

Giving Back Through Tech Support

For Onward Computer Systems, giving back to their community meant providing tech support for a local non-profit

Onward Computer Systems is a Managed Service Provider (MSP) for small to medium sized businesses. They step in when companies begin to feel overwhelmed by technology and offer a full range of services including procuring equipment, providing support, determining the business needs, and coming up with solutions. They work with companies long term to help handle their technology needs, whether that's hardware or software, data management, or working with the cloud.



CHALLENGE

A local non-profit was using outdated equipment and free software applications to share information, but that wasn't keeping their data secure

Helping Hands Street Mission uses a network of volunteers to provide services for the homeless and underprivileged in Hamilton, Ontario. But because of their non-profit status, their tech equipment was sparse, outdated, and difficult for the frequently rotating cast of volunteer workers to use. Onward Computer Systems stepped in to do an assessment of the Mission's current setup and see what they might be able to streamline to get the focus back on helping those in need in the community.



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When clients find that they're not running their business, their business is running them, that's when we step in.” – John Krikke, Onward Computer Systems Vice President

WHAT THEY WANTED

The client needed to keep their data more secure, while maintaining an easily accessible system that their many volunteers could access

Onward Computer Systems sat down with the director of the organization to get a handle on how they were sharing data with internal and external stakeholders. The client's email system wasn't working very efficiently, they had concerns about the security of their data, and didn't know where a lot of their data was being stored. They needed better systems for sharing and then rescinding access for volunteers, and were also concerned because their hardware equipment was very outdated.

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We've led with Lenovo on all our hardware proposals because they've been reliable, cost-effective, and easy to support.”



THE SOLUTION

Onward donated some new hardware to their client, set them up with new email software, and established a Sharepoint website

Onward donated two brand new Lenovo laptops to Helping Hands because the equipment in their office just wasn't up to par to support their work. They consolidated the mission's data and uploaded it to the cloud, using the Microsoft 365 suite of software and solutions to establish better, secure email for the organization. Onward also built a Sharepoint site that let them share their data with all collaborators using one secure portal. "One of the solutions we offer are collaboration portals, which also scales down for smaller organizations," said John Krikke, Onward Computer Systems Vice President

“Because we ended up bringing in new equipment for them, we could start fresh, and come up with something quite modern without having any legacy software we had to worry about.”

WHAT THEY DID



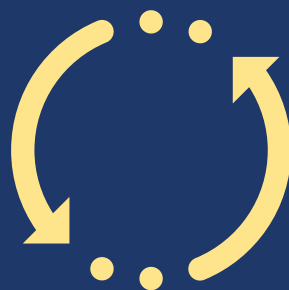
Donated two Lenovo devices for Helping Hands Street Mission's office use: a Thinkpad T14 and a ThinkBook 14 laptop



Installed the Microsoft 365 Suite to provide secure email and data sharing



Set up a secure Sharepoint website that offered easy access to all collaborators



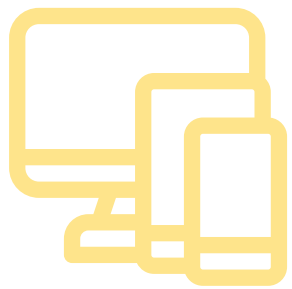
Provided ongoing tech support for the organization so future needs aren't a source of stress



WHAT THEY ACHIEVED



This new technology infrastructure allowed Helping Hands to better support remote work and take precautions related to Covid-19



Created a better system for sharing data and collaborating with volunteers regardless of setting or immersion level



Maintaining the privacy and security of the data from the people who come to Helping Hands for support or financial data from donors



Using devices specifically designated for work tasks helped maintain a better work/life balance for their employees and volunteers

A DEEP DIVE INTO THE SOLUTION

Onward giving back to the community through tech support, means Helping Hands can focus on people

Plenty of community programs could reach more disadvantaged people if they had the support of better technology. Onward's role handling the tech side of things lets Helping Hands focus on what they do best — help people. "This organization is more people-focused than technology-focused," Krikke explained. "They need solutions that don't need a big technical understanding to work with. That's where we step in, we sit in between the technology and the user."





Onward Computer System's donation and support improved workflow for their community ally

"The support of Onward Computer Systems to help us make the best use of the program as well as each of the work computers is invaluable to us," said Alice Plug-Buist, Executive Director of Helping Hands Street Mission. "They provided us with a much more reliable and comfortable technology experience, and as result lets us get back to focusing on our work supporting the friends in the Helping Hands community."

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"Technology shouldn't be a barrier, it should be an enabler. The more people they can reach, the more work the can do, the better. The ROI is based on the happiness that theyhave, and the work they're doing."

John Krikke, Onward Computer Systems Vice President

KEY BENEFITS



The added technology infrastructure made remote work accessible for the entire organization, a massive benefit during a global pandemic. "The ability to work outside of the office while still easily accessing all the information we need provides for more seamless and efficient work, especially given all of the current reasons we have to need to, and even just want to, work virtually," said Helping Hands Street Mission Executive Director, Alice Plug-Buist. "We are still learning to use Sharepoint well, but the opportunities it provides are exciting, both in ease of use as well as convenience."

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Our new computers work more quickly, allowing access to the things we need more efficiently.”



KEY BENEFITS

The work Helping Hands volunteers and employees do can be especially challenging, and requires work/life balance to avoid burnout

"Work with vulnerable, marginalized people takes a toll, and being able to set the work aside at night and use our personal computer for personal matters creates a healthier balance for us," Alice Plug-Buist said.

"These are people whose hearts go out to the community — they just want to help people," Krikke said. "They don't want to be IT experts. Anything we can do to make their work easier, means they make life easier for the people they serve."



Contact Onward Computer Systems to learn how they can support your technology so your focus stays on your business goals

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