Mobbixpress solution will work for a range of vertical sectors that is ideal for tradesmen, field staff, multi level and network marketing, or for independent professionals that sell services or products outside the traditional parameters of a shopfront or an office.

Jace anticipates as his business develops, his transaction base builds and the scale of the economic transfers occurring over the Mobbixpress platform grows, he will continue to working closely with Virtual.Offis to secure and protect the interests of his customers.

With such a flexible platform and the ability to innovate new service offerings so rapidly, Jace believes that he will also take advantage of the development space available to him through his relationship with Virtual.Offis, as it is one of the few that provides client-side access to hosted applications still in development.

About Mobbixpress

Mobbixpress is a “**Mobile Micro Payment and EFTPOS Transaction Aggregator**” making real-time payment, settlement and banking transactions easy and simple for travelling tradesmen (the “tradies”), mobile merchants (the “mobbies”) and taxi/limousine drivers (the “cabbies”).

Its “**Mobile EFTPOS Transactions Facilitator**” system uses a standard PDA phone as an alternative wireless EFTPOS device (an enabler) with added capabilities viz: internet browsing, SMS, emails, contacts, calendar, jobs finder, navigation, tracking and hotspots.

For more information about Mobbixpress International, visit www.mobbixpress.com