



Partner Case Study

The Lokahi Foundation



Introduction

The **Lokahi Foundation** is a multi-faith charity and research institute in London that is dedicated to the study of communities and how they work and integrate. It liaises with organisations such as the police, government, community and faith groups and advises on issues surrounding faith, culture and society. The **Lokahi Foundation** started to look into a hosted / cloud based system for all of its business needs a year ago. After initially trying one provider that proved to be too expensive, the organisation then moved to a hosted solution from ThinkGrid in February this year.

Vertical Market

Government Agencies
Statutory Bodies
Community Organisations

Organisation Size

Small - Medium

Solutions Utilised

Hosted Virtual Desktop
Hosted Microsoft Exchange
Software as a Service

The Challenge

Prof. Gwen Griffith-Dickson, head of the **Lokahi Foundation**, explains: “We create and deliver effective, practical projects which tackle needs and tensions in our communities. Our action springs from original research and thinking on the challenges of faith and culture. From government agencies through to community groups, our engagement is built on core values of integrity, independence and intellectual rigour. In order to devote as much time as possible to the work we do at the Foundation, we wanted to reduce the burden of managing and maintaining our IT, saving time and – hopefully – money. We looked into hosted IT solutions, but our first supplier proved to be far too expensive.”

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The Lokahi Foundation were using a Terminal Services/Citrix based solution but found the performance, reliability and personalisation of the service wasn't good enough when using every day.

The Solution

Prof. Griffith-Dickson soon discovered that by switching to a ThinkGrid based solution, the Lokahi Foundation could take advantage of the freedom and simplicity offered by hosted desktops – at a much lower cost. ThinkGrid’s services from the cloud eliminate capital expenditure on hardware and software, and reduce running costs as well as the burden of IT management. The Lokahi Foundation also now uses ThinkGrid’s Hosted Exchange email. They also use software application such as Quickbooks, atlas.ti and Endnote which they use for research.

The Foundation also comprises a board of trustees and a body of Fellows, who are mostly engaged in working at universities elsewhere, but who co-operate on projects with the Islington-based organisation. Choosing IT solutions that enable everyone involved to access desktops and email remotely from disparate locations, and that facilitate greater collaboration through shared calendars, contacts and public folders, was therefore highly apposite. Having started off with just a basic hosted desktop setup, Prof. Griffith-Dickson soon added hosted email and then decided that the Foundation needed its accounts software online as well. They were able to have the accounting application Quickbooks streamed to hosted desktops instantly on demand.

Rob Lovell, CEO of ThinkGrid, says: “With hosted desktops, hosted Exchange and hosted applications, the software and data are housed in our highly secure data centres. All of our hosted services can be accessed via the internet from anywhere in the world using an existing PC or laptop, and see the benefits of on-demand IT” Services are provided on a simple, per user monthly subscription, and customers only pay for what they use. ThinkGrid’s rapidly deployed, ready-to-use solutions can be activated within hours, and upgraded or downgraded quickly and easily. ”

The Result

Simplicity &
Flexibility

Substantial Cost
Savings

Reduced
Management

“It’s so easy – we just click on an icon on our laptops and our PCs and files appear on the desktop in front of us.”

Prof. Griffith-Dickson continues: “We create and deliver effective, practical projects which tackle needs and tensions in our communities – managing and maintaining IT systems are not activities that we are keen to spend much time on! With the hosted desktops and Exchange from ThinkGrid, it’s so easy – we just click on an icon on our laptops and our PCs and files appear on the desktop in front of us, including all of the emails and everything else the staff would previously have found on their desktops. I’m surprised that more small businesses don’t choose to work in this way,” she concludes.

Mr Lovell concurred: “The flexibility and cost efficiency of our cloud computing services is unrivalled. Savings of over 50% per user can be made almost immediately through reductions in capital costs, power, management and other associated soft costs, which can add up to thousands of pounds - even for a small business. For a charity like the **Lokahi Foundation**, keeping costs minimal is especially important. Organisations that benefit from instant, anywhere access to desktop applications, internet services and shared IT resources needn’t deal with the costs and risks of installing and maintaining the hardware and software needed to provide these services – we take care of all that, leaving them free to concentrate on their core activities.”