



case study **at a glance**

Client National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS)

Solution Exchange to Office 365 migration

Overview

- Total provides free advice on which Office 365 plan to use, enabling NYAS to reduce costs substantially
- Total manages migration of 1,100 mailboxes to Office 365
- Total's consultants provide expert, responsive service, including fixing problems out of hours to ensure users can access email
- NYAS's users benefit from massively increased storage and faster service
- Hosted Exchange is easier to manage, and improves availability and redundancy

NYAS, a national children's charity, chose Total to handle a move from on-premise to hosted Exchange with Microsoft Office 365. Total provided expert help and managed the migration for NYAS, freeing up its in-house staff for other projects.

Client

The National Youth Advocacy Service (NYAS) is a charity which operates across England and Wales: nyas.net. It provides services for children, young people and vulnerable adults, including advocacy, independent visitors, and legal representation. Its headquarters are in Birkenhead, and it has around 180 employees and another 800 users that are self-employed workers and volunteers.

Business driver

NYAS was previously providing its staff with email using Microsoft Exchange servers internally hosted and managed, from its office in Birmingham. It was finding this time-consuming to manage for its IT team of four people, of whom only two were on-site in Birmingham and qualified to manage the Exchange servers. Also with its storage nearing capacity, users were severely restricted in their mailbox size.

"We were running out of storage – our senior members of staff and employees had 1GB storage each, and the self-employed users only had 250MB," says Dean Burgess, IT Service Manager at NYAS. "This meant people were wasting time archiving, and deleting attachments."

Solution

To address the storage and management issues it was experiencing, NYAS decided to migrate to Microsoft Office 365 and it turned to Total Computers for help.

Dean says, "Total had been providing hardware and software for us for the past six years, and they'd given us a lot of peace of mind – they always gave us the best prices, and could get us kit at the last minute if needed."

Initially, Total's Microsoft licencing specialist helped NYAS to understand the different Office 365 plans and identified that NYAS qualified for free licencing under Microsoft's charity licencing scheme. This freed up budget for NYAS to get help with the project.

Dean explains, "Total brought the licencing options to our attention, and when I did the cost analysis the savings were just massive."

Total Computers provided two consultants who handled the migration from Exchange servers to hosted Exchange Online with Office 365. Users were migrated overnight in batches of around 40 people.

"From the start, we had a good relationship with Total's consultants – they were

responsive, and they got the job done," says Dean. "All the way through, they clearly knew what they were doing, and when we hit a few minor issues with our previous network configuration, we worked together to sort it out – in fact, they were up to 4am one night to fix an issue, so our users wouldn't be affected the next morning."

"Everything went smoothly for our users," says Waine Hanks, Network Administrator at NYAS. "And when one batch of users did experience a problem Total jumped straight on it, and fixed the issue in around an hour and a half."

Dean and Waine mostly handle network infrastructure and projects, but also provide third-line support to their two colleagues in user support. This workload means they would have struggled to find time to handle the migration to Office 365 without external consultants.

"Technically, we would have been able to do the migration ourselves, but it would have needed an enormous amount of out of hours work, and would probably have taken us a year," says Dean. "Getting Total in to help meant we could get it all sorted within eight weeks, which we're really happy about."

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With the migration complete, NYAS has decommissioned its on-site Exchange servers, which are now used for other services, and for additional storage.

Benefits

"Office 365 gives us 50GB storage for each user, which is effectively nearly unlimited," says Dean. "This is a huge improvement for us – a lot of staff were having issues with lack of space before, and they're really impressed with the new system."

"Not having to look after on-premise Exchange servers has taken a lot of strain off the IT department, and it's easier to manage now – it's freed up time for us to work on other projects, such as GDPR, and to be able to do more for our users," says Waine. "The redundancy and availability of hosted Exchange is really important to us as well, and it's given us peace of mind, so we don't have to worry over the weekend about a server failing."

"The free apps we get with Office 365, like Teams and Planner, are changing the way we work," says Dean. "The new system is also faster, helping our users."

"Total have provided an absolutely brilliant service, especially the lead consultant – he's gone out of his way to help us, and does things out of hours if needed," says Waine. "I don't know if all your employees are the same as him, but if they're not, you should get him cloned."

"Overall, we're just really pleased with Total's service, which enabled us to implement Office 365 so quickly, with minimum downtime," concludes Dean. "I'm very impressed, and we would recommend Total Computers to anyone."

Technology solution

With its Office 365 licenses, NYAS is using hosted Exchange Online. This gives its users access to email, calendars and contacts, which they can access from their PC and smartphones.

As a charity, NYAS was able to benefit from free E1 Office 365 licences, which provide online access to Microsoft Office, giving them more flexibility to log in remotely and work on documents, as well as other apps from Microsoft, including Teams, a group chat tool, and Planner, a task management program, Yammer and forms. Where locally installed versions of Office are required, they have continued to utilise existing Office 2010 and 2016 licences.