



HAVELOK - MANAGED SERVICES

Havelok is a charitable housing association and the largest housing association based in the North East Lincolnshire area. It provides accommodation for over 1,700 households.

When Havelok's IT Manager left, CNT was asked to assume the role until they could find a permanent replacement. As time went by, Havelok struggled to recruit a suitable candidate and handed even more responsibility to CNT. It soon became clear that with CNT's involvement, end-users were better supported and the performance and availability of IT systems had improved. The fire fighting tactics of old had disappeared and a more strategic approach to IT was emerging.

Havelok awarded a managed services contract to CNT which covered the day-to-day management of the IT systems and the development of an IT strategy to take Havelok to a new era. As CNT was already working with Havelok, moving onto a managed services contract was a straightforward process. CNT was already familiar with the IT infrastructure and with specialist knowledge of working with housing associations, understood the challenges Havelok faced and the technology solutions needed to address them.

DEVELOPING THE IT STRATEGY

When developing the IT strategy, CNT were mindful of the need to centralise and standardise the IT infrastructure so it could support a growing number of employees across a number of remote sites. Cost control was another key area and any investment in new IT systems had to demonstrate a reduction in the total cost of ownership.

CNT's first step was to upgrade the Citrix solution already in place so it would provide a more stable and functional environment for all networked users. The number of networked users rose from 12 to 80 and with all of these using dumb terminals, system and

application updates could be made centrally removing the need for the IT Administrators to spend time at each users desk. Remote support was also now a viable solution allowing CNT to resolve support issues quickly and easily.

Connectivity between the remote sites was also reviewed at an early stage, and to improve access, sites using modems were connected to the Virtual Private Network (VPN) via ADSL. This had immediate benefits for remote users, bringing them into the network and giving them quicker and more secure access to the systems and applications they needed to work efficiently.

As part of the IT strategy, a Security Policy was introduced to protect data and to ensure that users maintained a standard environment. The aim of the Security Policy, and the solutions introduced as part of it, was to allow users to safely access the information they needed and to reduce the risk of users loading additional applications which might cause conflicts with the standard environment already in place. Disaster recovery measures were also put in place as part of the Security Policy to ensure no data was lost should a server break down.

BENEFIT

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Peter Osbourne, Chief Executive,
Havelok Housing

DAY-TO-DAY MANAGEMENT AND SUPPORT

The day-to-day management and support is greatly simplified as a result of the IT strategy introduced by CNT. Operating with standard systems and with remote access, the time spent at each users desk is minimised. A lot of the system maintenance and upgrades are performed centrally and the two IT Administrators are fully supported by CNT.

The IT strategy and the day-to-day management work hand in hand and Havelok now enjoys a more proactive approach to IT with higher system availability, more functionality and a lower cost of ownership for all IT systems and applications.

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Peter Osbourne, Chief Executive, Havelok Housing.

THE BENEFITS OF MANAGED SERVICES

CNT can provide a full range of managed services and these services are adapted to complement existing in-house skills. Regardless of the type of managed service provided, the benefits remain the same, and these can be summarised as follows:

- Eliminates the fire-fighting mentality
- Guarantees service levels
- Controls costs
- Brings broader experience and knowledge
- Improves the performance of in-house staff and systems
- Removes the unpredictability often associated with IT
- Eliminates recruitment issues

“CNT has provided us with an ideal solution that perfectly fits our situation and requirements. As a result of this, I don't think we would ever consider moving away from Managed Services and back to an in-house IT Manager. Through using CNT's Managed Service offering we have been able to develop our long term IT strategy and improve our infrastructure. We have made cost savings by following their advice and our in-house IT Administrators feel part of a team and find their own roles have become much easier to manage and much more satisfying. In addition, we no longer have problems with recruitment, we have no line management issues, we don't need to worry about holiday or illness cover and we have fewer maintenance issues overall. What we do have is the support of a company willing to deliver 24/7 service and a personal approach. Working as a team with CNT we have been able to benefit from their experience, expertise and strength in numbers - whilst at the same time remaining cost effective.” said Peter Osbourne, Chief Executive, Havelok Housing



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