

When Success Depended on Well-Performing Tech



An innovative new health care services and technology company needed its new data center operational and business productivity software to perform well. If the data center and productivity software did not work as planned, the company’s employees would not be able to properly serve clients or work with one another.

Problem to Solve

An innovative new health care services and technology company, predicated on quality, efficiency and patient experience, needed its new data center operational and business productivity software to perform well. Amid several other internal start-up needs, the company lacked the bandwidth and experience to oversee this tech effort itself.

From a business and reputation standpoint, the success of the company depended on the availability of this vital infrastructure. If the data center and productivity software did not work as planned, the company’s employees would not be able to properly serve clients or work with one another. To manage these mission-critical IT implementations, the company engaged Freed Associates (Freed).

Strategy and Tactics

Freed quickly assessed and determined the organization’s most pressing IT needs and requirements, multiple

geographical locations and all stakeholders. The data center installation and business productivity software upgrade were divided into separate projects. Each project leveraged a common project management infrastructure, with client staff assigned to support and collaborate with Freed throughout the engagement.

For the data center installation, located within a single facility, the most critical strategic need was to ensure that both its physical and virtual networks were properly established, tested, and had sufficient security in place to support more than 600,000 anticipated members on a new customer-facing application. Key tactical assignments included:

- Completing the network design for the physical and virtual network
- Procuring needed hardware, software, tools and support services
- Implementing the physical and virtual network
- Establishing VPN mesh/inter-office connectivity
- Building environment testing servers and performing environment testing
- Building production servers
- Setting up back-up hardware and software and performing business continuity testing
- Defining and implementing physical and virtual security procedures

Unlike the data center installation, the business productivity software upgrade involved multiple company locations. While there were some infrastructure commonalities between these locations, there were also several location-specific change management decisions required. The timing and execution of this upgrade was critical, as the existing productivity software was proving woefully inadequate to meet the company's needs. This issue needed to be resolved as soon as possible.

The software upgrade part of the engagement included:

- Creating the overall migration strategy
- Developing and executing location-specific change management plans, including all end-user communication and training
- Directing all business and technology activities, including upgrading users to the newest desktop software, migrating to new mailboxes, and completing knowledge transfer to the IT department

Results

Thanks to the input and collaboration of organization stakeholders assigned to these projects, both the data center and business productivity implementations proceeded well and within the organization's desired time frame. This enabled the organization to launch its services on-time, as planned, and meet a critical market timing need. The company was able to maintain its reputation for reliability and properly support its employees, enabling

them to take care of current clients and market the company's services to potential new clients.

Conclusion

When your business success and reputation rests on the functionality and integrity of your technology systems, it is important to candidly assess your internal resources and capabilities. This start-up health care organization realized it needed outside assistance to meet its goals, and gained the help it required to launch on-time and begin to build long-term business relationships.