Case Study: Alzheimer's Society

The Alzheimer's Society is a membership organisation that works to improve the quality of life of those affected by dementia in England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The Society has also been running a forum since 2003. The forum is known as 'Talking Point' and now has over 200,000 posts as well as some 8,000 registered users accessing it on a daily basis. The forum is used by both people with dementia, carers, friends and family and its function is to provide a space for members to discuss all aspects of the condition.

Alzheimer's Society approached Global Gold in late 2008 to discuss the possibility of hosting the Talking Point forum.

Prior to migrating from their previous web hosting company, Alzheimer's Society wanted to ensure that Global Gold had extensive vBulletin expertise. At that time the charity was using an early release of vBulletin software but wanted to test the new functionality of one of the later releases without committing to updating the whole forum.

Global Gold decided to set up a test and development environment, where the Society's staff and moderators could effectively try out the new version of vBulletin under specific conditions on a virtual private server to check whether it could significantly improve performance as well provide a stable environment where vBulletin updates could be added with ease.

The testing phase went smoothly and once completed, the Society agreed to move to the new version of vBulletin and started branding the development environment.

In effect Global Gold quickly and efficiently migrated the existing forum content to their new VPS server and updated the forum to the latest version. Using the development environment Global Gold exported the brand image, imported it into the new forum and thoroughly tested all the functionality.

Global Gold remained hands on while the forum went live to resolve any issues and ensure a smooth handover from the old forum.

In the clients' own words...

"In the past we had concerns that our online forum 'Talking Point' seemed to be running very slowly. Additionally, we couldn't easily upgrade to the latest version of vBulletin and take advantage of new features like blogs, tagging and social groups because the forum was hosted on the same server as our content management system.

Consequently we took the decision to move the forum to its own dedicated host. Having reviewed a number of suppliers we were impressed both by the pre sales service provided by Global Gold and their knowledge of the vBulletin product.

Since we re-launched the 'Talking Point' forum we have had members commenting on the speed of the forums and we have been delighted by the care and attention Global Gold have provided us with.

We are happy to recommend Global Gold to any other vBulletin owner and believe that we have not just gained a supplier, but also a partner who can help us deliver this important service to those affected by dementia."