



# Case Study

Diocese of Oxford adopts reliable  
IT Support and Managed IT  
Services solutions from Sharp.

The Diocese of Oxford is the Church of England in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire. There are 810 churches in the diocese, which is more than any other diocese in the Church of England, and they have over 55,000 regular worshippers that attend their churches.

Sharp spoke with John Orridge, Director of Finance, who has been with the Diocese of Oxford for almost 3 years about their relationship with Sharp and the benefit of having them as their Managed IT Services provider, which has led to the diocese picking up additional IT services with Sharp.



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## The challenge

- IT team retention & recruitment
- Part-time IT Manager with a full-time workload
- No one to cover planned or unplanned absences

When discussing recruitment issues and their small team of three, John said: “The Diocese of Oxford initially had a small IT team of 3 – one person to manage databases and back-end developments, and two on-site to manage the day-to-day running of their IT systems and to assist any team members having technical difficulties.”

Over time the team slowly depleted and on top of the global difficulty in recruiting IT personnel, the Diocese of Oxford’s IT team was down to one person “We had one IT Manager who worked part-time and independently managed our entire IT infrastructure – all without the support of a large Managed Services Provider (MSP) like Sharp,” John explained, “We were left with no IT support when the IT Manager was off sick or on holiday, as there was no backup plan.”

## The solution

- Managed IT Services from Sharp
- Access to a wider team of technical experts
- Recruitment of an on-site IT Manager

Sharp’s Managed IT Services solution was proposed to the Diocese of Oxford because of the additional support required for their existing in-house IT team. The comprehensive solution would allow the organisation to fully outsource the management of their IT systems to Sharp and remove the burden from their overextended team. It would also ensure there was IT support available at all times.

Through this solution, Sharp would be able to recruit, train, and manage the Diocese’s IT team, monitor their IT systems (whether on-premise or in the cloud), take care of cyber security, manage and deliver large projects, and ensure backups happen as needed. Ultimately, Sharp proposed the recruitment of an IT Manager in addition to taking full control of their IT support and systems.

## The result

- On-site support is readily available
- Access to Sharp’s wider portfolio of technology
- Regular meetings for continuous improvement

When asked how Sharp’s Managed IT Services solution has benefitted the organisation John said “We have great relationships with our Sharp Account Managers and there is a huge benefit of having a dedicated full-time IT Manager on-site, who although an employee of Sharp, has become firmly embedded in our team and company culture. We’ve got a quirky Church of England culture with lots of strange language that we use and having an IT Manager on site all the time means that they get it, they get the culture, the language, and understand how we need to operate. All of that is an absolute bonus.”

By having the backing of a large MSP, the Diocese of Oxford has access to many technical experts who are well-versed in Sharp’s extensive technology portfolio. John said “The access to other technology is ideal. We’ve recently done a tendering process for a new telephone system as we weren’t too happy with the level of service from our former provider. We are going to use Sharp’s Hosted Telephony Solution going forward, as it was the best one for us.”

John added “In a previous role of mine, we had only one IT Manager, and the entire IT setup was designed based on that person’s preferences. This often resulted in unique and sometimes unusual solutions. On the other hand, with the backing of Sharp and Tom taking care of the technical aspects, we have a more standard and adaptable solution that fits our organisation and can also evolve over time.”

*“Our Account Managers are great. If our IT Manager is not around and I need to escalate something or bounce something off them, they are always available and respond quickly.”*

John Orridge, Director of Finance, Diocese of Oxford