



CASE STUDY

The Real Estate Council



GXA applies outside-of-the-box thinking to future-proof The Real Estate Council's technology infrastructure.

Taking tech to the next level, without taxing resources.

The Real Estate Council (www.recouncil.com) is a non-profit trade organization comprised of over 1,300 commercial real estate professionals. They use their expertise, relationships and fundraising to strengthen the communities where they do business and enhance the real estate industry through networking, government advocacy and good works.

Challenge: Upgrading IT without huge capital investments

President/CEO Linda McMahon explains, "We had a good IT company supporting us before, but we needed more assistance because we didn't have a full time IT resource on staff. As we reviewed our operations, we realized that we had out-of-date software and aging servers and equipment." She adds that portions of their IT infrastructure had gone unmaintained for several years and needed service.

“I have never experienced the level of personal support that GXA provides, anywhere else. I can't imagine any other partner that would give us this level of personal support.”

**Linda McMahon, President/CEO,
The Real Estate Council**



They didn't want to have to make huge capital investments in those areas. According to McMahon, they chose GXA Network Solutions "to have a partner that would help us think about strategies to maximize our IT abilities as well as think outside-the-box to reduce our expenses and manage our equipment." Specifically, their organization wanted to see improvements in several areas, so that they could operate more efficiently and cost-effectively. They wanted to:

- Align IT strategy and organizational goals
- Upgrade aging IT infrastructure
- Document the IT environment and maintain information about network, server and domain
- Establish improved support processes and procedures solutions

GXA first helped The Real Estate Council (TREC) think through their options and ensure that their upgraded IT infrastructure would clearly serve their organizational goals. From there, they moved TREC's platform to the Cloud and identified gaps in technology support.

Step One: Map a path to the organization's goals with a technology audit.

"One of GXA's core strengths," explains GXA Network Solutions President George Makaye, "is our ability to fuse business intelligence with technical expertise. We always start by understanding an organization's business objectives, so that we can ensure their IT solutions point toward them." For that reason, GXA:



- Met with TREC leaders to understand current and future organizational needs
- Performed a comprehensive problem-prevention audit
- Used audit results to document TREC's current network
- Assembled short-term critical recommendations and a long-term strategic technology plan
- Designed and implemented a robust, scalable and secure network infrastructure

Step Two: Immediately improve tech performance.

For measurable performance gains as dramatic as they were costeffective, GXA started by upgrading TREC's aging infrastructure with new systems that could scale and adapt to future growth.

- Migrated TREC's old server infrastructure to a brand new system
- Decommissioned old servers, cleaned up old data and helped reorganize their network
- Upgraded TREC's internet from T1 to high-bandwidth, ultra-fast fiber through a reliable provider



Step Three: Streamline and ease TREC's day-to-day work

GXA shouldered the burden of the most difficult aspects of IT management, including dealing with sometimes difficult third-party technology vendors to resolve longstanding issues quickly.

- Migrated TREC email system from an internal email server to the more efficient Office 365
- Upgraded their Microsoft Office software to Office 365 Professional Pro
- Upgraded their desktops to new hardware that would help maximize staff performance
- Facilitated resolution of several issues with their business applications; GXA worked and interfaced directly with application vendor to close issues that had gone unresolved for months

Step Four: Ensure long-term, future-proofed performance by aligning tech with future goals

- GXA offers the industry's leading service and support platform. McMahon marvels, "If we have a system outage, they show up on Sunday to make sure we are operational on Monday morning."
- Implemented 24X7 on-going rapid response Managed and Cloud Services



- Provided an ongoing suite of servers that positions GXA as TREC's full-blown IT department
- Now handles all Virtual CIO, vendor management, and project management tasks for TREC

Step Five: Protect against downtime and data disasters

Finally, GXA designed and implemented a comprehensive Cloud backup and disaster recovery solution to work seamlessly with their more robust IT backbone, to ensure continuity of operations in case of a catastrophic event.

Conclusion

The Real Estate Council was facing a common IT problem: how to update aging IT infrastructure and service to ensure it could continue to grow and serve its members even more effectively, well into the future and without necessitating massive capital expenditures. They turned to long-time technology partner GXA because they trusted GXA's ability to think outside-the-box and find leading solutions that wouldn't tax TREC's resources. The result: TREC saw immediate improvement in technology performance metrics and now enjoys GXA's exemplary signature service.

Executive Summary

Challenge

The Real Estate Council (TREC) needed to update an aging, unmaintained IT infrastructure to keep pace with the organization's growth and enhance its effectiveness.



Solution

GXA Network Solutions aligned TREC's technology plan with their organizational goals and took over virtually all IT functionality.

Results

TREC saw immediate speed and capacity boosts, while enjoying an unmatched level of service that resolved longstanding problems quickly and prevented new ones from arising.

About The Real Estate Council

Founded in 1990, The Real Estate Council is a dynamic organization of more than 1,300 commercial real estate professionals and 500 companies representing 95% of the top commercial real estate businesses in North Texas. The Real Estate Council pursues industry advocacy efforts on local and statewide public policy issues and works to improve the quality of life in Dallas through The Real Estate Council Foundation with initiatives that address housing, education, job creation and the environment.

Over the last 20 years, The Real Estate Council's FightNight, Giving Gala and Community Partners Program have raised more than \$20 million. The organization is a leader of efforts shaping the future of Dallas including the original \$1.5 million investment that spearheaded Klyde Warren Park, as well as \$6.3 million in pro bono legal and title services and \$250,000 in funding that helped create the Dallas Urban Land Bank. In 2010, the City of Dallas was awarded a \$2.225 million U.S. Housing and Urban Development grant made possible by a \$275,000 Transit Oriented Development study funded by The Real Estate Council and two of its Community Partners. Find out more at www.recouncil.com or by calling 214.692.3600



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