



Databarracks' case study

# YACHT HAVENS USE INFRASTRUCTURE AS A SERVICE TO DELIVER LUXURY EXPERIENCE

About Yacht Havens

Established over 40 years ago, Yacht Havens is one of the UK's leading marina operators. Headquartered in Lymington and overlooking the Solent, Yacht Havens leases space to both residents and approximately 100 tenanted local businesses.

Today, it employs 120 staff from ten prime locations across some of the most desirable stretches of coastline in the UK and overseas.

## The Challenge

Yacht Havens is a business built on locality. Whilst co-existing under the Yacht Havens brand, every marina is a unique destination which hosts site-specific businesses, services, attractions and activities.

Rupert Wagstaff, Manager of Yacht Havens, describes his vision to provide a compelling service for his customers:

“We strive to provide more than just berthing facilities – we want to create destination marinas that people enjoy spending time in. The more services and local information we can give our customers, the better their stay.”

As a result, high-availability of the technology Yacht Havens uses is a necessity. “We manage all the movements of the boats and visitors 24/7/365. On a busy night we can have 100 boats coming in to the marina so business continuity and uptime is very important for us.”

Achieving this vision depends on maintaining the idiosyncrasies of satellite locations whilst bringing them into the fold of centralised management. Yacht Havens’ legacy IT systems, though a far-cry from the paper-based processes of the 1970s, were still proving timeconsuming to integrate with one another:

“We have 10 sites all around the country, so maintaining, for instance, the active directory across all of those sites wasn’t easy. We also had a lot of issues managing local servers - our IT guys would spend their lives dashing around the country.”

Maintaining a unified, single version of the truth across disparate management systems at 10 locations was time consuming, inefficient and fundamentally unable to scale with Yacht Havens’ diversifying real-estate portfolio.

Moving away from on-site infrastructure was a necessity in order to increase reliability, reduce capital expenditure and improve business continuity. However, alongside these core benefits, Yacht Havens identified an opportunity to use cloud-based infrastructure in order to provide their customers with a better, more joined-up service

**“Before Databarracks, all of our data was held at each of the individual sites. This meant a single action could produce 10 different processes at 10 different sites.”**



## The Relationship

After making the decision to explore cloud infrastructure providers, IT Manager Ben Fox elected to build on his existing relationship with Databarracks, who had been supplying Yacht Havens' backup services for 10 years.

"I've always said the true test of a service provider is how they're able to respond when something goes wrong. I've always found Databarracks to be extremely helpful in such circumstances."

## The Solution

Yacht Havens elected to procure an Infrastructure as a Service platform from Databarracks and to host a single, unified environment across all of its physical locations.

The objective was to consolidate Yacht Havens' historically disparate systems and data sets, enabling processes to become centralised and less complex to manage.

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One of the early challenges involved in migrating Yacht Havens' on-site infrastructure to Databarracks' cloud environment was overcoming the inconsistencies in physical hardware between its older and newer locations.

“Databarracks proved very knowledgeable during the migration process, for both ad-hoc queries and more complex questions. Everything from optimising our environment with the correct disk types, sizes and speeds to configuring entire servers for us.”

The migration was also an opportunity to innovate the company's desktop estate by adopting a thin-client model:

“We don't have to have large PCs, which cost hundreds of pounds each. Instead we're able to use things like the Raspberry Pi which only cost around £20 each, because all of this central processing is done on Databarracks' cloud. It's helped us substantially lower our costs and increase the resilience of all of our businesses”

## The Benefits

“IaaS has transformed the way that we work as a business. Firstly, the resilience and security that we now have - because we know our data is somewhere safe is hugely reassuring. The high availability of data, to both employees and customers is hard to overvalue.

“Everything's now in a single repository, so everyone knows they're looking at the latest and most accurate information - in terms of customer leases, timetables, rent databases and more. It's drastically reduced incorrect and duplicate data. Where previously we'd have to send round a memo and rely on everyone self-manage and change their own documents, now it's automated.

“Cloud infrastructure has also opened up new channels of communication with our customers, which is great for engagement. By connecting our CRM systems and databases with each other, we can establish much more informed and meaningful dialogue with them via things like newsletters and mailshots.

“It's also enabled us both to support home working and to reduce travel because we can see data at all of our other sites from our central offices.

“Now we can manage everything centrally from our head office in Lymington, and if we ever need help, we know the support is there. It's reassuring that there's always someone at the other end of the phone, day or night.”