

A person wearing a light blue button-down shirt is shown from the chest down, holding a blue credit card in their right hand. The card is held horizontally, showing a dark magnetic stripe and some illegible text. The person's left hand is resting on a white computer mouse. In the foreground, a white computer keyboard is visible on a light-colored desk. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The overall scene suggests a digital transaction or online payment process.

Enhancing
international online
donation solutions

SARATOGA

The client

With a network of over 13 000 charities our client, an organisation based in London in the United Kingdom, facilitates donations of more than £100 million yearly.

The organisation operates as a donor advised fund, taking donations from givers and claiming their tax rebate under the UK's Gift Aid scheme. It then makes onward donations to charities at the request of the original donors.

Our client currently operates several platforms including their brand website, a website allowing full account management, and their donation's website, which allows fundraisers to create pages to raise funds for charities of their choice.

The challenge

As the donating community of the client has expanded, the need arose for the organisation to consolidate their donations and Mobile Optimized Giving (MOG) solutions, which facilitate the giving and receiving process between charities and donors.

The organisation required a development partner to guide them in developing one central application to capture both recipients and donors. An important requirement of the application was its compliance with the industry standards of the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) as required when dealing with users' personal and banking details.

To add to this, an old back-end system, lack of development flexibility and outdated technologies on some of their existing platforms were hampering the progress of this project.

The solution

Saratoga assembled a dedicated development team encompassing development, business analysis and quality assurance skills to manage the maintenance and development of the platforms.

Using Agile methodology and a suite of best practices, the team put a process in place for delivering iterative enhancements to the system, while remaining flexible to the needs of the client as the solution evolved.

Online portal

The online portal was redesigned and rebuilt as a web application to make it mobile-friendly and included additional new features.

Saratoga built a web API wrapper around existing SOAP services to create a new Restful service to run their two core systems - the donations website and MOG (Mobile Optimized Giving) - the accounting system.

Secure payments

The new Wallet concept made significant improvements to the way donors allocate funds to receivers of their choice, and card payments were built and later extended to Amex and Paypal.

All payment processing was then moved to the Braintree payments platform, thus ensuring security regulations and EU compliance requirements such as 3D Secure, were supported.

Information security

A key aspect of this project was working closely with the client's team on the security of intellectual property, donor information and key software features.

Dealing with public money needed a high degree of confidentiality, which was upheld using secure email for communicating, and high-security access to shared work management boards.

Technology overview

Azure B2C (Business to Consumer) platform for single user logon, .NET MVC, SQL, Visual Studio, Git and Windows Foundation Services (SOAP) among others.

The results

Our extensive track record with the client showcases Saratoga as a software outsourcing partner to international organisations.

As a provider of professional outsourcing services we enabled the organisation to realise their software development strategy of minimising costs, maximising quality, bolstering security and reducing software delivery time.

We've also aligned with the UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) and became responsible for the entire Giving services software stack, as well as the maintenance of the Head Office applications which manage the distribution of funds, and all banking processes such as debit orders and lump sum donations.

Client testimonial

"Saratoga handled the architecture and design all the way through to the front-end development. Their commitment to the project meant that we went live on the exact date we had committed to nearly a year before.

The performance and stability of the new system is rock solid and we will be building all future giving services client-facing products on this API."

Grant Owens, Product Owner and Software Development Manager.

Business benefits

- Overall partnership anchored on shared organisational values and transparent communication channels.
- Greater speed, accuracy and flexibility from the Saratoga DevOps processes.
- Conformance to coding best practices and governance.
- Developing better quality software at a faster rate.
- Updated technology across various platforms.
- Broadening of their client base through new payment options and features.

Saratoga, in partnership with client, was honoured to receive the GSA-UK Global Sourcing Award for Digital Transformation Project of the Year in 2018.