

BDO IT SOLUTIONS

CASE STUDY—ONTARIO 211

Winner of 2017 Impact Award—Citizenship and Community Award



The organization

Faced with increasing public demand for immediate access to health, social service and government supports, Ontario 211 Services (ON211) sought a solution to connect less-advantaged Canadians with services in their communities.

ON211 oversees the development and delivery of 211 service in Ontario. 211 is a gateway to community resources, providing help *“When you don’t know where to turn™”*

ON211 is available 24/7, in over 150 languages, and connecting enquires to over 60,000 community and social services.

The challenge

Since 2009, ON211 had supported Ontarians with some fundamental call-centre services and social service referrals. With increased demand for access via digital channels and devices, the public was progressively turning to the Internet for expected solutions from ON211. Unfortunately, ON211’s online site provided an inadequate experience for users, and in particular, was not able to provide information to the Public through digital channels.

Historically, the public would call the three-digit number, 2-1-1, to receive service from a certified specialist. The problem was that 211 did not have a modern and trusted online service channel for serving the public.

ON211 had to find an answer to the challenges of increasing demand against budget pressures (relying on funding from The United Way, and others) and supporting their client communities through the innovative use of technology.

The solution

In 2016, ON211 engaged BDO IT Solutions to create a cost-effective, web-enabled solution that was the culmination of a two-year strategy to transform their online presence and redefine

their Brand. BDO led ON211 to a Microsoft Azure PaaS solution powered by all of the advanced features of Azure Search, and Azure SQL, for a truly leading edge platform that will support their growth for years to come.

The benefit

The new online channels deliver ON211 services affordably, reduces duplication and as equally important, demonstrates how not-for-profits can cost-effectively transform their business process. Thus resulting in increased efficiencies and service choice, while labour savings on scarce resources can be reallocated into further enhancing services.

After turning to the Microsoft Azure platform, and utilizing the full power of Azure Search, ON211 is now on the leading edge of providing immediate response to any need, any enquiry, at any time, from any device.

Does it make a difference?

Absolutely. The solution helps call-centre care workers connect the vulnerable to immediate answers in a time of crisis.

It also supports EMS First Responders and front line Primary Health-Service providers with efficient/effective access to where and how services are available to their patients.

The solution and technology

The new solution delivered a number of valuable business benefits including:

1. **Reliable** - An always on application.
2. **Flexible** - Enhance user experience and search capabilities.
3. **Useable and accessible** - The application created is AODA compliant and supports bilingual access across all devices.
4. **Extensible** - The architecture allows for further growth of use by other key partners of ON211.

INDUSTRY

Not-For-Profit

ABOUT BDO

BDO is one of the nation’s leading providers of assurance, accounting, tax, and advisory services. With strengths firmly rooted in the communities we serve, our professionals deliver highly individualized services informed by deep industry knowledge and nearly 100 years of experience working in local markets throughout the country. And with resources across Canada and around the world, BDO provides seamless and consistent cross-border services to clients with international needs.

BDO IT Solutions helps our industry clients align technology to their overall business strategies. Our award-winning technology implementation and advisory practices enable our clients to streamline their business processes and improve overall operational efficiency.

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“Together, BDO Solutions and Microsoft helped us transform 211 digital services, and empower the public with a new mobile-first solution that helps families access important health and social service supports, in their community”

Andrew Benson, Chair
211 Canada Technology Committee