

Case Study: Community Drug Project



- Customer:** Community Drug Project based in South London
- Solution:** Wide area network, centralised storage, internal email system
- Benefits:** Improved reliability, simple documents sharing, improved communications

Internal Ref:

CDP 1.1

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version**

Issue 1

Background

The Community Drug Project (CDP) has been providing services to people with drug problems in South London for over thirty years. As one of the first community-based drug agencies in London, CDP was one of the pioneers in addressing the wide range of drug dependency problems facing local communities. An accessible, non-judgemental, client-focused and pro-active approach has always been, and remains central to CDP's philosophy.

Requirements

CDP has grown quickly over recent years and there had been a general lack of investment in IT to be able to keep pace with the needs of a larger organisation.

The only way to share information was to use a floppy disk, and each computer had its own ink-jet printer attached.

appiChar's brief was to create a system that would allow staff across CDP's 6 sites to easily communicate and share information efficiently. The system would need to be scalable enough to cope with the demands of an organisation that was still growing quickly, and reliable enough to ensure minimum downtime, particularly for mission critical services such as prescribing.

It also needed to offer security to ensure CDP was able to meet the requirements set down in the data protection act.

At the same time as the introduction of the new system, CDP were implementing a new care and

outcomes information system that required close working with vendors to ensure the system ran smoothly and efficiently.

Once the new system was in place, staff needed to be trained to ensure maximum value was gained from the new system. The complete solution needed to be fully managed and supported by a reliable supplier.

The Solution

appiChar worked closely with the CDP senior management team to develop a cost-effective, reliable solution.

The chosen solution included:

- Structured CAT5 cabling for data and voice at each site
- Fujitsu-Siemens file servers running Windows 2000 for file, print and security with a 3 year on-site warranty
- DDS4 and DDS3 tape drives to enable fast and reliable backups using industry standard media
- Active Directory to enable simple location of resources and administration across distributed sites
- Exchange 2000 for email and collaborative working
- An IPSEC-based virtual private network based on the intY managed service to link remote offices securely over ADSL
- Total Virus Defence from Network Associates to ensure all servers and desktops were safe from virus infection
- A combination of Windows XP and Windows 2000 Professional on the desktop
- On-site training for all staff to ensure all the benefits of the new system were realised

The system was implemented in a modular fashion, on time and on budget, over a period of around two months with the minimum of interference to the day to day running of the organisation.

Benefits

With the introduction of the new systems, CDPs' IT infrastructure is now at a level that will provide efficient support to the organisation for at least the next 3 - 4 years.

The benefits include:

- **Data is now backed up** across the organisation on a nightly basis and tested regularly, meaning senior management can feel confident that their data is safe and secure
- Instead of data being stored openly on desktop PCs, **file level security** now means data access is limited to those who really need it, helping CDP meet the requirements of the data protection act and protect the privacy of its clients
- **Secure web access**, with data logging capabilities and secure firewalls configured to specifically meet the individual needs of the organisation
- **Internal and external communications** has now improved significantly, with every user having access to the fast internet connection for speedy research and instant email across the organisation
- With the centralised file systems, users are able to **share documents simply and easily**, even across different sites
- **Secure remote access** has allowed CDP to have a more flexible approach to work, allowing key users access from

their homes which has helped to improve productivity

- **Roaming desktop profiles** allow users to access their work from any desk, even at different sites
- **The system is completely scalable**, allowing for rapid growth or changes in requirements

Supporting the New System

With any new technology, support is a key part of the equation, especially when your business depends on it!

appiChar's support and management services give CDP the peace of mind to make full use of the new systems.

If issues arise, 80% are solved almost immediately using the latest remote support technology, allowing appiChar engineers to take remote control of systems using the existing broadband internet connection.

Servers are monitored remotely, with regular checks on backups to ensure tapes are changed daily.

The service is enhanced further by regular on-site visits from a dedicated primary appiChar support person to ensure smooth running of the system. Users also benefit from having a face they recognise solving any issues or questions they have.

As part of the support services CDP can make use of all the experience, knowledge and expertise of appiChar staff, including strategic advice on the latest technologies and how they might impact the organisation.

The end result for CDP is:-

It's like having an in-house IT department at a fraction of the cost.