



CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

DOWN'S SYNDROME ASSOCIATION



“Cobweb Solutions solves email worries for the Down's Syndrome Association.”



Customer Profile

INDUSTRY:
CHARITY

CUSTOMER PROFILE:
THE DOWN'S SYNDROME ASSOCIATION (DSA) PROVIDES INFORMATION AND SUPPORT TO HELP PEOPLE WITH DOWN'S SYNDROME TO LIVE A FULL AND REWARDING LIFE.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE:
THE DSA REQUIRED A FLEXIBLE AND ROBUST COMMUNICATIONS AND MESSAGING SYSTEM TO SOLVE THE ONGOING PROBLEMS WHICH WERE ASSOCIATED WITH THEIR EXISTING EMAIL SYSTEM.

SOLUTION:
COBWEB SOLUTIONS HAVE PROVIDED THE DSA WITH A ROBUST, FULLY MANAGED AND MONITORED COMMUNICATIONS AND MESSAGING SYSTEM THAT WOULD MEET THEIR SUPPORT NEEDS WITHOUT THE ADDED EXPENSE OF AN IN-HOUSE TECHNICAL TEAM.

The Down's Syndrome Association (DSA), an organisation which provides information and support to help people with Down's syndrome to live a full and rewarding life, has turned to Cobweb Solutions for an outsourced IT solution to manage its communication and messaging requirements.

The fully managed Microsoft Exchange solution, provided by Cobweb, delivers an efficient and reliable email service that ensures that DSA staff have the ability to access their email while working remotely and can share information with their colleagues.

A membership-led organisation, the DSA was established 36 years ago and is the only organisation in England focusing solely on all aspects of living successfully with Down's syndrome.

The DSA has grown from being a local parent support group to a national charity with over 20,000 members, and now comprises of a national office in Teddington, Middlesex, offices in Northern Ireland and Wales and a regional team. Despite this growth, the organisation is run by a total staff of only 35 (many of them part-time), and a network of around 100 regional volunteer-led support groups.

Like any organisation, the DSA requires a reliable communications and messaging system. However, as a charity, the DSA finds it difficult to justify the expense of employing staff to deal solely with IT. This job role falls under the charity's administration category, meaning the money has to come directly from the administration funds. The DSA found that the expertise required to run an Exchange server is high, consequently it is difficult to justify the funds required to pay for such a resource.



The Challenge



Due to the age of the charity, the IT systems had not been reviewed in a number of years so an IT overhaul was well overdue. The DSA was constantly experiencing problems with sending and receiving emails and would regularly run out of capacity. Often staff would find out later that emails had never been sent or received. There was also no remote access capability and

therefore staff were unable to access emails when travelling around the country, working from home or when out and about attending meetings. Staff also found it difficult to plan with other departments, as there was no function which allowed the sharing of calendars to schedule meetings.

The DSA was seeking a solution that enabled all staff to have remote access, without having to go to the additional expense of installing a VPN and in-house Microsoft Exchange server.

“When we were reviewing our email outsourcing options, Cobweb came out on top.”

The Solution

When the DSA first looked to upgrade their IT systems, they organised for a company to come in to assess and recommend what was needed. It was suggested that the DSA use an outsourced approach. The first recommendation was Cobweb Solutions, Europe's leading provider of fully managed Microsoft Exchange email services. After reviewing the offerings of a number of competitors, Cobweb was selected.

The DSA selected Cobweb's Managed Business Email solution, based on Microsoft Exchange, to manage the DSA's email needs. The key requirements for the DSA included

comprehensive security, protection from spam & viruses, email archiving, the sharing of calendars and contact information, remote access capabilities and a guaranteed service level. As the service is based on a predictable pay-per-user pricing model, there are no hidden or unexpected costs, making it easy for the charity to budget for the service.

“We no longer have to worry that an email didn't reach us or that our messages aren't getting through.”



Stuart Honeysett, ICT Officer at the Down's Syndrome Association commented: "Email is extremely important to our organisation. We have found that people are increasingly using email when initially contacting us. New parents don't always want to reveal their name when contacting us about their child who has Down's syndrome. Email seems to break down the barriers as there is an element of anonymity to it, and we find people open up to us a lot more than they would on a telephone. We have peace of mind knowing that Cobweb Solutions is securely managing our communications and messaging, and we no longer have to worry that an email didn't reach us or that our messages aren't getting through."

Honeysett continued: "When we were reviewing our email outsourcing options, Cobweb came out on top, particularly for the level of support they offered, which is very important to us as an organisation. You want to know that after the initial outlay, there is going to be ongoing support for any queries that may arise."

Honeysett added: "Most importantly for us, Cobweb's Managed Business Email service was

easy to set up and doesn't involve any internal administration. All in all it was a very smooth process and it's a very well organised relationship."

Michael Frisby, Business Development Director at Cobweb concluded: "As email increasingly becomes the preferred way of communication it is vital that the DSA can be confident that all messages are reaching them. Equally important is the ability to access email remotely, particularly when working between offices and on the road. By outsourcing its messaging needs to Cobweb, the DSA now has peace of mind with a reliable communications system, leaving the technical side of managing and supporting the solution to our expert team."



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