

Lifeline WA 12-month roadmap to improved productivity and security

Not-for-profit (NFP) organisations play a critical role in social welfare, charity, and maintaining healthy communities. However, limited budgets, increasing demands, and tight regulations challenge these organisations. Moreover, not-for-profit organisations are witnessing a swift surge in their information technology (IT) needs as it has become a crucial catalyst for operational efficiency and security. Nevertheless, NFPs encounter several hurdles while integrating and implementing technology in their workplace, such as the absence of clear IT guidance, the intricacy and time consumption of system upgrades, the expenses associated with change, and the potential reluctance of staff due to change fatigue.

To address these issues and other NFP-specific IT challenges, organisations need to partner with IT providers that deliver long-term strategic solutions to strengthen organisations from within, spur engagement and better serve NFPs' purpose.

Bremmar, a Microsoft Modern Workplace partner and 2021 Microsoft Not-for-profit partner of the year finalist, is one such company.

Bremmar – A Microsoft NFP partner of the year finalist

With decades of experience in the NFP space, Bremmar's service portfolio includes strategic guidance, cloud services and support, managed IT services, cybersecurity solutions, information management and business process efficiency, and IT consulting services, specialising in Microsoft products. However, what sets Bremmar apart is their dedication to partnering with not-for-profit organisations, providing them with tailored solutions to their distinct requirements.

"Seventy per cent of our clients are in the not-for-profit sector. It's great working for non-profits because we truly understand their organisation and their challenges, and we can deliver on their specific needs," says Brenton Harris, Bremmar's Managing Director.

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Bremmar's unwavering dedication to social responsibility is deeply ingrained in their ethos, setting them apart as a valuable partner for NFPs striving to make a difference.

The NFP partner of choice

Bremmar has earned a reputation as a trusted name among not-for-profit organisations and recently added Lifeline WA - which receives over 60,000 mental health crisis-related calls each year - to their list of success stories.

Lifeline WA provides all Western Australians experiencing a personal crisis or thinking about suicide access to 24-hour crisis support and suicide prevention services.

Targeted transformation for Lifeline WA

Identifying an organisation's IT needs and delivering consistent improvements are challenging tasks, especially for organisations without a large IT team. This is the case of the Operations and Facilities Coordinator at Lifeline WA, Seth Phillips, who implements the organisation's IT initiatives.

By its nature, mapping IT needs is a complex and demanding task requiring significant technical expertise from many sectors. Fortunately, the team at Bremmar played a crucial role in helping Seth achieve his IT mapping goals.

"To have Bremmar as an escalation point gives me a lot of confidence to support the team and manage the systems better. They've got a great breadth of expertise across all Microsoft products, which means I can get answers quickly, learn and improve my skills as I go," says Seth Phillips.

Identifying NFP technical needs

New technologies and solutions are constantly emerging, leading to the ever-evolving nature of IT needs.

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By its very nature, identifying IT needs is ongoing and requires constant monitoring and evaluation. Therefore, Lifeline WA needed to be supported long-term, with current and future requirements in mind.

Lifeline WA's needs encompassed various areas, including hardware, software, network infrastructure, cybersecurity, and data management. Additionally, different departments

had unique IT requirements based on their business functions and objectives'

IT expertise where it's needed

Bremmar's expertise in Microsoft 365 products was instrumental in tailoring the solutions to address Lifeline WA's IT pain points, meet their needs, and fit within their budget requirements.

"We've actually collaborated with Bremmar on a number of projects. SharePoint Migration was the first one, then a Microsoft Teams Calling rollout and the digitisation of forms and business processes. In all of those projects, it's been really easy to work with Bremmar because they involved me from the very beginning, right to the very end in the planning process," says Seth.

In addition, Seth highlights Bremmar's approach. "I was just really impressed with how Bremmar didn't just try to sell us an off the shelf product. They actually sat down and worked out what our needs were and helped us achieve those needs."

Another example includes how Bremmar's team helped Lifeline WA automate its manual processes and reduce the amount of paper used, allowing employees to focus on delivering their services, reducing the burden of manual tasks and improving efficiency.

"The current IT initiatives with Bremmar have had a big impact on us achieving our purpose here at Lifeline WA. The enablement it has had to all employees to allow them to get on with their roles and concentrate on the services they deliver is important to us. And reducing the amount of paper that's going around the office, reducing the amount of process and

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procedure that we have. Any automation that's been put in has been key to achieving that," says Gavin Douglas, Chief Finance Officer at Lifeline WA.

