

Freeing people from addiction.

"This made it possible for us to get on with the job." – Cherry Corner.



Action on Addiction is the only UK charity working across the addiction field in research, prevention, treatment, professional education and family support.

With centres throughout England, a specialist family service and an expert training facility, the charity is a large concern, employing around 150 people across several sites.

The IT needs of such an organisation are extensive. Recently, however, the infrastructure was struggling to cope.

"Our server was coming to the end of its life," says Cherry Corner, speaking from the charity's head office in Wiltshire. "We knew we had to address this. There were considerable issues with slowness – and the email crashed completely once. The system was creaking at the seams."

The charity outsources its IT management and support to an external company, who were aware of the issues due to the rising number of helpdesk calls. Clearly, this could have been the opportunity for a lucrative purchasing project for the company concerned, and the charity braced itself for a large quote. Instead, the IT provider – Bristol's Solsoft Technology Ltd - pointed Action on Addiction towards the CTX programme.

"I looked at CTX and I thought – 'gosh!'" recalls Cherry. "We had already delayed an upgrade by a year, due to the costs, and this made it possible to get on with the job and move forwards."

The overhaul of the charity's systems has already started, with servers now running in tandem, and Office upgrades due to be rolled out in the next two months. But Cherry points out that this won't just make things more convenient for the staff.

"From a practical point of view, our IT makes it possible to help people," she explains. "Often, calls come through to us from people who have had to pick a time to coincide with a family member being out. Our admissions team need to be accessible to them right at that moment."

The ability to obtain the required resources as a donation has meant that Action on Addiction has not needed to approach donors for this big internal project. Furthermore, the charity has been able to build for the future, rather than being limited to a short-term fix.

"I knew that Microsoft did do a lot of charity work, but I was unaware that other providers were involved also," says Cherry of the CTX programme. "It is very reassuring for us – you know how hard it is for charities. And it is nice to know that there is altruism out there in the IT sector."

Who are they?
ACTION ON ADDICTION.

Where are they?
Nationwide.

What do they do?
"We take action to disarm addiction".

How big are they?
Around 150 employees.

What did they receive?
Microsoft Office and Office Professional Plus, SQL, Exchange and Windows Servers, Windows Remote Desktop Services User CALs.

The outcome?
Complete overhaul of a creaking IT infrastructure.

www.actiononaddiction.org.uk