

CASE
STUDY

City of Georgetown (Ky.)



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Home to some of the most historically revered places in the Commonwealth, the city of Georgetown is truly a Kentucky treasure.

Profile

Georgetown is the birthplace of bourbon whiskey, the home of Georgetown College, and the gateway to the Kentucky Horse Park. It has a lengthy array of cultural landmarks—such as the Cardome Center, Ward Hall, the Old Friends retirement facility for Thoroughbred racehorses, and the Barn Quilt Trail.

The city is host to Toyota's first wholly owned manufacturing facilities, the largest Toyota plant outside of Japan and a vital employer in the Bluegrass. The health care industry also has found a home in Georgetown, which boasts Georgetown Community Hospital and regional campuses for Baptist Health Lexington and UK HealthCare.

Georgetown's population is nearly 32,000, making it Kentucky's ninth-largest city by population. City leaders expect a jump to seventh ranking when the U.S. Census Bureau releases its next report. With eight elementary schools, three middle schools, and a high school full to capacity with bright young minds, the city has plans for an additional middle school and high school.

Georgetown—named in 1790 in honor of President George Washington—is the seat of Scott County. Seen as a perfect mixture of historical significance and modern amenities, Georgetown is expanding at an impressive rate. The city relies on a host of government offices and departments to support its many offerings. Leadership of Georgetown's city government includes a mayor, eight-member city council, and city clerk.



Challenge

“
We became technology-dependent without recognizing the need for robust maintenance of that technology—we took it for granted.”

Andrew Hartley
Georgetown City Attorney

For many years, an internal information technology manager oversaw Georgetown’s technology infrastructure. Starting with a turnover in that position in 2012, city government leaders seized the opportunity to consider improvements to its technological capabilities going forward.

Late in 2013, Georgetown’s city leadership determined the best solution for scalable technology to meet the present and future needs of its citizens and businesses would be a managed I.T. services provider (MSP). The city began working with a MSP specializing in government offices while maintaining its internal I.T. manager. During the following year, the city expanded its MSP contract to add an on-site engineer. That solution, while well-vetted, presented challenges.

Help desk services provided by the MSP’s network operations center (NOC) were a poor fit for the city’s demands. The result for Georgetown employees was fragmentation of duties: Different departments were improvising solutions on their own, and non-technical employees were tasked with I.T. responsibilities that pulled them from their core responsibilities. Meanwhile, some of the city’s technology investments were broken or needed updates that the MSP was unable to address. The mayor and council viewed the situation as not only a resource problem but also a security concern.

Andrew Hartley, Georgetown’s City Attorney and unofficial interim I.T. Director, recalled that city leadership sought a new solution offering more value. Another requirement was for the new solution to improve the city’s ticketing system for I.T. issue tracking, resolution, and accountability. Finding a managed services provider with an internal (and local) NOC was seen as a major competitive advantage.

Adding to Georgetown’s challenge was its unique role as a public entity: As the city considered a new I.T. strategy, it was under scrutiny from local media, the public, Council members, auditors, government regulators, and even internal employees.



Solution



Previously, non-technical employees were tasked with I.T. responsibilities that pulled them from their core responsibilities.

The government of Georgetown had an existing relationship with NetGain Technologies, which had installed a phone system and completed a workflow study for the city previously. NetGain Technologies also had worked with Georgetown's police department for years. City leaders consulted with the local MSP to determine if a customized managed-services program could meet the city's unique requirements.

Georgetown's City Council played a critical role in approving and adopting a new I.T. solution for the city. For a new solution to work, it required buy-in from all affected parties. Initially, the city's leaders were reluctant to move to a pure managed I.T. services model—that is, a completely remote support environment, without a staffer onsite in the city's government complex.

After hearing a presentation about the services available within NetGain's Technology OneSource program, the mayor and city councilors toured the company's network operations center, which operates only 20 minutes away from Georgetown city offices. The city leaders were impressed by the SOC 2 Type II security controls in place in the NOC, and by the 24/7 helpdesk staffed by NetGain's heavily certified engineers. The MSP's proximity to Georgetown was also seen as advantageous.

An important component of the solution offered by NetGain Technologies was to provide routine, periodic business reviews to the city. Georgetown's previous MSP claimed a "virtual CIO" (vCIO) service, but city leaders were disappointed in the lack of information and reporting.

Additionally, as the city considered outsourcing its I.T. to NetGain Technologies, government leaders sought to avoid an issue the city experienced with its previous provider, whose customer portal was "overpromised and underdelivered," according to a government leader. NetGain Technologies agreed to provide a feature-rich customer portal for Georgetown's leaders to oversee open and archived service tickets.



Results

“
Every pothole we fill,
every permit we issue,
every decision weighed
by the Council will be
guided by technology.”

Andrew Hartley
Georgetown City Attorney

The city’s mayor and council agreed that Georgetown needed value added to its I.T. support, and they were willing to invest in a solution that best benefitted the city’s long-term needs. Since switching to NetGain Technologies for managed I.T. services, city leaders report increased productivity and freed-up resources. The city also realized some hard cost savings after the transition, which city leadership considers a bonus result of the new outsource agreement.

During the onboarding process, as NetGain Technologies’ engineers evaluated the city’s existing I.T. environment, Georgetown’s city attorney commended the MSP for conducting a thorough review. Hartley commented, “I’ve never been asked some of these questions before.”

City employees have been making use of the NOC and 24-hour help desk, submitting support tickets by phone and email. “Resolution time is well within our comfort level, and the knowledge of help desk engineers is extraordinary,” according to Hartley. “Having a local resource is also reassuring.”



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