



Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

The journey to an
optimised SharePoint website

risual

the customer overview

Customer

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service

Website

www.notts-fire.gov.uk/

Region

Nottinghamshire, United Kingdom

Industry

Fire and Rescue

Customer profile

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service (NFRS) provide comprehensive safety services that cover the city and county of Nottingham. NFRS work to keep residents, visitors and businesses safe from fire and other dangers. They do this through various activities, which include:

- providing a front-line emergency response service (i.e. 999) from 24 fire stations, strategically placed across the county.
- advising business owners on fire safety and taking enforcement action where legislation is breached
- supporting vulnerable people who need help with safety at home
- teaching people, particularly those under the age of 18 how to reduce the risks to themselves and their families and friends.



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

"risual provide a very good service, are very customer focused and want the best for you. You really do strive for excellence in what you provide. You've managed to provide us with a structure so that we have a good working relationship with yourselves. The reporting and information you provide is exceptional and the support team are very good at getting to the bottom of issues."

Helen Dooley, Service Project Manager, Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service

the problem

Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service staff recognised that their current website failed to meet users' expectations and didn't represent a modern-day fire service. The design of the website was outdated and fell short of basic technical trends such as mobile optimisation.

Due to functionality problems, the website administrators struggled to keep the content up-to-date, with the lack of a clearly defined content lifecycle causing outdated content to appear on the website. The skillset to update and maintain this had been 'lost over time', therefore NFRS needed a new solution that they could manage internally. All of these issues prompted NFRS to re-define the design of their internet site, opting for a modern and professional website which followed their corporate branding.

"We went through the full process of looking at a few other competitors but based on previous experience, we knew risual would be able to provide the solution in a timely manner and give us the support needed to maintain it." - Helen Dooley, Service Project Manager, Nottingham Fire and Rescue Service

the solution

NFRS have a clear strategy to use Microsoft technologies where appropriate and had already invested in software licenses. Their IT department and Corporate Communications team wanted a solution that they could manage internally, easily update and support themselves using their existing skills and experience of working with Microsoft solutions. From an aesthetic point of view, a SharePoint platform would allow the public to easily navigate throughout the site using imagery rather than texture buttons.

risual's SharePoint consultants carried out several design workshops, engaging various key stakeholders from NFRS to gather requirements from both a technical and business perspective.

This allowed risual and NFRS to confirm the design with an objective of delivering a dynamic, modern looking and engaging website. It was essential that all content could be kept up-to-date in the future by the internal teams and was in keeping with the NFRS branding. Up to date news and social media feeds (Twitter) should be incorporated in the Homepage to give a modern feel.

From a technical view point, the website needed to be built using SharePoint as part of a programme to update the Intranet and Collaboration tools for internal and external use. The website also needed to be optimised for mobile devices and web pages needed to follow accessibility guidance with options to change the font size and contrast to make web content more accessible to people with disabilities.



working with risual

risual are experts in delivering scalable, flexible and intuitive solutions, which are business driven and IT aligned and built on Microsoft technologies. NFRS commented on how risual came along like a “knight in shining armour” to help NFRS leverage the most from their new SharePoint website.

NFRS had looked at alternative solutions, including upgrading their previous system, but knew the skills were not available in house to maintain and manage it. Instead they opted for a fresh start with a SharePoint platform which would empower them with much more accessibility and flexibility.

“We wanted to ensure we were on a Microsoft platform, so SharePoint was the obvious answer and risual had all the skills to support us through that journey.” - Helen Dooley, Service Project Manager, NFRS.

NFRS and risual already had a working relationship through their recent Skype for Business Enterprise Voice project. This helped smooth the transition as both teams were familiar with the other and the success of the Skype project meant that NFRS could be confident that risual would deliver to the highest level.



“The transformation of our website using Microsoft SharePoint technology is astonishing. We have migrated from an extremely corporate style to a friendlier and welcoming portal for engagement with our local communities. The professional guidance and support of risual throughout the project has enabled us to turn our vision of a new website into a reality in a very short space of time.”

Gavin Harris, Head of ICT,
Nottingham Fire and Rescue
Service

deployment and challenges

NFRS are a small organisation with lots of departments; the new SharePoint website allows all departments within the organisation to add documentation to the platform, providing valuable and interesting information for the public rather than merely statutory data

“Getting colleagues to commit, engage and understand what their role would be in the new website was initially a challenge, but we got over that by providing stakeholder workshops to ensure they all understood how they could contribute and keep up to date with the progress of the project.” - Helen Dooley, Service Project Manager, NFRS.

risual’s SharePoint consultant worked closely with NFRS to deploy a solution that would minimise disruption caused by the project. NFRS noted that it was “really impressive how risual provide their solutions”, as risual strived to futureproof their systems from further updates and changes.

benefits

NFRS are delighted with their new SharePoint website which, above all else, provides them with much more flexibility and productivity.

NFRS will continue their plan to build on the SharePoint platform, as in addition to the website, they are also deploying a SharePoint Intranet, SharePoint Extranet and SharePoint Collaboration and Document Management solutions, leveraging the maximum out of their license investment.

“We can instantaneously update our news and feeds, whereas before it took anywhere between a day to five days. So, we’ve definitely gained results in that we can now keep information up to date and as current as possible.

“From the process side it’s fantastic too; we all have access into the backend and with the “published docs” facility, it’s giving us the ability to have our corporate media team purely proof-read before publishing whereas before they also had to write everything too – so it saves lots of time and effort”

- Helen Dooley, Service Project Manager, Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service





"It's great to see Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service get so much value from their SharePoint investment. We have engaged with NFRS on a multitude of projects now and I'm very proud that each of them has proven to be a major success.

"The engagement process was smooth and our continued working partnership is testament to the great work we've been doing together. risual maintain their commitment to helping out critical public sector services in the UK and we're delighted that NFRS are already reaping the benefits of an optimised SharePoint website."

- Richard Proud, Director, risual

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