

Microsoft Azure for Nonprofits

Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk revamped its child protection information system with Microsoft Azure

Don Bosco National Forum for the Young at Risk is a network of organizations in India that provides a wide range of services to poor and marginalized youth, including the tracking and rehabilitation of missing children in India.

With 100,000 children going missing each year in the country, and 45 percent of them remaining untraced forever, there was a need for a centralized platform to trace and track missing and homeless children across all the states in the India. In 2011, Don Bosco created the Missing Child Search website, which proved to be useful for member organizations in their search for missing children, particularly in cases where the child had been transported across states.

The old system

As the number of website users grew, so did their demands for a greater range of services and the ability to share information across agencies. To cater to the needs of member organizations, Don Bosco decided to develop the Child Management Information System and Services (Child MISS) application in 2012. However, Don Bosco's legacy on premise IT systems were unable to accommodate the dynamic, fast-growing database needed to support the application.

The new system

Don Bosco realized that it needed to modernize its IT infrastructure for the development of the Child MISS application. At the same time, security was a major concern as the nonprofit handles a large amount of sensitive children data. With its robust data protection features, Don Bosco found Azure to be the ideal platform to host the Child MISS application.

Since the launch of Child MISS in 2013, 79 member organizations across 18 states have started using the system. With Microsoft Azure, Don Bosco is able to:

- Improve the agility and reliability of its IT infrastructure
- Achieve greater efficiency in tracking down lost children
- Explore new technologies to improve its services

Solutions used:



Microsoft Azure helped Don Bosco build a robust information management system to:



Improve agility while achieving 50% cost savings



Increase database search speeds by 40%

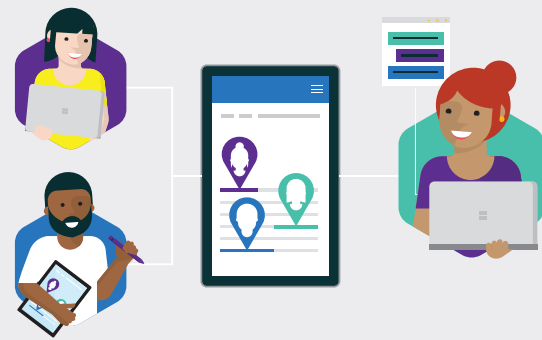


Enhance the process of searching for lost children

"We have successfully rolled out the Child MISS application in 18 states, and plans are being made to increase its adoption across India. With the new biometric technology features enabled by Microsoft, we are optimistic that we can reunite more lost children with their families."

- Father Thomas Aquinas at Don Bosco

Benefits from the new system



An agile, reliable IT infrastructure to support application and database needs



Don Bosco staff collecting information, from children identified to be missing, at the city central railway station

Azure SQL Database provided Don Bosco with a reliable cloud database to run its Child MISS application, without having to depend on dedicated on premise server resources. Moving to the cloud enabled Don Bosco to achieve up to 50 percent cost savings in the implementation of the Child MISS application. The cloud also gave Don Bosco the agility to cater to the needs and demands of member organizations more quickly. Improvements and upgrades to the Child MISS application and database can be developed and implemented across the Don Bosco network without unnecessary disruptions.

Father Thomas Aquinas at Don Bosco said, "With Azure, we managed to save significant man-hours because our staff no longer have to travel to disparate locations to maintain or update on premise IT systems. These resources can be put towards saving more children."

A centralized database for greater efficiency

Information sharing between agencies was enhanced as Azure SQL Database allows Child MISS to support the heavy load of interlinking with other government tracking systems. Capacity can be flexibly ramped up to cope with unexpected spikes in traffic, such as the need to track missing children after a natural disaster.

Azure's Full-Text Search feature further allows Don Bosco to fully leverage all the information on its centralized database. Using just basic keywords, Don Bosco is able to swiftly search and match children that were found, to missing persons reports. This has improved search speeds by as much as 40%, compared to the manual process on the legacy database.

The implementation enabled Don Bosco to trace missing children in nearly two-thirds of all reported cases since 2012, a significant increase from before, where only 35% of missing children reported were found. Aquinas said, "Information and speed are critical in child protection work. With access to other systems and faster search capabilities, our organizations can reach out to missing children more quickly, increasing the chances of them being restored to their families."

Cloud-empowered to use the latest technologies to deliver better services

Azure has empowered Don Bosco to explore leveraging new technologies to improve its child protection services. The nonprofit is now working to integrate biometric technology with the cloud-based Azure SQL Database. This will further help to address inconsistencies during data collection and refine the identification mechanism, speeding up the search process for missing children.

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The centralized database on Child MISS application empowers Don Bosco to track and rehabilitate missing children, even in cases of multiple missing occurrences