Managed Service Provider Allows Nonprofits to Focus on Changing People's Lives

NPower uses remote, integrated and automated IT systems management solution from Kaseya to streamline its service delivery model and implement a proactive IT systems management strategy.

Sometimes managed services mean more than providing efficient IT services and support to clients. In the case of NPower DC, a managed service provider (MSP) that caters exclusively to nonprofit organizations, it literally changes people's lives for the better.

There are more than 1.5 million nonprofits in the U.S. that provide life and family services, job training and healthcare assistance for tens of millions of Americans. As important as these organizations are to our community, they typically lag behind corporations and government when it comes to technology. In a recent survey of nonprofits by the Johns Hopkins University Listening Post Project, less than half of the respondents reported that they were satisfied by how their organization uses technology. They attributed this to a combination of a lack of funding, time, and expertise. As a result, NPower DC was created by local foundations and corporations to help close this technology gap.

Challenging Service Delivery Model

Early on, NPower DC sought to meet area nonprofits' needs for help with technology by providing a combination of onsite scheduled and on call support. This was particularly challenging given the heterogeneous IT environments of NPower's client base. Nonprofits are notorious for deploying whatever equipment or software is available—whether it was donated by a local corporation or on sale at local big box store. Slim budgets and lack of internal IT staff meant that employees in many organizations had to maintain their own computers. Alternatively, machines were simply left alone to run slowly or not at all—hardly the right strategy for getting the most out of a computer network. Few organizations had an overall technology plan. Often, by the time that NPower was called in, problems were serious and the disruption to operations was significant. Peaks and valleys in demand made it very difficult for NPower to maintain the right level of staffing.

NPower knew that there had to be a better way to run their operations and serve their clients. The current system provided no ability to scale to serve more organizations—a key part of NPower DC's mission. And, the economic downturn resulted in a decline in contributions, so NPower needed to generate more earned revenue.

"Today, nonprofits need to look for alternative sources of revenue beyond charitable giving. We needed to find a way to earn revenue while making our own operations more efficient," said Julie Chapman, President of NPower DC.

Kicking the Tires to Find the Right Fit

NPower DC's Board of Directors was made up of tech execs from leading companies and they knew that the answer lay in the power of managed services. However, saying that you are going to migrate to an MSP business model is one thing and executing on that vision is another, especially for a small organization like NPower DC. NPower needed technology that would support its new approach to IT services and looked for a partner to help them do that.

The Board mined their contacts with the IT industry, asking for recommendations for a reliable IT systems management solution that would let NPower proactively monitor, maintain, and secure its customer systems which are spread out across the region. They developed a short list of potential

Greater DC Region

Kaseya Customer
NPower DC
Washington, D.C.
http://www.npowergdcr.org

Industry
Managed Service Provider for Nonprofits

Business Challenge
- Provide efficient managed services to nonprofit organizations so they can focus on core competency of helping people
- Continue to scale in order to assist additional nonprofits in the area
- Raise additional revenue in the face of declining fundraising and donations
- Enhance service offerings within the confines of a small staff

Market Solution
- NPower On! managed services powered by the Kaseya IT Automation Framework

Key Benefits
- Provides customers with enterprise-level managed services at a nonprofit price
- Empowers nonprofit employees with the technology they need to provide life-changing services
- Allows eight administrators to efficiently and remotely manage more than 1,800 end points seamlessly
- Achieves unparalleled visibility and control into all customers' systems for better network and systems health

Kaseya

solutions and then trialed each one. In the end, NPower determined that Kaseya's automated and remote IT systems management solution was the best fit.

"It was obvious from the minute we hit 'deploy' that Kaseya was above and beyond the best solution for us," Chapman said. "We felt we'd finally found a technology partner that shared a passion for providing enterprise-level managed services at a price point our nonprofit customers could afford."

Consolidating IT Maintenance and Support on a Single Pane of Glass

NPower DC deployed the Kaseya solution in all its customer environments, instantly gaining the ability to remotely monitor, update, back up and secure all systems on their networks. Basic tasks like patch management, defragging a hard drive or migrating a system to a new operating system could now be done automatically from a consolidated management console. This level of integration and remote control is built directly into the Kaseya IT Automation Framework and allows NPower DC's eight administrators to proactively manage more than 1,800 client end points.

"The impact of Kaseya was transformational," said TJ Rainsford, CTO, NPower DC. "Now, we are able to support more clients and provide a broader range of services without having to hire additional staff. We have gone from providing on-site reactive support to remotely and proactively maintaining the health of our customers' systems. It is a huge paradigm switch. We're automated. We're centralized. This lets us be strategic and focus on aligning our client's organizational goals with their technology. Now, we can really be the CTO or CIO that our clients need."

In addition to providing a holistic view of each customer environment, Kaseya allows NPower administrators to drill down to individual systems to make granular changes in the background without users being aware the maintenance is taking place. This dual visibility ensures the overall health of the network while making sure every end point is in complete compliance with each client's unique IT policies.

Using Managed Services to Touch People's Lives

Using Kaseya made it possible for NPower to provide enterprise-level IT services and support at a price point nonprofits could afford. By taking the responsibility of IT off their hands, NPower DC allows its customers to focus on their core strength: providing the services that change people's lives.

"Our customers are able to do so much more for their clients because they don't have to spend their time making technology work," Chapman said. "We have Kaseya to thank for that. We're able to support more systems at a higher level which enables users to use technology in ways they previously couldn't even conceive. So many lives have been touched simply because Kaseya makes it easier for us to provide cost-efficient managed services."

NPower DC is a private nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization that helps nonprofits make the best use of technology to strengthen their operations and deliver on their missions. NPower provides high-quality, cost-effective technology services exclusively to nonprofits. For many, NPower serves as the primary point of contact for their IT vendors including hardware, software and telecommunications providers.

"NPower DC's clients are able to do so much more because they don't have to spend time trying to make their technology work. Many lives have been touched because Kaseya makes it possible to provide cost-efficient managed services. This means that we can truly help nonprofits make the most of their technology investment."

Julie Chapman
President, NPower DC

Kaseya makes administrators more efficient by streamlining basic maintenance and eliminating repetitive tasks. For example, when Microsoft issues a patch, NPower DC can use the Kaseya patch management engine to automatically update all its customers' systems. What was originally a two-day process done manually onsite is now executed automatically and consistently across all customer environments in a few hours. The Kaseya patch policy process that NPower created:

- Audits all customer environments for systems that need to be updated
- Checks that each system has the required components for the upgrade
- Powers on machines that are turned off
- Downloads and installs appropriate components to get systems ready for install
- Installs the Microsoft patch to a test system and ensures all kinks are ironed out
- Pushes the patch to waiting systems and remotely installs it on each machine
- Reboots the systems with user permission
- Tests that the patch was installed correctly
- Compiles a report indicating patch successes, failures and what needs to be done to complete the operation

About Kaseya

Kaseya is the leading global provider of IT Systems Management software. Kaseya solutions empower virtually everyone — from individual consumers to large corporations and IT service providers — to proactively monitor, manage and control IT assets remotely, easily and efficiently from one integrated Web-based platform.

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