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IT Leader, Pacific Northwest Beverage Distributor



How a Northwest beverage distributor scaled smarter with Kelley Create

In the Pacific Northwest, getting the right beverage to the right place at the right time takes speed, precision, and a technology backbone that cannot afford to fail. For more than 90 years, this family-owned distributor has supplied beer, wine, energy drinks, coffee, and other beverages to grocery chains, convenience stores, bars, restaurants, clubs, and golf courses across the region. But as demand grew, the systems supporting the business struggled to keep pace.

With only one internal IT resource supporting nearly 500 users, many of them mobile and working from trucks, phones, and on the road, the company was stretched thin. Systems were inconsistent, security was not standardized, and there was no clear roadmap for what came next. Rather than add headcount, the team chose a co-managed model that could expand capacity, strengthen security, and provide strategic guidance. As one leader put it, “On an average day we were getting by, but any emergency could quickly put us underwater. We needed to be able to pick up the phone or send a message and get access to an expert, quickly and reliably.”

That is where Kelley Create came in. With expertise across security, networking, infrastructure, Microsoft 365 support, and long-term planning, Kelley Create helped the internal team stabilize operations and build a stronger foundation for growth. One leader shared, “Security and infrastructure are very important, but we didn’t have the budget or need to hire several full-time specialists, so partnering with the experts at Kelley Create made a lot of sense for us.”

The impact was immediate. Kelley Create standardized the company’s security suite, improved patching and system management, and put secure Microsoft 365 backups in place, turning a reactive environment into one that was far more stable, secure, and scalable.

The relationship also expanded over time, evolving from mail security to phishing testing and other proactive protections that strengthened the organization’s overall posture. In their words, “We started with basic MDR on the PC and firewalls, and have since added patching, cloud backups, mail protection, and most recently phish testing. Having access to a partner who can tell us what other companies our size are doing has been useful for us.”

That foundation quickly translated into day-to-day wins. New sites came online with firewalls ready on day one, aging network infrastructure was replaced with a modern environment, and the organization strengthened its defenses with email protection, phishing testing, and continuous monitoring. What began as a need for support became a long-term advantage, giving the business access to specialized expertise without the cost and complexity of building it all in-house.

Today, the company’s IT team spends less time chasing updates and more time driving innovation. Automated onboarding and offboarding, more efficient financial and data processes, and smarter use of automation and AI have helped the business scale without adding headcount. As one leader explained, “We are fortunate that we can spend our time and skills improving business processes instead of micromanaging updates, patches, and firmware. We get to work on things that genuinely turn the dial. For such a small team we have a robust set of tools and automations.”

Just as important, the partnership has created something harder to measure but just as valuable: peace of mind.

As their IT leader put it, the goal is simple: “Stay out of the local news because of an IT problem.” With Kelley Create in their corner, that concern has faded. Before major technology decisions, the team now asks, “Let’s ask Kelley Create what they would recommend.” That kind of access to experience and bench strength is what turns IT support into a strategic advantage”.

Have a challenge for your organization we can help tackle? We’d love to set up a consultation to see how we can help find a solution that helps grow your business.