case study | Manjimup property services

From GeeDee to Console Cloud

Introducing Dianne of Manjimup Property Management Services

Dianne Milentis is the owner, licensee and property manager in charge of Manijimup Property Management Services. Manjimup is a small inland town in Western Australia near Margaret River. It's one of the world's largest producers of black truffles, as well as being home to the pink lady apple, and the farmland that produces a significant amount of the nation's fresh produce.

And it's been home to Dianne Milentis for over 30 years. She's grown her business as property manager, owner and licensee, and doubled her property portfolio in the last five years. It's safe to say there isn't much she doesn't know about her business and rent roll.
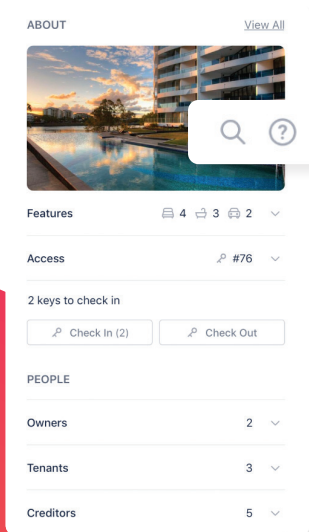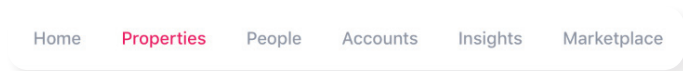
Trusting the partnership between GeeDee and Console Cloud

As a long-time user of Western Australian property management software GeeDee, her recent transition to Console Cloud was a bold move. But she trusted the partnership between GeeDee and Console Cloud enough to make the move—an experience she describes as taking a running leap off a cliff without a parachute, and surviving. She's seen her team's productivity skyrocket since using Console Cloud, and has been able to work remotely without a hassle.

We caught up with Dianne to get her honest views on the transition from GeeDee to Console, and what advice she would give to other Western Australian agencies considering the move.

Why did you or your team choose to migrate to Console Cloud from GeeDee?

I chose to migrate my business to Console Cloud because I have always had fantastic service from the Gee Dee crew. They've partnered with Console Cloud, and when they suggested I make the move, I trusted them.

My honest experience of the transition was that it felt like taking a running leap of a cliff without a parachute. Being in Western Australia and not knowing any other agencies that were using Console Cloud was a worry for me. This wasn't helped by the time difference between Western Australia and Queensland (where Console HQ is based).

But GeeDee were absolutely fantastic with the migration. They were so helpful and easy to work with, even though I was constantly contacting them during the migration period. And while there was definitely a learning curve and some issues to begin with, Console Cloud and I are now friends.

That's good to hear! How are things going for you and the team now?

Now that I've been using Console Cloud for a few months, I'm glad I made the move. Console Cloud is fantastic for its automation and workflows, and it makes managing my rent roll so much more efficient. You can set up automated text messages to tenants when they are in rent arrears, and edit the rules of when text messages are sent according to your agency's practices.

It also gives you a great dashboard that tells you what leases are nearing expiry and when, contract expiry dates, compliance expiry dates. All of this helps you manage by exception, rather than having to dig through all your files constantly to find this information manually.

What did your agency do to prepare for a successful migration?

Webinars, webinars, webinars! Attend them. I know it sounds boring and you won't want to do it (I didn't want to!) I won't lie, they are pretty dry, but they are also pretty thorough and relevant, and useful for when I was actually in Console Cloud.

Close of month took a bit longer for us to get used to because you only do twelve of them a year, but there are 365 days you still need to run the business. Yes, I know. Hi, my name is Dianne Milentis and I am a workaholic!

What advice would you give other agencies thinking of making the switch from GeeDee?

On the subject of reports and end of month: make sure your agency saves the monthly Bonds reports to a separate file on the last day of every month prior to close of month. Also the bond ledger and bond trial balance available from close of month reports are of no use to reconcile the Bonds administrations monthly bonds report (speaking from experience).

Console's service team was there to help me and the team though, and we were much more comfortable and knowledgeable with the system after the transition.

Have you noticed any time savings? If so, what sorts of tasks or processes are faster or easier?

Once we were confident navigating the platform and became friends with the Console Cloud platform, our work output skyrocketed.

We've seen our agents completing property management processes and tasks in half the time using Console Cloud that it would have taken using other software. That's given us this great sense of achievement, and boosted office morale and camaraderie.

Maintenance, inspections, and communications:

On a personal note, I've seen that Console Cloud saves me time on inspections, maintenance and communications. Using the Console app to do my routine and other inspections means that I don't have to do any double-handling of reports when I or one of my agents gets back to the office. You can do the inspection on your phone, and Console Cloud automatically syncs that data with the property file in my cloud office.

The Console app

Another feature of the Console app I like is the ability to raise maintenance requests on site and send them to contractors. Again, this saves me time chasing up maintenance when I'm back in the office.

My only suggestion would be to allow me to group maintenance requests for the same contractor in the app so they only receive one request. Sometimes I have two, three or four jobs that need to be done by the same contractor for a property, and they get them all as separate requests.

One-click communications

And finally, I also love the communication features. You can email or send SMS to owners, tenants and contractors at the click of a button. You can send it in bulk, or individually, you can send communications from workflows, and you can also create and edit your own templates to send. It all happens at a click of the button, and everyone you want to contact will receive the message. This feature is also very user-friendly too.

Has Console Cloud affected how your team can work remotely with COVID-19 measures in place?

Console Cloud has made it so much easier because the team and I can work from home or anywhere that we have an internet connection. It's BRILLIANT! And that aspect of Console Cloud (being able to work from home) is so beneficial right now with the Coronavirus restrictions. We used to have a server to look after and we'd need to remote access into it to work from home. It was painful and slow.

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We have also been proactive and advised owners and tenants of new procedures put into place to ensure that inspections, maintenance and reporting still happen. We are still providing the service our owners are paying us for. We are still operating on business as usual terms.

Do you have any other wisdom to share with people considering the move to Console Cloud from GeeDee?

To any other agencies—but especially agencies that are using GeeDee and considering the changeover: just do it. We jumped off the cliff without a parachute and survived, and so will you. Migrate to Console Cloud, and don't look back!

Our settling in period to Console Cloud was made a lot easier with the support of Console's service team and the continued support of GeeDee. I would however suggest that Console Cloud get better at connecting agencies using Console Cloud to other agencies considering the move. That kind of support is great, and we think it would improve the migration experience.

Suggestion noted! Thank you so much for your time and wisdom, Dianne.

Is it time to migrate your property management agency to Console Cloud? Book a demo to see what we can do for your business.

BOOK A DEMO

Call **1300 131 311**

Email **sales@console.com.au**

or visit **console.link/Cloud**