

THE CUSTOMER



ClearSprings

Sector:
Public Services

Industry:
Housing Management
Public Services

Location:
United Kingdom

Profile:
ClearSprings has been providing accommodation and support services to local and central government in the UK since 1999.

They provide a range of housing options with allied support services in more than 45 areas across England and Wales. They work closely with local authorities, the BIA and the MOJ to deliver exactly what is required according to the contracts they are party to.

They work hard to ensure that their service users receive the support they need and have the very best opportunity to move into successful, independent living.

Solution Technology Stack:

- Microsoft Windows Server (Ent.)
- Microsoft Office SharePoint Services
- Microsoft WSS
- Microsoft SQL Server (Ent.)
- Microsoft ISA



THE CHALLENGE

ClearSprings provides its services by managing a complex network of resources and services. An in-house team of 14 software developers took 6 years to design and deliver a complex bespoke services management program to help manage their core business processes.

While initially successful, the ASP program they delivered was not flexible enough to change at the same pace as the organisation or the contracts that it serviced. Essential line-of-business modifications took 3 to 6 months to develop and implement (often too late to make a real difference to the organisation). The increasing complexity of the application made it increasingly susceptible to crashing - leaving staff with no alternative but to consistently work around the failing system (costing them time and money).

Some core information was only accessible by call-centre users at the head office, who quickly became overwhelmed during times of high demand.

Ultimately poor performance, poor reliability, poor flexibility and high maintenance costs forced decision makers at ClearSprings to investigate alternatives that could better support their business.

ClearSprings mission and vision:

Vision

- To be the leading private provider of outsourced accommodation and support services to communities, organisations and government across the UK.
- This offering to be enhanced by a family of outstanding ClearSprings Group support services to deliver market leading value to our customers.

Values

- Be a highly professional, trusted, fast moving and talented company that works hard together as a diverse, flexible and freely communicating team to deliver the services we all passionately believe in.

THE SOLUTION

ClearSprings decision makers assessed a number of technologies when investigating alternatives to their legacy business software. The key pain points that they aimed to address were slow change deployment times, poor stability, poor performance (system lag during peak activity) and poor ability to change with future business needs. They considered replacing it with a like-for-like platform developed on ASP .NET (a new technology) and a CRM (Customer Relationship Management) system, but finally selected Microsoft Office SharePoint Services (MOSS) as the platform of choice.

The built in automated workflow manager in Microsoft Office SharePoint allowed our designers to build reliable, repeatable service delivery into the software. It meant that users experienced a consistently high level of service with the same resources and with less chance of human error.

The Microsoft Office SharePoint platform was flexible enough to meet the changing demands of the organisation as it grew. The familiar Microsoft User Interface (UI) meant that end-users could use the solution right away, not only call-centre operators, giving staff access to live and accurate information on-site when and where it was needed.

The entire solution is secure. Keeping user, service user and resource information secure is vital to ensure safety in accordance with both the data protection act and the terms of the contracts that they service. Emphasis was put on system stability - making sure that service delivery was never compromised by poor system performance.

The final solution enable ClearSprings to consistently meet the increasing demands on their resources and services with less intervention and less overall cost, all without sacrificing the quality of service that sets them apart from competition.

THE BENEFITS

- The solution gives all end-users direct access to the information and resources they need to do their work efficiently and effectively when and where they need it.
- The solution was designed, developed and implemented in under a year (compared to six years using a bespoke technology like .NET) and at a seventh of the cost of the legacy system it replaced.
- In addition to providing a platform to manage service delivery, the system also enables managers to monitor and assess staff, resource and area performance, giving them the ability to make objective and well informed management decisions.
- The commercial team have been given access to real-time reporting functionality that enables them to confidently answer queries regarding services at any level of detail, at any time.
- The solution acts as a platform for all internal and contracted project management. Managers can assess service levels achieved by in-house staff and contracted staff side-by-side.
- Versioning means that system generated and annual 3rd party auditing of the information within the system takes days not weeks.

THE CUSTOMERS PERSPECTIVE

"The new service delivery software designed and implemented by the Softwerx team has exceeded our every expectation.

The service team are pleased to finally have a platform that they are confident using, the directors are pleased to have access to live service information and our IT costs are down 70%."

**Randle Slatter, Finance Director
ClearSprings Management**

Our team of experienced consultants design and implement systems that help organisations achieve their goals.

Our experience in IT outsourcing can give your organisation the tools it needs to:

- **provide IT support to all users**
- **significantly reduce costs and deliver services within your IT budget**
- **reduce unscheduled downtime**
- **meet all legal and policy obligations**
- **manage the life cycle of your IT systems**

