

CASE STUDY

NACRO

Nacro is a UK-based charity dedicated to assisting marginalised and disadvantaged groups. Individuals include those who have grown up in care, are experiencing homelessness, have mental health issues, or have had contact with the justice system. Nacro works in partnership with public sector organisations to provide help to these groups and others with housing, education, health and more.

Nacro's philosophy is that everyone deserves a good education, a safe and secure place to live, the right to be heard, and the chance to start again, with support from someone on their side. They help people move towards independence and a better future, and ultimately, they want to help create a society in which everyone has the chance to succeed and achieve their potential. Nacro believes this is built on access to a secure home, good education and a second chance when things go wrong.

OVERVIEW

Nacro wanted to upgrade and modernise its IT environment to support its growing workforce post-Covid. This transformation aimed to facilitate a truly hybrid working environment, enabling employees to deliver the most efficient and effective services to those people the charity helps.

CDW worked with Nacro, executing a comprehensive project in two distinct phases. The first phase involved identifying requirements and the subsequent migration away from the incumbent platform to a fully secured Microsoft environment for a large public sector contract. CDW's team designed and deployed the Microsoft E5 platform, and introduced Microsoft Surface Pro devices under a managed service. This phase was instrumental in enhancing security, governance, and device management, reducing support tickets, and enabling more efficient collaboration between Nacro's workforce and its clients.

Building on the success of the first phase, the second phase focused on server rationalisation and infrastructure consolidation, device management, on a new lease model and the introduction of a 24/7 dedicated service desk ran by CDW for Nacro. These enhancements further improved Nacro's ability to provide seamless, employee-focused IT support while addressing technical debt and optimising its IT estate.

These services, and CDW's ongoing support via the IT service desk, have ultimately enabled Nacro's workforce to work more collaboratively with their clients and deliver its support services more efficiently and effectively. IT support prioritises the customer needs and the number of IT support tickets has been reduced. Nacro is also now able to track the number of support tickets effectively.

CHALLENGE

Before engaging with CDW, Nacro's IT environment faced several challenges, including a lack of resources to support the transition to remote working necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Compounding this was a growing workforce and mounting service desk tickets, making it difficult to prioritise their obligations.

Nacro wanted to reduce the amount of technical debt across its estate, characterised by legacy systems, and improve governance, documentation and ITIL processes. Additionally, Nacro wanted to ensure sensitive client data continued to remain secure, while maintaining functionality and adaptability. This ensured Nacro's workforce were easily, yet securely able to deliver its range of client services, with the right governance.

Nacro wanted to remove inefficiencies in system login times and basic computing tasks. Nacro's employees are central to the critical, high-quality support Nacro provides to its clients, especially the frontline workers who provide specialised personal support, and are often required to be mobile as part of their job. Additionally, legacy tech and change in staff led to little device management, posing risks and recovery of devices.

" We've moved forward a decade in technology within the last 2 years. "

John Rider-Dobson, Head of ICT, Nacro

" After successfully migrating the public sector project to the CDW environment, we felt confident that Carlos and the team had the ability to deliver the wider Nacro project across the organisation, including the development of a new Citrix environment and virtual server migration. "

Andrew Hodges, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Nacro

SOLUTION

Scoping the projects began with CDW conducting discovery workshops with Nacro to determine their requirements.

CDW's team ran workshops to define user and technical requirements, and segmented the projects into desktop, security and infrastructure. The team examined the challenges, and worked through potential solutions systematically with Nacro.

"One of the things we found really useful with CDW was the very close support and detailed documentation during the planning process, which helped to bring structure to the project."

Andrew Hodges, Director of Finance and Corporate Services, Nacro

For the public sector project, CDW migrated Nacro to Azure, and undertook the discovery, design, and deployment of the new managed service wrap.

This included:

- The introduction of associated services, including Microsoft 365, Landing Zone and the entire Microsoft E5 security platform. CDW created Windows virtual desktop
- Enhanced security and governance, with device management via Intune and Rubrik backup for easy recovery and reporting
- Delivering Microsoft Surface Pro devices under a managed services wrap with a robust, secure leaver/joiner process
- Introduction of CDW's service desk and backup managed service
- Introduction of ITIL service management
- General change management during the process
- Proofpoint email security introduced across the business

A key service for Nacro's clients is now a full, end-to-end Microsoft stack, with the appropriate security, governance and controls to continue the handling of sensitive data that Nacro holds. The environment is bespoke to the service and flexible enough to meet the organisation's varying needs.

