

All systems are go

Cutting-edge traffic data consultancy Go24 has found Cornwall combines great quality of life with a supportive business environment

Overview

Andrew Kristoffy, founder and managing director of Go24 Group, advises major companies on how best to integrate traffic data systems into their products and services. It's a demanding role that involves a great deal of travelling: one week he might be meeting with a German car manufacturer to discuss onboard navigation systems, the next he could be jetting off to Beijing to demonstrate how real-time traffic information services can help manage the congestion problems of China's cities.

When he started to think about relocating Go24 from its previous base in Reading, Andrew was initially drawn by the idea of a Mediterranean lifestyle. As he explains: "My wife and I had always been keen to live by the sea, and since a lot of my work is in Europe we thought initially of moving to France or Italy. But after doing some research, I decided that the areas of these countries that were most attractive to live in just didn't have the entrepreneurial attitude that could help support my business." Fortunately, there was somewhere closer to hand that could provide just the right combination of lifestyle and business-quality infrastructure that Andrew was looking for: Cornwall.

Technology

The company has its own server for business applications, and Andrew has broadband connections both in his office and his home, linking the two with a virtual private network (VPN). Andrew says that he's found Cornwall's dedicated broadband facilitator actnow very useful in helping him find IT support.

Clients

Go24 has a wide range of clients in the road transport, mapmaking and broadcast industries, including carmakers BMW, ERIC (European Road Information Centre), leading digital mapmakers NAVTEQ and a number of radio stations in Britain and abroad.

"We'd been holidaying here for three or four years," says Boston-born Andrew, "and we also knew some people who'd been running a successful company in Cornwall." He admits that the outdoor lifestyle was a big pull, and this has more than lived up to expectations: He and his family now spend their weekends sailing out of Mylor Yacht Harbour and swimming off the exceptionally beautiful beach at Portthowan, just ten minutes from their home. But he emphasises that if Cornwall hadn't had the infrastructure to support his business, he wouldn't have moved.

Infrastructure

Broadband was top of the list of requirements, followed by good connections to major air hubs from which to pick up flights to Europe and the States. "I use the Newquay-Gatwick connection a lot," Andrew says, "and the rail link to Paddington makes Heathrow pretty easily accessible too." I spend the time on the train as if it were my office."

He's also been impressed at the quality of the business premises on offer. Go24 is now based in offices at the Threemilestone Industrial Estate just outside Truro. "Space of the same quality in London would be ridiculously expensive," he says. "Even in Reading we'd be paying at least twice as much."

Support

Cornwall Pure Business helped Go24 locate office premises, and also put Andrew in touch with two networks that bring together IT professionals in Cornwall - Wired Cornwall and the Digital Peninsula Network. Andrew has been impressed by the welcoming and supportive attitude that has made his company's relocation that much easier. "The actual move went very smoothly, with no interruption to the business," he says. "Everything was up and running within ten days."



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