Overview

Industry: Non-Profit

Country: Canada

Customer profile:
Founded in 1948, the Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada (MS Society) is a non-profit organization headquartered in Toronto, Ontario that provides services to people with multiple sclerosis (MS) and their families. The organization also funds research to find the cause and cure for MS. A National Board of Directors comprised of 13 volunteer members governs the MS Society, which has a membership of 28,000.

Challenge:
The MS Society wished to streamline meeting room booking at its head office with cost-effective, user-friendly meeting room software. The organization sought a solution that could also manage hoteling because they were switching to a shared workspace environment in order to cut real estate costs.

Solution:
After evaluating various resource scheduling solutions, the MS Society decided to implement Resource Central. Because Resource Central integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Outlook® and the Exchange Server, the process of booking a meeting room or desk was familiar to users and the adoption rate was fast.

Using Resource Central has enabled the MS Society to smoothly transition to a shared workspace environment. The organization has reduced office space by 25% and expects to save an estimated $1.5 million on real estate costs over the life of its lease.

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada Reduces Office Space by 25% and Saves an Estimated $1.5 Million on Real Estate Costs with Resource Central

The Multiple Sclerosis Society of Canada (MS Society) struggled to efficiently manage the meeting room booking process at its head office in Toronto and required more robust meeting room software. The organization was also looking to reduce real estate costs with hoteling and needed a way to manage shared workspace. Implementing Add-On Products' Resource Central software was critical to eliminating meeting room booking headaches and easing the transition to a hoteling arrangement.

"Our staff was anxious about switching to a new booking system, but they have been very pleased with Resource Central. Many of them have commented on how easy it is to use. Because the system integrates with Microsoft Outlook®, there really wasn't much to learn. It wasn't taxing to implement."
Valerie Weddell, Project Manager/Business Analyst at the MS Society

Meeting Room Booking Woes
Prior to implementing Resource Central, the MS Society was using basic Microsoft Outlook® calendars to book meetings. The organization sought a complete solution that would streamline the meeting booking process by giving users a quick overview of available resources and other time-saving features.

"Booking an appropriate meeting room was a struggle because you couldn't obtain a quick overview of all resources and their availability. You also couldn't determine the size or location of meeting rooms," said one user about the MS Society's previous booking system.

Advantages

- Saves time and frees up staff for other important tasks.
- Integrates seamlessly with Microsoft Outlook® and Exchange.
- Gives users an overview of all available meeting rooms and shared workspaces.
- Easy to administer and use.
- Displays important details about meeting rooms, including images and location.
- Handles all changes and cancellations.

VP of Information Technology at the MS Society, David Arbuthnot

"Moving to a hoteling arrangement has allowed us to reduce our office space in Toronto by over 25%. We are saving an estimated $1.5 million on real estate costs over the life of our lease. Resource Central has been critical to making this transition successful."

Meanwhile, the MS Society planned to transition to a shared workspace environment in order to reduce real estate costs. This meant staff would no longer have fixed desks. The decision to adopt hoteling coupled with meeting room booking troubles led the MS Society to seek a more robust resource booking system that could handle both meeting room and shared workspace booking.

Resource Central: A Cost-Effective, User-Friendly Option

The MS Society evaluated various meeting room booking systems that integrated with Microsoft Outlook® and Exchange. Ultimately, the organization chose Resource Central because it was cost-effective and user-friendly.

MS Society Project Manager/ Business Analyst Valerie Weddell said, "Our staff was anxious about switching to a new booking system, but they have been very pleased with Resource Central. Many of them have commented on how easy it is to use. Because the system integrates with Microsoft Outlook®, there really wasn't much to learn. It wasn't taxing to implement."

Resource Central serves as a one-stop shop for meeting room and shared workspace booking, allowing users to do the following:

- Get a quick overview of available attendees and resources.
- Order all extra services, such as catering and AV equipment.
- Schedule meetings and order services in less than 2 minutes.
- Automatically send order receipts to all internal and external service providers.
- Schedule and book shared workstations.
- Extract reports on resource utilization to monitor and improve meeting room usage.

Resource Central prevents more than one person from booking the same resource, eliminating double bookings. Administrators also have the option of making it so that a resource can only be booked for one day at a time to prevent users from monopolizing meeting rooms and workspaces.

Easy to Expand to New Locations

Expanding Resource Central to the MS Society's office in Burnaby, British

Columbia was simple because all they had to do was create a folder for the new office and put its resources there. As the organization continues to expand Resource Central to other locations, it will take advantage of this convenient folder feature.

David Arbuthnot, VP of Information Technology at the MS Society, said, "Resource Central will keep things quite organized as we expand it. For any given location, we can create a folder for meeting rooms and a folder for workstations."

Reducing Real Estate Costs by an Estimated $1.5 Million
The process of moving nearly 100 staff members from fixed desks to a shared workspace environment at the MS Society's head office in Toronto was seamless with Resource Central.

The adoption rate was fast and little training was required. The process of booking a meeting room or desk in Resource Central was familiar since the system integrates with Microsoft Outlook® and Exchange.

Arbuthnot said, "As a non-profit organization, we have to watch our dollars very closely. Moving to a hoteling arrangement has allowed us to reduce our office space in Toronto by over 25%. We are saving an estimated $1.5 million on real estate costs over the life of our lease. Resource Central has been critical to making this transition successful. The National Board of Directors recently came to our new office and was really impressed. Two other MS Society offices are looking to follow the Toronto model at their next lease renewal opportunity."

About Resource Central
Resource Central is a premier booking solution from Add-On Products that allows you to book resources, equipment, catering, and other services. Resource Central integrates with Microsoft Outlook® and the Exchange Server, simplifying the process of scheduling and organizing meetings.

About Add-On Products
Add-On Products specializes in developing digital signage and add-on functionality for Microsoft Outlook® and Exchange. More than 400,000 clients around the world rely on Add-On Products' solutions to serve their employees and customers.

Our Products:
Resource Central – room booking solution – reserves resources and requests associated services in less than 2 minutes
Ariadne - digital signage software - full-scale solution providing wayfinding, meeting overviews, pictures, video, RSS feeds, etc.
Digital Sign Service – software for digital meeting room signs – displays meeting booked in Outlook® on touch screens
Exchange Central – group calendar – provides overview and scheduling of appointments
WebTeam Central – group calendar – provides web-based overview and scheduling of appointments
Mailbox Central – email signature management – improves email branding and campaigns

Microsoft Partner
Gold Application Development
Silver Application Integration