



BT hosted service facilitates growth and better IT infrastructure

Challenge

A non-profit organisation, the Rehab Group has 3,500 employees who provide social care, rehabilitation and employment services across 200 locations in Ireland, the UK, Poland and the Netherlands. Crucial to its success is an IT infrastructure that was run out of its Dublin headquarters with increasing difficulty.

“We were faced with technological and physical constraints,” explained Gary Merrigan, Chief Information and Technology Officer. The lack of enterprise-class fibre in a predominantly residential area was one issue. Another was a sprawling server farm crammed into a building that was impossible to extend. There was no central support desk to manage and deal with user queries and the 10 people in the IT team were struggling to keep on top of it.

An initial decision was taken to find a co-location partner but as Merrigan looked at the requirement, it became obvious that outsourcing the backend with a fully managed service was a better way to go.

“There was no sense in just shipping what we had into a data centre, and what we planned on paper was something that we didn’t have the resources to manage internally,” he said.

BT was eventually chosen to host and manage Rehab’s IT infrastructure. “They wanted to partner with a company who had the experience not only to get the job done, but to work with them in a consultative way and help build an ICT roadmap,” said Matthew Drum, Account Manager, BT.

Benefits

After detailed planning and project management, BT migrated Rehab to its City West data centre, a 42,000 sq. ft. Class A hosting

facility where the infrastructure was wrapped in a 24x7 managed service. The move was also an opportunity to swap out legacy equipment for more efficient technologies.

BT specified and built an infrastructure to meet Rehab’s growing needs, using Cisco switching and Dell storage and servers, along with VMware applications for virtualisation. Consolidation and cost-saving was part of the project, with BT moving Rehab from 30 servers down to 20.

Using best practice service desk principles and ITIL methodologies, BT has given Rehab a world class customer experience and provides a proactive approach to IT management that would have been impossible to realise internally.

Benefits include an improved user experience for Rehab employees, a central store of information that is easier to access and control, and levels of resilience that were unachievable when the infrastructure was located in the head office.

Another major benefit has been the liberation of the Rehab IT team. “Instead of looking at the nuts and bolts, the cables and the wires, we can focus on the business requirement and improving the experience of our end users,” said Gary Merrigan.

He has been pleased with the work of BT. “We see them as colleagues who operate as an extension of our IT service,” he said. “We are able to rely on them completely to take care of the backend while we concentrate on improving the business.”

Rehab is already talking to BT about the next phase, rolling out a private network that can better serve its geographically dispersed locations. “We have built a good infrastructure that has put us in the position to look at creating a global network,” he said.

Offices worldwide

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