



A leading
Charity
services firm

Wavex helps charity to professionalise IT function

The the client is a complex organisation with four national offices and some 320 branches spread across the UK. The charity commissioned Wavex to review the organisation's IT infrastructure. The aim: to improve communications and overall efficiency for staff and volunteers across the UK, and to provide subsequent ongoing outsourced IT support

The Charity

The client is a degenerative neurological condition affecting over 100,000 people in Britain today.

The client is the UK's largest charity for people affected by the client. The charity invests in research and supports those who are suffering from the client. In addition, The Society runs a number of programmes designed to educate health professionals, opinion-formers and the general public, as the disease is still not well understood. The charity also funds nurses and home-help services for those suffering from the client.

The Challenge

Like any charity, The client is only as effective as the staff and volunteers who make up the organisation. The four National Offices in London, Belfast, Cardiff and Edinburgh act as coordinating hubs for activity on a regional basis. Additionally, in small offices, church halls and living rooms across the UK, an army of volunteers regularly gathers in small groups to fund-raise and to exchange ideas and information.

These volunteers rely on IT to remain connected to the National Offices, and to communicate across the organisation as a whole.

Neil Director of Corporate Services, sums up the challenge he faced back in 2007: "Given the shape of the organisation, there was no national structure or strategy in place for the use of IT. People were doing their own thing in different offices and at an individual level. We knew it all needed professionalising."

3 The Choice

Unsurprisingly, service delivery standards were suffering. Some remote workers could barely access the emails, data or applications they needed. Additionally, national offices were unable to use IT to collaborate effectively. So, in 2008, Neil took the tough decision to outsource IT service delivery. Wavex tendered for an initial project to deliver an effective Remote Access Solution and was

awarded the contract to scope, design and implement the solution throughout the UK.

"We chose Wavex because they took the trouble to understand our organisation, and to engage with our staff. More than any other contenders, they seemed to care about what users wanted, and what the organisation really needed," Neil recalls

4 The Relationship

Initially, a team led by Dan Coleby (Wavex's Director of Consulting Services) carried out an audit of user needs and of the existing infrastructure. Dan recalls the process: "We travelled the country, researching the people and their various activities and interactions. The aim was to truly understand what they needed from IT, based on their roles and the way they worked."

Users were then segmented according to their requirements, and a clear definition of their technical needs outlined. This analysis fed into an over-arching IT Strategy, aligned to the organisation's real current and future requirements. This strategy then drove a series of projects designed to optimise infrastructure, applications and service delivery.

As Neil the client explains, lack of IT Governance was a key concern. "Before Wavex, there was no IT strategy to speak of. We had some high quality kit, but it wasn't properly integrated. We had some good software, but no clear plans about how best to maintain and update it.

There were no SLAs and no logs or stats of user problems or technical faults. User support had become a case of he who shouts loudest. There was no consistency or uniformity of service. And therefore not a great deal of trust in the IT function."

The Remote Access Project was just one step in a steady journey to create a userfriendly, nationally integrated approach to IT. Subsequently, Wavex was awarded a Managed Services contract to deliver fully outsourced support and network & infrastructure management, which included posting a small team of engineers on site, managed by Wavex Client Services Manager, Phil Cooper.

"I am no IT expert," says Neil, "so I am very happy delegating most of the IT function to Phil. Our trust in him is very high. So much so that when our in-house IT Manager took maternity leave, we handed over her responsibilities to Phil as well!"

SERVICE HIGHLIGHTS

- Infrastructure audit
- Application review
- User audit
- IT strategy
- Infrastructure refresh
- Fully managed support services
- Remote access project
- On-site support
- User support
- Ongoing advice & infrastructure planning

The aim was to deliver uniformity, certainty and quality to all users regardless of role or location.

Phil, the Client Services Manager, Wavex

The Experience

Asking a decentralised organisation to embrace a centralised IT strategy was not easy. Naturally, there was some resistance to such fundamental change. The Wavex team recognised this. Phil explains: "Putting the technology right was one thing. But, as we took on more responsibility for a nationally managed IT function, we had to be sure that people understood why we were doing what we were doing. Plus, they needed to know what they could expect in terms of service delivery, looking ahead. So we created a Road Show, and travelled around the country, explaining things to people face to face. Neil looks back: "We felt that Wavex understood our organisational challenges as well as our technical ones. They understood that, especially at the transition stage, it was as much about getting the communications right as getting the processes and the IT right."

The Results

Neil sums up the state of play, two years on: "I monitor IT success by the number of calls I don't get from unhappy users. And the fact is, that since we have been working with Wavex, there have been pretty much none. Whereas, before, let's just say I got quite a few!" Neil is also delighted to be working in a transparent environment with clear SLAs, regular reporting and measurable performance. Looking ahead, The the client has further plans to upgrade infrastructure and core applications. Wavex will continue to manage these and other key IT projects, so that the staff and volunteers at The Society can focus on the fight against MS.

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Neil, Corporate Services Director, the clientv

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