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Wanstor partners with The Fostering Network to drive transformational change

The Fostering Network

Wanstor delivers a robust IT infrastructure, Microsoft 365 migration and Dynamics implementation in its initial transformation programme to help The Fostering Network realise its ambition for a business based on a SaaS foundation.

About The Fostering Network

As one of the UK's leading fostering charity and membership organisations, its mission is to bring together those involved in the lives of fostered children, ensuring that care is the very best it can be - supporting those who foster and improve opportunities for fostered children and young people, providing expert guidance to all fostering services to transform children's lives for a stable family experience and a fair start in life.

Wanstor is proud to work with The Fostering Network in driving transformational IT change, delivering solutions to evolve and future-proof operations, and ensuring systems are agile and efficient enough to support them in their mission.

The Challenge

When Wanstor were on-boarded to help the business, it was just in time to save them from a previously failed migration to a new server and Microsoft O365 implementation, which had left them with a host of compromised and fragile systems and inability to fulfil their daily roles.

It was crucial for The Fostering Network to get this fixed and unravel the series of difficulties they were presented with on an almost daily basis, with Wanstor quick to deliver.

Notwithstanding the previous migration's problems, they also suffered from disparate legacy systems and infrastructure that did not communicate.

The ultimate vision was to digitally transform the charity to radically optimise how it operated, fundraised and delivered services, eventually having everything running on a software-as-a-service basis and merging a long list of unlinked but interdependent legacy systems covering HR, Finance, Projects, Fundraising, and their CRM.

The end result would be to ensure reliability, efficiency and security, reduce admin and enable growth through both established and new, exciting projects.

The most pressing aspect of this transformation was the replacement of the Network's existing CRM database to Microsoft Dynamics, providing the foundation for a single view of members and services, and gaining an immediate and better understanding of their needs.

“We were in urgent need of help, and engaged Wanstor as our service provider. At the initial briefing meeting, we laid out those IT issues we faced”, Geoff Wilson, Director of Finance and Resources, explained. **“They told us that they would resolve every problem, one by one as these happened, and they did.**

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Wanstor have done more than could ever reasonably be asked of them.

Geoff Wilson,
Director
Finance & Resources

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“They’ve done more than could ever reasonably be asked of them; restoring our faith in our digital transformation vision, improving infrastructure, and allowing us to carry on with our IT strategy, which will lead to everything running more efficiently and make sure we are in the best place to meet our Mission today and in the future.”

The Challenge

Initially, Wanstor suggested an elevated service level to resolve the issues they were facing, introducing a virtual IT Manager and IT support Engineer to work within the Network's offices.

This approach immediately bridged the gap between Geoff's vision for digital transformation and Wanstor's wealth of expertise, providing support from highlevel strategy to day-to-day running.

Having a dedicated provision onsite meant Wanstor knew the charity, its challenges, pain-points and goals inside and out.

Over a two-month period, the team reversed every problem and issue caused by the failed migration and had The Fostering Network working better than ever before.

Eventually, The Fostering Network could benefit from the full functionality of O365 with reliable, efficient servers and systems.



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This helped to support rather than disrupt keyworker roles. Wanstor improved the charity's network and security, adding a FortiGate firewall, updating and rehousing servers to run more efficiently, and refreshing all laptops.

It was this preparation work that allowed the charity to respond to a sudden need for remote working. Thanks to Wanstor's work, they could use Teams and Zoom, collaborate, communicate and share data securely from the get-go.

"Their work has also meant that we've been able to move seamlessly between working in the office and at home with support from a team of experts who can't do enough to help.

"It's hard to imagine this new way of working without Wanstor's assistance. They are simply determined to offer us a great service."

The Feedback

The benefit of working with Wanstor is direct access to such a large pool of IT specialists in different disciplines giving us exceptional levels of support. The calibre of their technical team is exceptional... it would've been near impossible to achieve what we've done so far or work from home without them," Geoff said.

"With the introduction of the new CRM, some admin tasks within the organisation will become obsolete, allowing resources to be used where their skills are needed instead. There is an initial financial cost, of course, but the potential, future savings are immense and Wanstor has helped us so much already, it's great to know we are in the right hands for everything new we have planned.

"The purpose for undertaking such an enormous digital transformation strategy was to support The Fostering Network to prepare for the future and help us fulfil our charity objectives. This is so important for the charity sector. We now feel we are in an excellent position, with state-of-the-art IT infrastructure and services to keep moving forward, adapting, becoming more efficient and achieving our mission."

Key Outcomes

- ✓ Resolution of failed Microsoft 365 migration, full restoration of services and infrastructure to over 100 staff
- ✓ Enhanced, future-proofed IT estate, network and security, delivering on strategy to be software-as-a-service driven
- ✓ Scope, design, implementation of Microsoft Dynamics CRM solution for one single view of members and services
- ✓ Hosted CRM provides £80,000 saving p/y across licensing, infrastructure and support
- ✓ Fully outsourced IT function, from strategic guidance to onsite support, maintenance and security of entire IT estate
- ✓ Mobility solutions implemented allowing secure remote working from any location