

case study

# Bartercard



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**Michael Walles, Bartercard**

## Bartercard®

**Industry:**

Financial organisation

**Business Start Date:**

1993

**Number of premises:**

9 (UK)

**Number of Employees:**

80 (UK)

**Number of Mobile Workers:**

20

**Services with Cobweb:**

Hosted Exchange Email

Bartercard was founded in Australia in 1993, with the aim of helping small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) grow and achieve financial success by facilitating a trade network that allows these businesses to exchange goods and services, instead of using money. Bartercard has since expanded worldwide, coming to the UK in 1998. The company operates a unique franchise model, which helps it quickly establish offices all over the world. In the United Kingdom, the company has 9 offices with 80 employees.

All Bartercard employees use Cobweb's email service every day for many essential activities, such as communicating with colleagues, putting together the Bartercard magazine and website, dealing with payroll and supporting clients.

In addition, Bartercard's staff can now log into their email from wherever they are, which is helping to increase productivity and efficiency.

**Customer Profile**

Bartercard has created a unique platform that has transformed simple bartering into a flexible and modern business tool to meet the demanding needs of businesses. The platform enables member businesses to exchange goods and services with other member companies without using cash, or having to engage in the direct two-way swap of goods and services.

To achieve this, Bartercard counts on its unique business model, whereby interested individuals can buy and run a franchise model within a specific area of the United Kingdom.

Bartercard has over 4,000 members in the UK, with a monthly turnover of about £4 million trade pounds.

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### The Challenge

Bartercard has 9 offices located around the UK. Each location used to have a different email provider, which resulted in different domain names. This made it difficult for employees to communicate internally - as they had to remember the specific email address for each office, and it was also a challenge for the company to uphold credibility with customers, as it was not clear to them that each office did in fact belong to Bartercard.

“For years we battled with setting up and maintaining individual mailboxes for each new franchise,” explained Michael Walles, Bartercard’s IT manager. “Our team would spend several hours each day dealing with all of our offices, trying to help with email outages and crashed systems. And the more we grew, the harder it was to cope with email inconsistencies, and we knew there had to be a better way of providing email to franchise offices.”

But not just any solution provider would do. Bartercard’s IT team provides a friendly and personable service to employees and franchisees, and their solution provider needed to share the same culture. They were looking for a provider that would not only give them the required software, but would become a partner who understood their business needs and goals, and help on the journey towards achieving them.

### The Solution

Cobweb, with its reliable email solution and friendly and approachable team, provided the complete package; just what Bartercard’s IT team was looking for.

“Cobweb is more than just a solution provider; it is a trusted partner that we know we can count on. The ease of access to my account manager really puts my mind at ease, and I know that Cobweb has dedicated and highly skilled individuals working towards making our email solution better every single day. What’s more, Cobweb’s solution is robust and reliable, and it does not cost the earth,” says Walles.

Bartercard is using Cobweb’s Hosted Exchange, which is based on Microsoft Exchange Server, giving the company access to email, calendar, contact and task functions. The service is based on a pay-per-user pricing model, guaranteeing that there are no hidden or unexpected costs, giving IT manager Walles complete control over the expenses for his IT department.

“We wanted a solution that would allow us to do more in less time,” explained Walles. “With Cobweb, we have freed up time which was previously spent in configuring and maintaining the old email solution. Now we can focus on more important and urgent IT issues, such as network administration and patch management. Employees and franchisees benefit, as they no longer have to wait to get help from the IT department, which increases their productivity as their computers are always running smoothly.”

Cobweb has made both internal and external communications much easier; thanks to the global address book staff no longer have to remember colleagues email addresses and outages are a thing of the past as Cobweb guarantees a 99.9% uptime.

“Our email system has finally entered the 21st century, which is incredibly important for an innovative company like ours,” concludes Walles.

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