

Anka Outsources IT to Fix Issues and Cut Costs, With Guidance From Armanino

CASE STUDY

armanino 

At A Glance

Customer Profile:

Founded in 1973, Anka Behavioral Health, Inc. is a nonprofit, behavioral healthcare organization supporting over 15,000 individuals every year across more than 70 locations in California and Michigan. Delivering services such as crisis residential treatment means being available around the clock, seven days a week, but Anka's technology and supporting staff could not keep up with the business continuity, speed, security and functionality needs of the organization. After one location was down for a week, Anka turned to Armanino to help it shift from an in-house IT team to an outsourced IT function.

Software & Services

- Armanino Technology Assessment

Benefits

- Gives executive team confidence in making informed technology decisions
- Saves money on technology, which is reinvested in services and programs
- Delivers improved uptime and response time for critical applications

"If you're unhappy with your technology situation, get Armanino involved—the sooner the better."

-Janice Washburn

Challenge

Anka Behavioral Health, Inc. began in 1973 as a small organization serving developmentally delayed children. Today the nonprofit is a large, multi-site agency assisting more than 15,000 people each year. With more than 70 locations and nearly 1,000 employees on staff, Anka is a premier behavioral healthcare organization supporting and providing treatment to individuals who are mentally ill, homeless, developmentally disabled or have substance use challenges.

Like most nonprofits, cash flow and cash management are crucial to the health of the organization and its ability to fulfill its mission. Yet the technology being used by the organization—from telephones to PCs to servers and software—was a major expense that was not working as it should. "Everything was running very slowly," says Janice Washburn, CFO at Anka. "But what impacted our operations the most was the unreliability of our systems. Servers kept breaking down, and one of our locations was down for an entire week."

While Washburn and Anka's CEO knew that the technology ecosystem needed to change to deliver the speed, reliability, security and cost-effective operation that the nonprofit needed, the internal IT team had different ideas. Being at odds with the in-house IT staff put the executives in a difficult situation. How could they make good decisions about how to modernize their technology when the current IT organization believed status quo was better?

Solution

Knowing that its long-time auditor, Armanino LLP, also offers technology assessment services as part of its Strategy and Transformation practice, Anka reached out for help. Armanino is one of the 25 largest independent accounting and consulting firms in the U.S., and the practice covers the full spectrum of consulting, from technology to processes to people.

"We're a behavioral health organization. IT is not, and should not be, our core competency," says Washburn. "We believed that by outsourcing our IT needs, we could both improve our technology ecosystem and redeploy savings to our core services." With that plan in mind, Anka engaged Armanino to:

- Provide change management guidance
- Gather business requirements, map processes, and determine technology gaps and needs
- Manage the request for proposal (RFP) process for outsourced IT services, including all vendor communications and acting as an extension of the Anka leadership team
- Assist in vendor selection, recommendation and contract negotiation

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-Janice Washburn

“Armanino managed everything from start to finish and guided us throughout the RFP process,” says Washburn. “The Armanino team helped us narrow down the vendors responding to the RFP to the top three choices based on fit, experience, capabilities and adaptability.”

With the field narrowed, Armanino and Anka together met with each finalist for a second round of review. Using an Armanino-created decision matrix, Anka chose one outsourcing provider to help it modernize its technology stack, move to the cloud, provide business continuity and speed, and save money on technology and supporting resources.

Results

Washburn and the rest of the executive team at Anka are thrilled with the results of outsourcing the IT function. Already the organization has saved \$18,000 per month on network and phone equipment alone. “As leases come up for renewal, our outsourced IT partner is helping us replace what we have with better equipment at a lower cost,” says Washburn.

Anka now has the reliability, speed and security it needs to deliver the highest quality behavioral health services around the clock, seven days a week. “My advice to other nonprofits is don’t be afraid to take the step to outsource your IT function, especially if you’re spending a lot of money and still not getting what you need” says Washburn. “If you’re unhappy with your technology situation, get Armanino involved—the sooner the better.”

Washburn appreciates the knowledge sharing, guidance and best practices that Anka received. “Armanino delivered great value for us,” she says. “We had no idea how to proceed, but they were there to guide us to the best decision each step of the way.”

Next Steps

With an outsourced IT team in place, Anka can now turn its attention to improving other aspects of its technology roadmap. Armanino remains a trusted resource for audit services, as well as technology consulting and thought leadership. “It’s incredibly easy to work with Armanino,” says Washburn. “We gain so much every time we talk to the Armanino team.”

About Armanino^{LLP}

Armanino provides an integrated set of accounting services—audit, tax, consulting and technology solutions—to a wide range of organizations operating both in the US and globally. You can count on Armanino to think strategically, to provide the sound insights that lead to positive action. We address not just your compliance issues, but your underlying business challenges, as well—assessing opportunities, weighing risks, and exploring the practical implications of both your short- and long-term

decisions. When you work with us, we give you options that are fully aligned with your business strategy. If you need to do more with less, we will implement the technology to automate your business processes. If it's financial, we can show you proven benchmarks and best practices that can add value company-wide. If the issue is operational, we'll consult with your people about workflow efficiencies. If it's compliance, we'll ensure you meet the requirements and proactively plan to take full advantage of the changes at hand. At every stage in your company's lifecycle, we'll help you find the right balance of people, processes, and technology.