

Increasing Office Efficiency at "Changing Faces"



"We upgraded the whole charity for the money that we might have spent on three, maybe four users" – Christine Muskett.

Who are they?
CHANGING FACES.

Where are they?
UK National Charity, based in London with Scottish and Welsh offices.

What do they do?
Help overcome the practical difficulties encountered by people living with a disfigurement. Education, information, support and enabling – Changing Faces acts as a Catalyst for Change.

How big are they?
Income approximately £1m;
21 employees.

What did they receive?
Upgrades to Microsoft Windows XP/Office 2003 Professional.

The outcome?
General efficiencies across the organisation; staff released from helpdesk and support duties.

www.changingfaces.org.uk

Each year, around 3,000 children are born with cleft lips, craniofacial conditions or birthmarks. The NHS sees 40,000 people with burns or scalds; a similar number are treated for cancer of the head, neck, mouth, throat and skin. **Changing Faces** is the UK national charity that supports people who have disfigurements of the face or body – whatever the cause. It aims to enable people to develop high self-esteem and self-confidence, have access to the very best health and social services and enjoy equal rights and opportunities throughout their lives.

Christine Muskett is Head of Operational Support at the organisation, which has 21 members of staff including two based remotely in Scotland and Wales. With no IT department on call, technology forms just one facet of Christine's responsibilities; an external consultant provides services as and when required. In a scenario such as this it's key to keep user support requirements to a minimum, and a potential issue was raising its head.

"There was little consistency to the software being used across the organisation," explains Christine. "We don't have the budget to consider a routine 3-year upgrade cycle, so had a mix of software versions running, all needing support and troubleshooting."

It's the sort of situation that trickles away at the efficiency of an organisation, without necessarily prompting the crisis point that many need to justify action. But by providing an upgrade to consistent software platforms, the CTX programme gave Changing Faces an opportunity to cut out much of this unnecessary back-office work, and to head off future problems when old versions become obsolete. With Microsoft donating upgrades to Windows XP and Office 2003 Professional, the whole organisation now runs a single up-to-date suite of programs.

Charities often naturally struggle to find resources to invest in back-office efficiencies. Here it was no exception – the upgrade was an opportunity that simply wouldn't have been available without CTX and Microsoft. The project "wouldn't have been on the agenda," notes Christine. "We'd have just had to get by. As it was, we upgraded the whole charity for the money that we might have spent on three, maybe four users. That was an incontrovertible financial argument."