



ROYAL AERONAUTICAL SOCIETY

Hart Square gives wings to RAeS' new IT Service Provision

The Royal Aeronautical Society benefits from Hart Square's IT knowledge



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Director of
Programmes and
Marketing, RAeS

The Royal Aeronautical Society (RAeS) is the world's only professional body dedicated to the aerospace community and exists to further the advancement of aeronautical art, science and engineering around the world.

Established in 1866, the Society has been at the forefront of developments in aerospace, seeking to promote the highest professional standards and provide a central forum for sharing knowledge.

Key services

- Assessing requirements gathered for new IT infrastructure
- Formulating Invitations to Tender for new IT support partner
- Managing vendor shortlisting and presentations
- Assessing tenders and advising on final vendor selection

The RAeS has over 25,000 members from across the aerospace industry who come from a diverse range of organisations, including Boeing, Rolls-Royce, Airbus and BAE Systems. Its members include engineers, aircrew and other professions that serve the aerospace, aviation and space industries.

Importance of IT infrastructure

The RAeS relies on its IT infrastructure to support both the organisation's 50 staff and its members. The Society had a contract with an IT support company for day-to-day IT management, disaster recovery provision and hosting. With the contract due to expire at the end of 2020, it decided to go to tender for a new IT support provider, with the incumbent also invited to participate.

With limited internal resources available to ensure low-risk selection and implementation of a new support arrangement, RAeS turned to Hart Square for external help and support. Emma Bossom, Director of Programmes and Marketing at RAeS explained: “This was a business-critical project that needed to be implemented within a relatively short timeframe of three months. We faced the challenge of developing the best strategy for the project with limited internal resources, so we called in Hart Square, who





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we had worked with on a previous project.”

Although Hart Square traditionally works on Customer Relationship Management (CRM) projects for the non-profit sector, RAeS recognised its other skills: “Hart Square has a wide understanding of and expertise in IT infrastructures and we felt that they could apply this and support us through this project,” added Emma Bossom.

The project team within RAeS had pulled together a set of requirements for the new IT support partner. “We asked Hart Square to review our requirements and the tendering process itself. We wanted to make sure we had covered everything that was important to the project and how we could best convey our requirements to the vendors who would be invited to tender for the project,” said Emma Bossom.

Understanding requirements

Hart Square undertook a series of face-to-face and telephone discussions with key stakeholders to get a better understanding of the infrastructure the Society had in place already, as well as what was required from the new support partner.

“Armed with Hart Square’s advice and input on our requirements document, we worked closely with them to formulate a detailed Invitation to Tender (ITT) document,” added Emma Bossom. “Hart Square also advised us on a shortlist of vendors we should invite to tender, based on their in-depth knowledge of the market.”

Crucial to the success of the ITT was the evaluation criteria. “It was really important to have clarity and consistency around the information we needed to draw out from each supplier,” said Emma Bossom. “Hart Square was really thorough and designed the criteria in such a way that it not only met our requirements, but also made it very easy to evaluate the vendor responses.”

Key benefits

- Expert guidance on selecting new IT support partner
- Expertise on IT support vendors
- Management of ITT process and vendor selection
- Staff and members can rely on IT infrastructure that is well supported

Managing the bid process

Hart Square also helped RAeS through the process of inviting in vendors. “Five suppliers were invited in, and Hart Square managed the communication process throughout. That included setting up both initial and final bid meetings and facilitating the vendor presentations for us,” explained Emma Bossom.

Following those meetings, Hart Square summarised the evaluations. “They really brought it all together and highlighted how each vendor met our specific requirements, working closely with us through the process,” added Emma Bossom. “Where there was a need for clarification they made sure we got the answers we needed to make a decision that was completely evidence-based.”

This was particularly important given the strategic and business-critical nature of the project. “It was vital that we reached the optimum, lowest-risk and best-value option that we could then execute successfully,” explained Emma Bossom.

The project commenced at the beginning of 2020 and was concluded by the start of March with the selection of the new support partner, Atech Support, within the deadline that RAeS had set. “Fortunately, the decision was made before the Covid-19 lockdown,” added Emma Bossom. “With the introduction of more remote working, we’re in a good position to review what we need from the new IT infrastructure and ensure we get the best out of it in the future for both staff and members.”

Working collaboratively

She added: “Hart Square’s knowledge of the non-profit sector and the suppliers out there is very solid. They worked hard to understand our requirements and what we wanted from a support partner. They were really positive and conscientious in providing updates throughout the project to us and the prospective suppliers. They worked in a really collaborative way in terms of highlighting areas that needed clarification, flagging up any potential issues and making sure everything ran to time and was accurate.

She concluded: “Hart Square covered off the project in a really methodical and well-structured manner. It was definitely the right decision to engage with Hart Square.”