



Case Study



Christchurch Escape Rooms Keep the Fun Going with Voyager

The joy of escaping

For Dan Varcoe, Director of Escape Artists Christchurch, puzzles are more than just a hobby; they're a passion. And he's turned that passion into a living that has allowed him to share it with Christchurch residents and visitors, old and young, families and couples, friends and workmates, and everyone in between – through unique, challenging, themed escape rooms.

“Doing an escape room is more than just a game,” says Dan. “It gives you that feeling of accomplishment, a collaborative achievement. Often, people are good at solving isolated problems, but an escape room requires different ways of thinking for a team to be successful. When you bring groups of people with their individual ways of thinking together, that feeling of winning is so awesome – you can't replicate it any other way. I love bringing that to people. That's why I do it.”

The first escape room in Christchurch (and the fifth in New Zealand overall), Dan and his wife established Escape Artists in 2015 after experiencing their first one overseas. “We just thought it was so much fun, and we decided someone needed to bring it to Christchurch,” says Dan.

Their feeling was right. Since opening, Escape Artists has grown significantly, going from their original forecast of 50 guests per week to hosting nearly that amount in just a single session. They've doubled in space and have just moved into a brand-new premise in the CBD. “We initially estimated that we would open four days a week, for about 30 hours a week,” says Dan. “We quickly realised there was demand, so we went from having one room to running six rooms at a time, with six people per room. We're now open seven days a week, from 10am-10pm, and have seven employees.”

A need for speed (and reliability)

A hands-on guy, Dan is heavily involved in designing and building the rooms, in addition to running the business overall. That's why having simple, easy-to-use telecommunications solutions is key. And they absolutely must be reliable. For that, they partner with Voyager for their broadband and voice needs.

“We are fully reliant on the internet for a good customer experience. Every step along the way, there's a connection to our Voyager solutions that can't fail” says Dan. “If our broadband isn't working, we can't talk to customers or book them in.

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We can't run our games or communicate with the teams in the rooms. All of our rooms are reliant on data: we run touchscreens and timers that are connected to our servers. We remotely log into our cameras to monitor if teams need help. We can't take payment, start a game, watch a game, and we can't even take the team photo at the end unless our internet is working."

Tools for success

Escape Artists has been using Voyager from the start. "After researching, I realised that business broadband is very different to residential," says Dan. "If something goes wrong at home, there's not much sense of urgency. But if something goes wrong at work, it always needs to be fixed quickly. I came to understand that what's key with business broadband is the priority service and support, especially as provided by Voyager."

Escape Artists also uses Voyager Voice for their phone system. "At the start, VoIP was foreign to me," says Dan. "I thought all phone lines were the same, but the team at Voyager taught me about the advantages of VoIP. It's been awesome to just plug in our phones and have them ready to go, especially being able to add another user without re-wiring or anything."

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