"We needed expertise and CDW are the experts in getting to key information and defining requirements. Working with CDW makes this so much simpler, whether that's speaking to our Account Manager or one of the technical team."

What would take us maybe months or years has been condensed down into workstreams, and allowed Nacro to move with the times and implement CDW's recommended solutions, removing complexity whilst enhancing security and functionality.

This made a huge difference for our end users experience and running of the organisation."

Savita Bhanot, ICT Strategic Programme Manage, Nacro

For the second phase, CDW introduced a portfolio of bespoke solutions due to Nacro's legacy estate no longer being fit for purpose. Virtual server migrations reduced Nacro's estate from 156 servers to fewer than 60. Using Zerto, CDW migrated from historic legacy servers to CDW's ServiceWorks PaaS platform. ServiceWorks allows Nacro to optimise its core IT costs, without compromising availability or performance.

The business had an estate of over 1,500 devices, and a fluid, growing workforce. Tracking and remote-managing these devices is important, as is security to guard against both professional cyber crime and simple human error. CDW introduced Microsoft Intune and Autopilot to all devices, greatly boosting device security and giving Nacro the ability to 'wipe and recover' them. A leasing model was also adopted, allowing Nacro to procure better quality devices that can be upgraded as and when required. Recently, CDW has introduced Asset Management as a Service (AMaaS) to Nacro, freeing up further IT internal resource and enabling full tracking of devices.

CDW set up a dedicated service desk for Nacro. Previously, Nacro's business entities were generating over 1,200 tickets a month, which caused a 'logjam' of tickets and a dissatisfied user base. This number has been greatly reduced and allows Nacro staff to have IT issues resolved quickly and effectively; giving them back more time to support Nacro's clients. CDW also introduced Zscaler Internet Access (ZIA) and Zscaler Private Access (ZPA) to Nacro's corp, education and housing units. This has enhanced Nacro's cloud security AES access, whilst simplifying branch and cloud connectivity which has enabled Nacro's business units to gain faster and secure access to application from anywhere. This has enabled Nacro to move away from legacy security to Zero trust architecture removing the access to potentially harmful websites.

OUTCOME

The migration to Azure has given Nacro much greater flexibility, without compromising on governance or security. This has allowed key stakeholders and users to regain control of business processes, given the business greater confidence in the security of its systems and public sector data, and allowed employees to deliver a more efficient and more flexible service to Nacro's clients.

Microsoft Teams has enabled greater collaboration, enabling Nacro's employees to deliver more effective, efficient virtual services to its clients, such as online lessons in the education branch of the business. This enables Nacro to better engage its clients in the programs that they deliver.

High quality and better connectivity of leased devices have increased user satisfaction and collaboration amongst teams, reducing the number of support tickets. This has provided a more cost-effective solution over the long term.

"CDW's work has allowed us to develop a more collaborative, effective video course through Microsoft Teams. Our education environment is more stable and the team is well on its way to being able to confidently deliver video lessons."

Tim Craig, ICT Service Transformation Manager, Nacro

"The feedback that we're getting from colleagues is that dealing with CDW service desk is a great experience. The support staff pick up the phone promptly, there is always someone there and available at specific times. There's always somebody there to reset passwords and deal with other small issues. This has been a really key fundamental improvement."

John Rider-Dobson, Head of ICT, Nacro

CDW helped Nacro be more responsive to its clients' requests and needs, enabling anybody within Nacro to get online securely from anywhere, and access key enterprise applications like housing and student record systems.

The new, 24/7 CDW service desk has a dedicated line for the public sector contract and another for the rest of the business. This has greatly reduced the wait times in resolving tickets, leading to a notable uptick in productivity and user satisfaction, and fewer open tickets, with many resolved at first line. Nacro can now focus on providing great customer service to its challenges with trusted support from CDW.



For more information on how CDW can help you on your transformation journey, speak to us today.