

Conran Design Group Ltd

Overview

Conran Design Group Limited is one of the UK's top ten design companies. It's a leader in environmental design for the retail food and non-food sector and in the corporate arena with graphic design. Conran specialises in design for corporates, new media, interiors and exhibitions. Conran Design Group work on a global basis with international companies that include MFI Furniture Centres Ltd, Shell International, Sainsbury's, Citroën, Orange and BT.

Working together

We spoke to Reginald Thompson, Conran's IT Manager, at their attractive offices in EC1. Reginald and his assistant work together with Supportplan to ensure that the equipment for the fifty Mac-users runs smoothly. "I chose Supportplan six years ago as they seemed very professional." He went on to explain why it's imperative to have Supportplan's reliable support, "As is the nature of any design studio, we have freelancers coming in and out during the course of projects. We need fast, efficient machines along with peripherals, like scanners and colour printers and Supportplan has provided cost-effective solutions."

Conran Design uses Supportplan's Pay As You Go system. Units can be bought in advance and then used as and when required. Reginald said, "We buy a certain amount of units every month which works well for us. We also have a good amount of kit on a fixed maintenance schedule. This means that if equipment breaks down we get loan machines and some parts are replaced for free. All the critical equipment like the servers, scanners, printers and laptops are covered."

Supportplan Provides Solutions

The first major job for Supportplan was the delicate task of moving Conran from smaller offices to the current spacious premises. Reginald recalled, "Supportplan provided invaluable help and sound advice from day one when preparing for the move. They organised the whole project." He wasn't present for the move, as he felt confident enough to leave it to the engineers. "They took out the entire infrastructure and devised one that would work for our studio and all of its idiosyncrasies," he continued, "It was done in a weekend so that everything was up and running on Monday morning." The engineers also provided solutions for remote access, desktop faxing, email systems and email access. Additionally, a thorough System Audit focused on implementing adequate application software, a well-needed font management system, virus protection and back-up systems. Reginald confirmed, "All unforeseen problems were handled smoothly and calmly with the expertise of the engineers." He stated, "Supportplan sold me solutions and not technology."

Recently Supportplan reviewed Conran's infrastructure concentrating on the hubs and switches and the amount of bandwidth. This amounted to a big upgrade on the network and Reggie was pleased with the result, "It made everything run faster beefing up the overall performance of the network and the server. They also added more storage space to the server – more backup capacity – that was done over a weekend. We tend to do a big project every year with Supportplan."

Supportplan engineers tackled another key project for Conran when they installed a network box. Reggie explained,

“The whole procedure took around three weeks and that included getting the right equipment ordered and installed plus all the testing and training of the staff. I was very happy with that!”

As our interview came to a close, Reginald summed up his view of Supportplan, "I've always liked the fact that Supportplan use and rigorously test everything they sell. This means they can tell you from first hand experience what the machines are like." He finally stated, "The engineers are a talented, nice bunch. They're interested in what they do and come up with innovative ideas. I've found them to be consistently good and have never had a problem with the work they've done."