

## CASE STUDY

Busy Park District Has a  
Million Things to Deal With:  
IT Isn't One of Them

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When a park district needed to move its network data system to a new headquarters across town, the district IT manager saw an opportunity to do more than just relocate. A partnership with GO Technology Group helped remake a patchwork system of technology into a secure, streamlined and state-of-the-art network that was COVID-ready before anyone even knew what it was...

Five years ago, a busy suburban park district had nearly a dozen administrative sites spread out across the city, with its computers operating on almost as many different networks. From one location to the next, phone systems were different, desktops were set up in varying ways, and in-house IT employees spent a lot of time driving.

The district had outside IT support, but there was no real system pulling all of the pieces together. "Nothing was working, nothing jelled, and there was no uniformity," the IT manager recalls.

Then she got a recommendation from another vendor about an IT provider who operated a little differently.

"I said I really need a network consultant," the manager said. "We had used two other companies with bigger names and they just didn't work. GO Technology came in and said, 'Let's start with your priorities.' He was so organized and professional," she said of GO Technology Group's president, John Marta.

"He said 'Tell me your goals. What are you looking to achieve?' Then he drafted a plan... and we worked backwards from the end game."

The goals included the creation of a streamlined and uniform system of technology across the district. The manager also wanted to be out in front of security risks and opportunities to innovate. "They have just completely changed (the system) from that reactive posture to a proactive environment," she says.

Here's an overview of what the district has been able to achieve in partnership with GO Technology:

### Uniformity

It began with an inventory of every piece of equipment in the district's server room and throughout the district. Desktops were upgraded so that each system was the same.

### Security and Redundancy

Enhanced security and firewall protection bolstered by redundancy put the district's system on solid ground. A virtual environment and two network copies were created in the main location and replicated in a second location across town. In the event of an outage, a live copy can be activated with a flip of a switch. An additional copy is housed in GO Technology Group's offsite data center. "I have four copies of my environment. One of them is offsite. That was a huge step—very progressive for a park district," the IT manager said.

### Backup

A generator project, including a detailed plan for prioritizing power use, left the park district well protected against a wide range of scenarios, from ransomware to severe weather. Whatever comes, "we're ready for it," the IT manager said.

*"These guys have worked until 3 in the morning. I'm sleeping like a baby."*

— Park District IT manager on partnering with GO Technology Group

## Ongoing Support

In addition to 24/7 monitoring of the network for problems, anomalies or signs of intrusion, GO Technology manages updates, subscriptions, licensing and vendor management and ensures that software is always cutting edge and up-to-date. "Their knowledge of products is just amazing," the manager said.

## Time Savings

An estimated 10 hours a month of the IT manager's time that used to be spent troubleshooting network issues with various vendors is now free for more valuable work. The district also saves an estimated 15 hours of IT staff time per week now that IT issues can be managed from wherever IT employees are, instead of having to drive from office to office.

## Cost Savings

The district has reaped payroll savings of roughly \$40,000 annually, plus benefits, for an IT department vacancy that the manager did not have to fill after partnering with GO Technology.

## Education and Training

GO Technology also manages employee training programs that have reduced the district's vulnerability to phishing scams and other malware from 80% to 27%—a rating system under which the government agency average is 65%.

## A "Night & Day Difference" for the IT Manager

Today, nearly five years later, the strategy has advanced the park district's IT security and sophistication to a level few park districts could match. "It's a night and day difference," the IT manager said. "They manage every aspect of our network. They're on top of everything. It has freed up so much time and (eliminated) so much stress—knowing that we have a sound environment."

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She also likes the fact that she can pick up the phone at 3 a.m. and get Marta on the phone. Even better, she says, is that she doesn't have to. When there's a problem, "they are already on it," she said. "These guys have worked until 3 in the morning. I'm sleeping like a baby. I have never had a company so responsive."

That's no small thing for a district operating hundreds of programs and facilities, from batting cages to golf courses, ice rinks and swimming pools, music, fitness, art, and every variety of recreational classes for residents of every age—no small feat in the best of times. A solid IT—and well-timed IT partnership keeps the district covered in the not-so-best of times as well.

Thanks to GO Technology Group, in fact, the district already had its VPN network in place before the pandemic struck. "With the technology they introduced, we were able to work from home seamlessly before anybody even knew what COVID was," the IT manager says.

## About GO Technology Group

Get more done with managed IT services that work for you, not the other way around. Start with GO Technology Group's **technology landscape assessment**, will give you a technology plan, implement it and support your team with 15-minute response time. Whether you have a small in-house staff or none, we will support any combination of software, hardware, mobile devices, servers, and cloud that you use and need. Go Technology Group is a trusted provider of managed IT services for many organizations, with special expertise with law firms, private K-12 schools, local government agencies, independent medical offices, and professional services firms.