

WORKPLACE RECOVERY

# Sungard Availability Services' Workplace Recovery enables charities to continue their vital work



**Charityshare was set up in 2004 to be the shared IT department of its participating charities, namely The Children's Society, Age UK and Alzheimer's Society.**

It combines the rigour of an external services provider with the flexibility and responsiveness of an internal IT function. Everything that Charityshare does is about bringing benefits to its member charities. Together with its economies of scale, beneficial VAT status and lack of profit margin, cost savings have been substantial.

Charityshare operates just like a commercial concern with the difference that instead of running to make a profit, it is in business to reduce costs. Annual savings to the participating charities now run at over £1m a year.

Just weeks after signing the Sungard AS contract, Charityshare needed its workplace recovery positions when the premises of one of its charities experienced an incident at its premises. Gary Smallman, Service Delivery Manager for Charityshare, reflects, "We could never have foreseen that we'd need to invoke so soon after signing. It's one of those things we've always known is needed but that is somehow never seen as top priority. We were extremely lucky with the timing."

Charityshare employs around 70 staff working in finance, HR, admin and 1st, 2nd and 3rd line technical support and project management. It currently provides the ICT infrastructure for three

charities but is actively seeking to grow by taking further charities on board. Its shared service desk, manned by 22 staff who handle around 180 calls a day from member charities, is among its most critical services.

With around 6,500 people who work or volunteer for the charities relying on its ICT infrastructure, Charityshare recognised the importance of putting in place affordable business continuity provision. Gary Smallman, Service Delivery Manager for Charityshare, explains, "Around 6,500 people rely on the ICT infrastructure we provide to do their jobs. Failure would mean our charities couldn't process donations or perform other essential functions to continue their often lifesaving work."

Gary Smallman recognised that the organisation needed an alternative workplace not only to enable its own staff to continue working in the event of business disruption, but also as a valuable additional service for its charity clients. After researching the market, he contracted 50 seats at one of Sungard AS's fully-equipped Central London workplace recovery centres. With just weeks before the London Olympics were due to start, both organisations needed to move quickly and Sungard AS pulled out all the stops to meet the immovable deadline.

## Business challenge

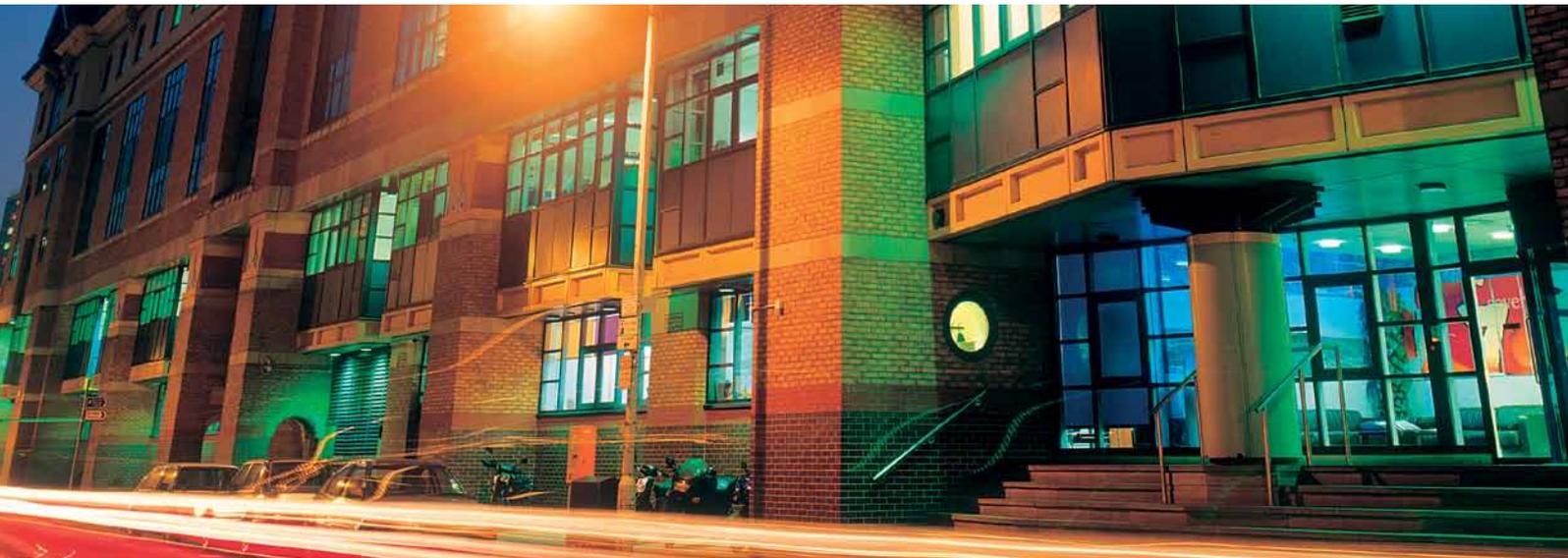
Charityshare was set up as the shared IT department for its participating charities to dramatically reduce their operating costs. With thousands of the most vulnerable people in the UK – the very young and the very old – relying on the charities' vital services, it needed to ensure it could withstand common business disruptions. Charityshare would need its business continuity provision sooner than it could ever have imagined.

## Solution

- Workplace Recovery.

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**Gary Smallman,**  
Service Delivery Manager,  
Charityshare



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**Paul Earl,**  
 Information Security Officer,  
 Charityshare

#### Business benefits

- Ensures ‘business as usual’ within four hours
- Minimises the risk of donation income loss
- Provides an alternative workspace for critical workers
- Peace of mind for the participating charities that their work can continue uninterrupted
- Contributes to the ongoing viability of the partnership.

Just three weeks after Charityshare put its business continuity plans through their paces in a scheduled test, the organisation needed to invoke Sungard AS’s services in a live incident when one of its charities’ offices suffered an incident. Information Security Officer Paul Earl recalls, “My lasting memory of the day is that we were expecting a four hour turnaround time, as specified in our Service Level Agreement, but our recovery suite was ready for use just 2½ hours after making the call! That really exceeded my expectations.”

Charityshare stayed with Sungard AS for two days. Paul Earl reports, “We were very impressed with Sungard’s Workplace Recovery service. It was very easy to invoke and the suite was completely set up for us when we arrived. Everything ran like clockwork – so much so that one member of staff asked if they could stay on once their own office was back up and running as she could get more work done without any interruptions!”

Everyone apart from the affected charity was blissfully unaware that Charityshare was operating from an alternative location, the acid test of any workplace recovery arrangement. For Gary Smallman, the incident vindicated his decision to invest in business continuity provision. He notes, “We could never have foreseen we’d need to invoke so soon after signing. It’s one of those things we’ve always known is needed but that is somehow never seen as top priority. We were extremely lucky with the timing. To Sungard’s credit, it appreciated our not-for-profit status and gave us favourable commercial arrangements.”

Paul Earl comments, “I consider Sungard more of a partner than a provider of a business service. I found their staff extremely helpful, especially on the day we invoked when we were under pressure. It gives me peace of mind to know they’re on my side.”

#### About Sungard Availability Services

Sungard Availability Services provides managed IT services, information availability consulting services, business continuity management software, and disaster recovery services. To learn more, visit [www.sungardas.co.uk](http://www.sungardas.co.uk) or call 0800 143 413

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