Data security at the forefront

Bremmar and Lifeline WA place a high priority on data security, recognising the importance of ensuring the safety and protection of data. Gavin Douglas states, "We have a big obligation to the data that we hold and making sure that's safe and secure to all our clients and employees and people who use our services."

Since Bremmar's initial engagement, there have been key achievements in Lifeline WA's data security space. For example:

- Ransomware preparation and Essential 8 assessment
- Development of a ransomware scenario response plan
- Microsoft Defender Implementation
- Security Awareness Training & Simulation to all staff
- Improvement of Microsoft score by 6-7%
- Achievement of Essential 8 - Layer 1 compliancy
- Implementation of new outsourced backup system with Probox
- Protection of corporate files and client data through SharePoint online implementation

"The main change that we have implemented with Bremmar in the security space is the implementation of Microsoft Defender. The staff are picking up spam emails a lot better than they used to, but we also have done a phishing simulation exercise, and that was really good for highlighting who was getting caught by phishing in a safe way. As a result, staff have become a lot more aware of the security importance than they used to," says Seth.

Microsoft Defender

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Microsoft Defender is an advanced security solution that provides endpoint protection to safeguard devices from potential threats such as viruses, malware, and other malicious

software. It continuously monitors devices for suspicious activities and leverages artificial intelligence and machine learning technologies to identify and prevent threats in real-time.

"Most NFPs already have access to this tool through their Microsoft 365 Business Premium licensing; however, are not leveraging and are still paying third-party vendors for other anti-virus and anti-spam solutions," reinforces Rushad Billimoria, NFP IT Consultant at Bremmar.

Staff training

Notably, to raise Lifeline WA's staff awareness of the importance of security, Bremmar conducted a phishing simulation exercise.

"That was really good for highlighting who was getting caught by phishing in a safe way. As a result, staff have become much more aware of the security importance than they used to," says Seth Phillips.

In addition, Bremmar provided comprehensive training to Seth Phillips, enabling him to operate confidently and independently when dealing with data security issues.

"They trained me with anything I needed to know to support the users, and they were there to help me with the support afterwards as well."

Tailoring an IT roadmap and solutions to specific NFP needs

Another way Bremmar enabled Lifeline WA with strategic support was to tailor solutions to meet their unique needs rather than offering a one-size-fits-all strategy. By working closely with Lifeline WA, Bremmar allowed Seth and the team to achieve their goals in a way that worked best for them.

"We're there to help them own the solutions and own the outcome for the longer term,"

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says Brenton Harris.

In addition, Bremmar crafted a comprehensive plan for the upcoming 12 months to bolster Lifeline WA's security and efficiency further.

"We've got a comprehensive plan now for the changes we can make over the next twelve months that will improve our security, improve the efficiency of our processes and will help our staff get value out of their Microsoft investment," says Seth.

Bremmar is passionate about making a difference in the non-profit sector by providing customised solutions that meet each organisation's unique needs.

"We understand that each non-profit is different, with their own set of challenges and goals. That's why we work closely with each organisation, providing ongoing support and guidance to ensure our solutions are successful and effective," adds Rushad.

By tailoring their services to the individual needs of each non-for-profit, Bremmar helps organisations achieve their full potential and positively impact their local community.

Tech for Good

Bremmar also partners with other organisations with a similar passion and values towards the not-for-profit sector. For instance, Crayon, a global technology vendor. The collaboration shows how companies working together can achieve the common goal of enabling NFPs through technology and Microsoft licensing. Crayon believes in using technology to create positive social change and that its 'Tech for Good' initiative is a way to use its skills and expertise to make a difference in the world.

"Working with Bremmar in the not-for-profit space in the past contributed to Crayon's decision to create its Tech For Good initiative. And it is their commitment and focused engagement on non-profits like Lifeline WA and many others that make us feel good that we're in the right place to support Bremmar and the great work they do," says Tovia Va'aelua, Vice-President of Sales – Tech for Good.

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In conclusion, Bremmar's partnership with Lifeline WA demonstrates its expertise in the not-for-profit sector and its ability to provide tailored IT solutions that address the unique challenges faced by such organisations. Not-for-profit organisations can efficiently deliver essential services by leveraging the right technology, significantly impacting society.

As Brenton Harris puts it, "It's great going to work knowing that we can have an impact on the NFP organisations that we serve and their purpose in the community."

A special thank you to our Microsoft licensing partner



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