



Nonprofit Profile

TBF provides grants to nonprofit, community-based organizations and works with donors to help identify giving opportunities that match their charitable goals. TBF is one of the largest community foundations in the US.

The Boston Foundation Utilizes Technology to Meet the Needs of the Community

Challenge

Founded in 1915, The Boston Foundation is one of the oldest community foundations, and today TBF is one of the largest. With over 750 separate funds established by hundreds of donors and an endowment of 650 million, the organization heavily relies on technology to manage these monies and meet the needs of the communities that it serves. In its most recent fiscal year, it received new gifts of 44 million and made grants totaling 48 million.

mindSHIFT executives met Jim Pitts, CFO of The Boston Foundation in 2001, while completing a project for the Nonprofit Advisory Committee. Pitts was involved in the committee's work, laying the groundwork for future technology practices for community foundations. Impressed with mindSHIFT's work and concerned with TBF's upcoming office move, Pitts asked mindSHIFT to conduct an assessment of his IT staff and current system. Jim wanted a move plan as well as recommendations for improvements to TBF's internal systems and support solution.

At the completion of the assessment, TBF decided to have their internal IT person implement these recommendations rather than enter into a comprehensive partnership with mindSHIFT.

Solution

In 2003, TBF's management realized their systems hadn't been improved by the internal IT person as spelled out in mindSHIFT's recommendations. The ongoing problems were too much for the management team to bear. Pitts contacted mindSHIFT again, this time to become explore a full service relationship. After receiving the mindSHIFT proposal, Pitts engaged mindSHIFT as its technical partner.

mindSHIFT upgraded TBF's internal systems to provide a greater level of stability and replaced all of their workstations, servers, and firewall in three phases. mindSHIFT now provides comprehensive IT support services to TBF that includes:

- Management of LAN, servers, and workstations
- Management of software applications
- Management and administration of email
- Comprehensive network security
- Virus and spam filtering
- Redundant internet access and wide area networking
- 24 x 7 network monitoring of TBF's entire infrastructure
- 24 x 7 help desk support for all users
- Secure remote access for mobile users

Results

"mindSHIFT is made up of very smart people who are driven to provide quick no-nonsense help."

Jim Pitts,
Chief Financial Officer
The Boston Foundation

The decision to eliminate the inside technology position in favor of a managed service provider was a hard one. However, Pitts and his senior management team realized that a single person simply could not effectively cover all of the technology bases for the 60+ person organization. "Hiring mindSHIFT has allowed us to break the bottleneck and remove other constraints that kept us perpetually behind in satisfying users needs," said Pitts.

By using the mindSHIFT solution:

- TBF is able to focus on important long-term technical strategic goals instead of day-to-day support issues. With a new system and support structure in place, TBF was able to form two internal committees, the IT Committee and Expert Users Group, to help guide the future of IT. TBF is invested in the success of their technology systems.
- TBF has a stable/secure network, and operational risk has been decreased dramatically. mindSHIFT removed all network wide security holes and rebuilt the entire infrastructure of the network using a proven list of best practices. TBF now benefits from state of the art servers running the latest software and patches, an upgraded e-mail system, new firewall, a fully documented nightly backup routine, upgraded and centrally managed Anti-Virus software, and 24x7 server and firewall monitoring to prevent problems before they arise.
- TBF staff has access to 24x7 unlimited technical support and a wide range of technical resources. mindSHIFT's solution provides a multi-level support structure available to all employees at the Foundation. One TBF employee said "I think that the staff has a wide range of technical skills which really empowers me to ask questions that I wouldn't have bothered to ask before. Their attitude is 'can-do' and they have worked to find solutions for my every technical problem."