

How Conard House Strengthened IT Services and Support

CASE STUDY

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“Partnering with us on our long-term strategy to transform our organization, Parachute has absolutely been the right partner for where Conard House was, where we are today, and where we’re headed in the future.”

ANNE QUAINANCE,
CEO/Executive Director, Conard House



For over 60 years, Conard House has provided effective, community-based resources for San Francisco's vulnerable adults living with serious mental illness. With the help of a skilled team, clients find healthy pathways to recovery and utilize a combination of counseling, treatment, programs, and other services.

HIGHLIGHTS

Challenges

- Finding additional resources for IT services
- Providing round-the-clock IT support
- Updating and streamlining systems and processes
- Developing a long-term strategic IT plan

Solution

- A managed IT services provider
- Expert, flexible implementation
- A tailored IT transformation plan

Results

- 24/7 support that builds confidence
- Improved processes and services
- Expanded capability at a predictable cost
- Ongoing guidance

Challenges

UNDER-RESOURCED IT SERVICES

For 1,500 of San Francisco's most vulnerable adults, Conard House is a lifeline. The nonprofit organization specializes in supportive housing and mental health Services in San Francisco, and their skilled staff works to build welcoming communities and caring relationships that empower people and restore hope.

It's a cost-conscious, complex operation—and the team doesn't have time to focus on IT.

When Conard House CEO and Executive Director Anne Quaintance assumed the role in 2020, the organization had *"the most minimal amount of IT services."* Similar to other nonprofits, those services were under-resourced.

PROVIDING ROUND-THE-CLOCK SUPPORT

Only one team member provided IT support to 135 employees and over 700 residents across 14 locations. It was impossible, especially for a 24/7 operation like Conard House.

One Saturday afternoon, the Wi-Fi went down at a 110-resident building. The building desk clerk filed a support ticket but couldn't answer residents' most important question: When would the internet be back?

Eventually, residents lost trust in the system. *"I think people stopped letting us know what the issues or problems were,"* Anne says. *"Getting 24/7 help desk support was critical for us."*

UPGRADING AN OUTDATED ENVIRONMENT

Conard House needed more than additional help desk support. Their environment was entirely localized on

desktop computers, with nothing in the cloud. The software was outdated, information security needed urgent attention, and processes like onboarding and offboarding were inefficient and needed a top-to-bottom overhaul.

“We were looking to expand what we could offer our employees and residents,” Anne says. Doing that while staying true to their strategic business plan required a complete IT transformation, and Conard House chose Parachute to lead the way.

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“Our goal was an IT transformation that included improving our capabilities, updating our equipment, providing 24/7 support, and making the most of our budget.”

“We were looking to expand what we could offer our employees and residents”

Solution

A CUSTOM PLAN



“Parachute was the partner able to make our transformation happen, analyzing our pain points and looking at what it would take to provide better services for our staff, residents, vendors, and clients.”

Several things set Parachute apart from other MSPs: their professionalism, knowledge, high-level security accreditations, and experience working with different-sized businesses—especially nonprofits.

Even more than their expertise, Parachute listened to the Conard House team.

“They seemed interested in our mission and the complexity of our organization,” Anne says. Instead of making the nonprofit adopt a pre-defined solution list, Parachute took the time to understand their pain points and developed a flexible transformation plan to suit Conard House’s specific needs.

DISRUPTION-FREE IMPLEMENTATION

IT should support the organization’s mission, not the other way around. Anne was impressed by Parachute’s commitment to ensuring Conard House services remained uninterrupted throughout implementation. The rollout timing was flexible and took place around the other priorities of the Conard House team.



“Parachute quickly understood our systems and worked to improve those systems in a way that allowed staff to still do their day-to-day jobs,” Anne says.

Conard House's modernization included:

- updating equipment
- adopting cloud-based applications
- creating more efficient policies and protocols for onboarding and offboarding

Parachute also manages security and backup, which Anne says *“stands above other companies we have worked with.”*

And because Parachute's IT support is available around the clock, Conard House staff receives real-time help when issues arise, no matter the hour.

AN EXTERNAL TEAM WITH THE FEEL OF IN-HOUSE SUPPORT

Working with Parachute is the closest thing to having an in-house IT team without breaking the bank. Conard House now has a dedicated Parachute team to manage day-to-day IT operations. This team is intimately familiar with all the ins and outs of the nonprofit: its mission, its goals, and what keeps its people awake at night.

As a complete managed IT service provider, Parachute is well-suited to respond to Conard House's needs. When it's time for a new round of upgrades, the team expands to include implementation specialists to address a specific area.



“What’s great about working with Parachute is they can expand and contract our support as we need it. The implementation team experts joining us on special projects have been instrumental.”

Parachute makes IT more accessible to all businesses. Conard House doesn't have the same internal resources as a larger organization, but with Parachute, they don't have to.

Results

24/7 SUPPORT BUILDS TRUST

The Conard House team gets answers much faster than they did before.

“To submit a ticket and get a response right away has made a big difference for us,” Anne says. That responsiveness has built trust among staff and residents, who no longer hesitate to contact the help desk when something goes wrong. Conard House residents and clients also notice the continuity of services.

“People trust that we have an IT services provider looking out for our staff and residents,” Anne continues. “It increases confidence that we can sustain the services we’re offering.”

EXPANDED, COST-EFFICIENT CAPABILITIES

When done right, IT services allow any nonprofit to do more. Anne says partnering with Parachute has increased Conard House’s efficiency and effectiveness. In particular, moving to the cloud has improved communication and allowed Conard House to go paperless in its financial and HR systems.

Rather than thinking about the money they spent, Anne thinks about the value they’ve gained. *“For us to provide these types of services with full-time employees would be nearly impossible,”* she explains.



“Parachute has helped us expand while keeping our budget flat, so we’ve been able to make a plan based on our funding year-to-year.”

A RESPONSIVE PARTNER SHOWS THE PATH FORWARD

Anne appreciates working with a partner committed to advancing Conard House’s mission—a partner she calls *“responsive, transparent, forthcoming, and action-oriented.”* Her leadership team now has access to analytics that highlight areas of improvement, whether it’s staff training, equipment, or addressing issues with specific buildings. Even though they have a wealth of expertise on their side, Conard House remains in the driver’s seat.



“Parachute provides the guidance that we can partner with them to expand the way we want to,” she emphasizes.

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***“People trust that we have
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