

Turning wishes into reality:

Make-A-Wish UK's digital transformation with Nerdio



Industry: Nonprofit

Platform: Nerdio Manager for Enterprise

Region: EMEA

RESULTS

Reduced

Azure bill by 40% each month

Led to

A positive end-user experience

Allowed

Team to refocus efforts on granting wishes



Challenges

- Struggled with managing a fragment manual IT environment.
- Lacked scalability and flexibility.
- Experienced hindered ability to efficiently support staff and volunteers across various locations.



Solution

- Implemented Microsoft Azure Virtual Desktop and Nerdio Manager for Enterprise, providing an automated, scalable platform for improved IT management.

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get started?**

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"Nerdio is unlike anything else on the market when it comes to managing AVD."

Make-A-Wish UK

[Make-A-Wish UK](#) was founded in 1986 to make the wishes of critically unwell children in the UK come true. These young people deal with unthinkable struggles on a daily basis. Make-A-Wish affords them a respite from being patients and makes their dreams come true, which is life-changing for the children and their families. It is vital that the organization's technology supporting employees and volunteers works seamlessly.

To accomplish this, the organization embarked on a digital transformation journey to migrate to the cloud and eliminate reliance on traditional laptops. Particularly when it came to supplying corporate volunteers with the access and technology needed to be effective, it simply wasn't practical for the charity to acquire, maintain, and manage large volumes of physical hardware.

"We wanted to implement a BYOD/thin client strategy as part of our digital transformation effort to better enable and empower our amazing volunteers to fulfill the Make-A-Wish mission in a safe, secure, reliable way," said Oliver Wilson, technology & workplace lead, Make-A-Wish UK. "To do so, we knew we'd need better day-to-day performance from our IT infrastructure that would also provide flexibility and scalability—the Microsoft Cloud was our first choice."

A foundation for success

The charity partnered with UK-based managed service provider Foundation IT to build out its cloud infrastructure and guide the digital strategy. Make-A-Wish opted to leverage Microsoft 365, so Microsoft's Cloud VDI service, Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD), was the obvious choice to enable remote work and provision virtual workspaces for volunteers. However, Wilson had concerns about managing it.

"With our finite resources, I can't afford to have a system in place that is going to require more hands-on management," added Wilson. "We needed a tool that could simplify the inherent complexities of AVD. And its use combined with legacy systems we had in place meant we had to consider cost implications, infrastructure, compatibility, and troubleshooting for end users."

With the support and guidance of Foundation IT, Wilson and team landed on Nerdio Manager for Enterprise as the management platform for AVD based on the automation capabilities and scalability of virtual machines.

Nerdio also automates some of the most arduous AVD management tasks. For instance, Nerdio automatically downloads the latest image from Microsoft every month and performs scripted

actions that walk through the step-by-step installation for over thirty different applications on the Firm's base images.

Nerdio Manager for Enterprise: A wish come true for IT

Following the implementation of Nerdio Manager, Wilson was immediately impressed with how much the platform improved efficiency and better enabled volunteers to get up and running.

"Unlike most corporate businesses with a set number of employees, we can experience heavy fluctuations in the number of users based on how many volunteers need to access the system in a given day," discussed Wilson. "The auto-scaling functionality in Nerdio Manager turns resources on and off as needed. If there's a spare machine not in use, it will be deallocated so it's not costing us anything. And in the same vein, users can be provisioned with a new machine in a matter of minutes versus manually creating a new VM in the Azure portal."

Nerdio's Unified Application Management (UAM) further fuels Wilson's efficiency in providing volunteers with the resources they need to deliver wishes. UAM allows IT to automatically pre-install applications on a machine rather than relying on the first user login to cue a group policy. In doing so, Wilson can equip a volunteer's designated desktop with the exact tools they need—ranging from Chrome to Creative Cloud and everything in between.

A better experience for employees and volunteers

Finally, a positive end-user experience has been key in Make-A-Wish's successful implementation of Nerdio and AVD. Across the not-for-profit sector as a whole, there has been a lot of reluctance from users to adopt new technology, so the Make-A-Wish IT team needed to ensure that whatever solution they chose would be virtually invisible to users.

The last thing I want is for IT to get in the way of the Make-A-Wish mission. If we gave users another portal to log into or application to open, we're just creating one more obstacle to delivering wishes," Wilson said. "But Nerdio just hides in the background—our users don't even know it exists. They can just open their machines, and they're immersed in a desktop experience that follows them to all of their devices natively and seamlessly—whether they want to work out of our offices, at home, or in a coffee shop."

Nerdio Manager also allows the organization to vastly scale and broaden its volunteer base, providing more flexibility and efficiency with provisioning.

“As Make-A-Wish grows, we know the roles of our volunteers will vary more and more—each with their own specific technical requirements,” said Wilson. “Nerdio allows IT to ensure every volunteer has the right tools in place from the start to provide critical assistance to the organization. They’re giving us their time, so I want to make them feel like part of our family and ensure their experiences are as seamless as possible.” Delivering more wishes to children in need

Delivering more wishes to children in need

In total, Nerdio Manager for Enterprise has delivered immense value for Make-A-Wish UK. Not only can the charity remove the burden of costly hardware and reduce its Azure bill via Nerdio’s auto-scaling capabilities each month by 40%, but it can also decrease its energy consumption. The thin clients now provisioned to volunteers are two-thirds more energy efficient than physical desktops and massive laptops, generating even more savings.

“As a not-for-profit, we’re always looking for ways to do more with less. The less we spend on IT infrastructure, hardware, and software, the more we can put towards granting the wishes of the over 60,000 children in the UK diagnosed with a critical condition,” Wilson shared. “Nerdio Manager for Enterprise is an irreplaceable tool in our stack that consistently pays for itself and saves us money across the organization.”

Additionally, Nerdio Manager has reduced the time Wilson and his team spend on administrative updates and user support by automating much of the grunt work associated with managing AVD. The time savings for the team adds up significantly over the span of a month, enabling them to focus on more proactive initiatives to further the charity’s mission.

About Make-A-Wish UK

Every day, the lives of 10 families in the UK are changed forever when a child is diagnosed with a serious illness. From that moment, childhood takes a backseat to medical appointments and worry. A wish helps to restore that childhood and puts worry on the backseat. It provides an opportunity to choose something positive to look forward to and the chance to be a child first and a patient second.

Make-A-Wish UK is a registered charity that was established in the UK in 1986 to support children and young people diagnosed with a serious illness or life-limiting condition by granting them their dearest wish. The charity receives no government funding—registered charity numbers: 295672 in England and Wales, SC037479 in Scotland.

About Nerdio

Nerdio is a leading provider of powerful, simplified cloud management solutions for businesses of all sizes. Trusted by managed service providers (MSPs) and enterprise IT departments alike, Nerdio equips organizations with seamless, cost-effective management tools for Azure Virtual Desktop (AVD), Windows 365, and comprehensive Modern Work solutions.

With thousands of customers worldwide, Nerdio accelerates cloud adoption, enabling companies to thrive in an era of hybrid work by providing modern, future-proof technology that adapts to evolving workplace needs.

For more information, please visit **www.getnerdio.com**.



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