

A Case Study of Lutheran Homes Society

History of Lutheran Home Society

Lutheran Homes Society (LHS) was founded on August 6, 1860, in the days leading up to the Civil War. The Society's ministry began as a home for orphans, but expanded in 1906 to include care of the elderly. Today, having just completed its 150th year of service, LHS supports more than 2,500 youth and elderly, located throughout northwest Ohio and southeast Michigan, each of whom benefit from LHS residential and community services. LHS's mission statement, *"As followers of Christ, we are called to do what lies within our power to share burdens that weigh upon the young and the old and to alleviate sorrow and misery in His name"*, is reflected in each area of ministry that LHS provides.

LHS is affiliated with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) and the Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod (LC-MS). It is also a member of Lutheran Services in America (LSA) which is an alliance of the ELCA, LC-MS, and their nearly 300 human service organizations. These members deliver services annually to over three million people in three thousand communities across the country.

LHS offers extended care facilities, assisted living facilities and independent living residences for seniors, as well as group homes and supportive services for youth.

Background

Prior to working with Prelude Services, LHS outsourced their IT management and support services to a local vendor. They had built a patchwork of over 17 servers housed at each individual site. Email was stored on multiple servers. In fact, at one site a server went down and LHS found itself manually recreating accounting data for six months worth of

records. The network became more unreliable as they continued to grow. Additionally, software licensing and updating was tracked using an outdated, manual method. There were on-going concerns regarding network security.

Managing the Mission

LHS recognized that the current level of risk was unsustainable. Given the previous loss of mission critical data, licensing audits and potential fines, LHS decided to take a more holistic approach to their IT management. As they observed colleagues moving forward with their IT management, they realized they needed to find an IT provider with experience, and familiarity with the senior healthcare environment who could quickly get them up to speed. They released an RFP and reviewed four different technology services providers.

LHS selected Prelude Services to provide their organization with a comprehensive technology management program.



Dave Roberts, the CEO of LHS, states, "Prelude is a true partner of LHS. It is like a personal relationship. It's not just a person at the other end of the phone, but someone that you generally feel is helping you manage your mission. They're not just another vendor."

Preludes' previous SAS70 and now SSAE16 accreditation was unfamiliar to us when we first started looking for someone to manage our systems. This compliance standard ensures third-parties that our IT systems are secure.

The R&D and product development that Prelude provides enables us to implement new solutions. They have the horsepower to handle the mission critical items with instantaneous success. Prelude's afterhours and weekend support is well planned and well manned".



LHS Today

The current technology environment for LHS looks much different from previous days. Prelude has been able to effectively reduce the "sprawl" of servers that often happens without centralized management and controls. At the same time,

Prelude is providing a level of redundancy that did not previously exist. Prelude provides a comprehensive set of services for LHS, designed to provide a holistic management strategy for all of LHS' technology resource requirements.

Some of these services include:

- Centralized IT hardware support
- Application support
- Application hosting
- Testing area for future development
- Data security
- VoIP Telecommunication services
- Centralized Help Desk
- User training

Prelude ensures that each of LHS' five Senior Living communities, and 13 affordable housing properties continue to function at the highest level on a 7 x 24 x 365 basis.

Prelude also provides LHS with Technology Planning and Leadership, enabling them to stay in the forefront of the ever-changing technology continuum.

In the words of Lorinda Schalk, VP of Youth, Housing and Community Services at LHS, "Prelude has brought us into the 21st Century. Our annual technology and industry strategy sessions enable us to partner with Prelude, so we are more up-to-date and efficient in our daily operations at LHS."

If you'd like to see how Preludes Services can help your organization succeed in today's continually changing technology and regulatory environment, contact us today at: 800-579-1047