



The Oxford Knowledge Company conducts server 'surgery' for recruitment specialist

Keeping Healthcare Professionals at the heart of clinical excellence

In the medical profession, life-saving situations dictate quick thinking and instant action. But, with the growing shortage of qualified medical practitioners in the National Health Service (NHS) and many private clinics, organisations are finding it increasingly difficult to keep the right skills in the right place at the right time.

For over a decade, healthcare recruitment specialist Health Professionals has been sourcing, training and providing specialist nurses, allied health professionals and doctors to the NHS and private sector.

Boundless

Significantly, the company was one of the first ever healthcare recruitment organisations to operate online allowing candidates to upload their CVs, receive training remotely and check for available job opportunities.

Says Managing Director Hugo Lyons, "As a recruitment agency providing staff into a sensitive sector, we're responsible for meticulously checking virtually every action we take so that, understandably, the resulting paperwork becomes boundless. For us, systems automation is almost mandatory allowing us to refer back to documents and emails for an indefinite amount of time as required by law."

Following the transition from manual to automated workflow processes, Lyons engaged Microsoft Gold Certified Partner The Oxford Knowledge Company to optimise the performance of their newly-installed dedicated Microsoft Small Business Server (SBS) 2000, configure a virtual private network (VPN) and wide area network (WAN), and generally 'health check' its IT infrastructure.

Reputation

So, why The Oxford Knowledge Company?

Lyons continues: "Our organisations were previously located in the same office complex and the Company's proven reputation in sophisticated server expertise was apparent. In addition, this is all backed up by the Microsoft Gold Partner accreditation. Equally, I like the way they do business. They're up-front, responsive, technically adept and instinctively translate technical issues into layman's terms – as well as being thoroughly nice people to work with."

Increased productivity

However, the transition from a paper to paperless operation wasn't without hitches, he adds. "Document retrieval from our core workflow application was quite sluggish. And in particular, our remote-working consultants had severely limited systems access, which had the potential to affect how quickly we were able to place clinicians in jobs."

healthprofessionals 

Health Professionals was established in 1997 to meet the demands of the National Health Service (NHS) and Private Health industry in finding specialist clinicians throughout the UK and Ireland.

Today, from its offices in Knightsbridge, London, and satellite locations throughout UK and Ireland, Health Professionals operates a 24x7 specialist healthcare staffing service – including online induction and mandatory training through its innovative web portal – to the NHS and a diverse range of private sectors.

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Managing Director
Health Professionals

Which is when The Oxford Knowledge Company's expertise came into play: "Business Development Manager Robert Arnold tirelessly collaborated with our application's independent software vendor (ISV) to optimise the architecture and ensure we have a solid and stable, but above all fast and efficient platform. Now our organisation is optimised for instant, 24/7 document retrieval and our productivity has increased ten-fold."

Seamless

The Oxford Knowledge Company designed and implemented the unified 'anytime, anywhere' systems access for all the Health Professionals staff.

Robert Arnold says: "By analysing traffic usage over the Company's ADSL (Asymmetric Digital Subscriber Line) circuits we established the bandwidth levels required to support an ever-growing use of the workflow and VoIP (Voice over Internet Protocol) systems." The WAN was further secured by the installation of SonicWALL unified threat management (UTM) devices and Netgear PROsafe firewalls across the client's geographically dispersed staff users.

Portal

And this server optimisation and ongoing management is pivotal in facilitating fast and responsive online induction and training, adds Hugo Lyons:

"Health Professionals is legally required to provide such training for its overseas healthcare candidates to ensure that they meet stringent UK medical guidelines. Equally, this ensures that we continually supply candidates of the highest calibre.

"We're dealing with highly skilled, busy and specialised personnel. Consequently, offering fast, no-fuss training and information through our online web portal, structured to reflect the varying levels of clinical expertise, is essential. And significantly, the feedback on portal usability and online response time from our candidates – and healthcare clients – has been excellent."

Synergy

And Lyons believes there is a distinct synergy in values between the two organisations: "Just as Health Professionals ensures that its clinicians regularly upgrade qualifications and training; The Oxford Knowledge Company equally keeps ahead of the IT skills market by investing in its people and accruing industry accreditations and high-level technical qualifications."

Paperless

So, is Health Professionals still paperless? Lyons confirms: "Absolutely! Any paperwork is duly scanned into our workflow system and electronically assigned to a person and process – and our optimised server performance ensures its life cycle is visible and instantly accessible to those who need to manage it. We do however still operate a manual back-up system to help us comply with legislative guidelines.

"I wholeheartedly trust The Oxford Knowledge Company with the IT wellbeing of Health Professionals, and am confident that the server topology – and our business relationship – will replicate into other locations as we expand.

"In the meantime, Health Professionals can remain focused on placing people where they count – saving lives."

Solution & Services scope

- Microsoft Windows Small Business Server (SBS): Proactive troubleshooting and management
- Ongoing supply and commissioning of ADSL and VPN links for 'anytime anywhere' remote access
- Consultancy on migration of email service from POP3 email to Microsoft Exchange Server
- Security: SonicWALL UTM devices and Netgear PROsafe firewall installation and management for geographically dispersed staff
- Remote monthly 'health check' of IT infrastructure
- Ad hoc IT 'roadmap' consultancy

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