Making a difference with a new network.

The St Vincent de Paul Society in Australia has more than 40,000 members and volunteers, who work hard to assist people in need and combat social injustice across Australia. Internationally, the Society operates in 149 countries and has over 950,000 members.

An increase in demand for St. Vincent de Paul Society's much needed services was putting a strain on an ageing network infrastructure.

The Society identified the need for an improved data network to ensure the organisation's goals were fully supported. They wanted something that would remove risk and improve overall performance.

Following a rigorous tendering process, the Society sought a vendor that demonstrated an understanding of their business, and the importance of delivering services to those in need.

After reviewing many proposals, they engaged Enablis to provide a new data network (Wide Area Network) to strengthen the organisation's goals, and provide staff with greater overall access speed to applications.

A highly fragmented network over a large geographic spread comes with its own set of challenges. The Society were conscious of ensuring any changes caused minimal disruption to their large volunteer network, as ensuring a supportive culture is at the core of the organisation's business operations.

Nick Prior, IT Manager said "Understanding that the infrastructure is only part of a much bigger picture, and that the bigger picture is far more important that anything we are doing. We simply provide the tools so that the front line can give the assistance they do."

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>
> **- Nick Prior, IT Manager**

Name	Area of operation	Year founded	Number of sites
St. Vincent de Paul Society	Charity	1854	33

Stability, security & speed supports key goals

Prior describes their selection process, "We used a third party consultant for the tender, and the responses from the larger players were stock standard figures in a template and, well they just didn't get what we were trying to do. A couple more were closer to the mark and Enablis was in that mix. But what struck me about Enablis was the team seemed genuinely interested, they wanted to know who was in the room. This was important because it showed they wanted to build the relationship, they wanted to understand who was there and what our issues were. That impressed me from the outset. A couple of the others felt like death by PowerPoint, they weren't interested."

Enablis customised a solution to support the goals of the Society, whilst enabling further growth & development. Enablis sought to remove existing bottlenecks, reduce downtime, and improve network stability, speed and security, all while keeping costs down. Prior said, "As we got into the technical design of the network it just made more sense. We were getting uncontended, improved bandwidth; hosted and firewalled internet access; and all for a small increase on opex over three years."

Prior said that improving collaboration throughout the Society was an important consideration. "We were able to start looking at the collaboration we needed and reducing the costs of other services by moving traffic over the WAN. When you consider that we have 16,000 members and volunteers it is far different to a typical corporate environment. We needed a provider to come on the journey with us. To understand what we are doing and why we are doing it," said Prior.

By utilising the comUnity Data platform, the Society's new network has the capacity to enable future project improvements and harness more cost effective technology platforms, providing significant benefits to staff productivity and lowering operational expenses.

Once comUnity Data was implemented, the Society saw immediate benefits with significantly reduced outages. Prior and the team received positive feedback on connectivity, uptime and reliability. "We can now concentrate on better understanding what the business wants, so we can deliver what they need and look at improving services in other ways," said Prior.

Technology Implemented

- **comUnity Data**
- **comUnity Secure**

Key Benefits

1 Reduced outages

2 Improved bandwidth

3 Enhanced process flows

4 Faster network speeds and access

5 Improved stability

6 Opportunity for growth

7 Improved collaboration

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