Cloud based solutions providing business continuity and efficiencies – not just a COVID fad

There have been some positives from the COVID-19 pandemic. Personally, as a clerk and member of the team at EDGE, I have enjoyed having more time for my allotment and developed a newfound appreciation of my son's school. We've all learned to adapt and find new ways of working over the past 18 months. Working from the kitchen table at home has taken great strides forward with technology supporting the way. To Zoom or to Teams will surely be entered into the Oxford Dictionary to mean "video chat" in the same way that google is synonymous with "search for information".

AdvantEDGE and Epitaph have been cloud-based for 15 years, allowing our customers to work from anywhere and have all the paperless information at their fingertips; whether that be at home, in the office, or the local café. Good examples of cloud-based applications and storage are Microsoft 365 and Google Docs which provide email, office applications, online storage of documents and video conferencing for virtual meetings. Cloud-based applications are ideal for all eventualities, not just the pandemic, and provide flexible working for staff. Other emergencies such as the community centre being flooded, or the offices being burgled, would mean working elsewhere for a while and an office-based system would slow down the continuity of business, whereas a cloud-based system is ready whenever and wherever you are based.

We adapted our AdvantEDGE Service Manager module for councils to use as a community response system, to keep a secure track of both residents and volunteers. All logged calls remain on Service Manager so that repeat callers could be identified and build up a history of their needs. Useful information to have available in case of future emergencies.

More recently, we've been busy developing our latest version of InspectEDGE; a tablet based paperless asset inspection app (see screenshot opposite). No more trying to write on a clipboard in the rain juggling a mobile phone to take photographs; information can be tapped straight into the InspectEDGE tablet along with any photographs taken using the tablet. InspectEDGE facilitates inspections of all the council's assets including allotments, street furniture, play equipment and cemeteries.

You won't need a data signal during the inspection as all the information can be uploaded once you are back in the office, warm and dry.

We've developed InspectEDGE to work with maps, starting with what3words, so that your assets all have a reference inside the module which links to a map; great for sending a contractor to repair a notice board. It's a simple matter of adding a new asset out in the field if during inspection you discover a bench you hadn't realised the council owned.

InspectEDGE helps councils to manage risk, by keeping paperless records of inspections evidenced with photographs, which can be retained for as long as required.

Price is 15% of the annual AdvantEDGE subscription starting from £20 and InspectEDGE tablets start from £295 excluding VAT.

Call us for a demo of InspectEDGE or any of our 10 software modules for Local Councils. We also provide IT support and Microsoft 365.