



How Stellar Systems helped Workpower *double its operations almost overnight*



As Western Australia's largest dedicated disability employment service, Workpower has provided meaningful employment opportunities for individuals living with disabilities since 1992. Workpower provides vital support to around 900 people, empowering them through specialised employment programs. These initiatives not only assist in finding and retaining jobs but also support career development and transition from school to the workforce. By offering a comprehensive range of services tailored to individual needs, Workpower plays a crucial role in building fulfilling careers and enhancing the quality of life for its community members.

Overcoming complex *integration challenges*



When fellow WA disability services provider Activ Foundation had to close its disability employment services, Workpower was faced with a sudden and substantial challenge. The task was to integrate all of Activ's staff and physical sites into their operations seamlessly, effectively doubling the size of the organisation overnight. This required a swift and strategic response to prevent job losses and service disruptions, particularly for the 550 supported employees who depend on these services.

Finding the right partner for rapid IT growth

To tackle the monumental task of integrating Activ's operations into Workpower, a comprehensive strategy was essential. The primary goal was a seamless IT integration, merging Activ's existing network infrastructure with Workpower's to ensure operational continuity across all sites. At the same time, it was vital the onboarding of 100 staff members and 550 supported employees was as seamless as possible, and they would need to be equipped with the necessary IT resources to begin work instantly. To make things even more complex, Workpower's network had to be expanded to incorporate new regional locations previously beyond their usual scope of metropolitan Perth. All these efforts needed to be completed within a stringent six-week deadline to guarantee a smooth transition and the continued provision of essential services and continued employment of nearly 650 people.

“When Activ’s services closed, we faced the urgent task of integrating their operations into our own - no small task. Within just six weeks, we seamlessly merged IT systems and onboarded 100 staff and 550 supported employees across both new and existing sites. Stellar’s ability to execute this ensured continuity and stability for everyone involved. This was a monumental task, and Stellar were the right people to manage it.” explains Peter May, Executive Manager of Enterprise Development at Workpower.



Planning for seamless integration *without disruption*

Stellar Systems' two-decade-long partnership with Workpower and their deep understanding of Workpower's core systems and business operations made them the natural choice for this critical transition. Without exploring alternatives, Workpower trusted Stellar to handle the integration seamlessly.

The stakes were high: failure to get things right straight away would not only disrupt operations but also jeopardise the safety and communication needs of over 100 staff, potentially leading to lost customers, revenue, and creating a non-compliant work environment.

Key solution objectives

Implementing Stellar's solutions were crucial to maintaining business continuity and ensuring safety across all sites.

- ✓ **Seamless IT integration:**
Ensuring continuous operation of critical systems like accounting and stock management.
- ✓ **Robust communication networks:**
Establishing reliable communication channels for staff and families, crucial for immediate needs and safety compliance.
- ✓ **Comprehensive hardware setup:**
Equipping all sites with necessary hardware and software to support immediate operational needs.

Implementation

The implementation process began with an extensive discovery phase, where Stellar conducted a thorough assessment of Activ's existing IT infrastructure. This included auditing equipment, communication setups, and user accounts.

Key activities included:



SITE VISITS AND ASSESSMENTS:

Stellar's team visited key sites to understand the physical layout and existing infrastructure. This helped in planning the integration of sites into Workpower's network.



COLLABORATION AND TRANSITION PLANNING:

There was continuous communication between Stellar, Workpower, and the site managers from Activ to ensure everyone was aligned. Stellar also coordinated with communication providers to set up new connections and managed all necessary appointments to prepare the network.



PREPARATION AND EQUIPMENT SUPPLY:

Stellar prepared and supplied new devices and other essential IT equipment to ensure that staff could log in and start working without disruptions from day one.



NETWORKING AND INTEGRATION:

Workpower's existing MPLS network was expanded to include Activ's sites. Stellar also integrated phone systems and other IT hardware like laptops and computers, ensuring they were fully operational from day one.



CRISIS MANAGEMENT AND ALTERNATE SOLUTIONS:

In hard to connect areas, Stellar implemented temporary solutions. This included 4G firewalls and enabling connectivity via the existing infrastructure.

Throughout the project, Stellar maintained communication with Workpower, while handling the technical execution independently. This proactive and agile approach ensured that all objectives were met within the tight deadline, despite the project's complexity and high public and governmental visibility.



A landmark project for Stellar Systems *and Workpower*

The transition has been overwhelmingly well-received, characterised by seamless integration and minimal disruption during a period of significant uncertainty.

The successful implementation of Stellar’s IT solutions marked a pivotal moment for Workpower. It not only facilitated a smooth transition but also highlighted the resilience and flexibility of their long running partnership.

Outcomes and benefits achieved:

No missed deadlines: Met the critical six-week deadline, ensuring a seamless transition without interrupting the business.	Community impact: Received positive feedback from families, emphasising the role of IT in facilitating a supportive environment for both staff and clients.	Employee retention: Successfully retained nearly all of the 100 staff and 550 supported employees taken on, with less than 10% turnover.
System integration: Smooth integration of Activ’s systems into Workpower’s existing network, maintaining operational efficiency and user familiarity.		
Operational continuity: Minimal disruption to daily operations, allowing Workpower to continue serving its community.	Training and support: Provided additional training before and after the transition to ensure all staff were comfortable with the new systems.	Business continuity: Maintained all previous commercial relationships and services, preventing potential loss of business and employment.

Words of *advice*



Peter May highlights the value of a dependable IT partner during critical transitions.

“Stellar’s preparation and execution were flawless, ensuring a smooth transition despite the tight timeframe. Their deep industry understanding and commitment to our values established them not just as a service provider but as a trusted partner. For any complex project, a reliable partner like Stellar is essential.”



Plans for *the future*



Looking ahead, Workpower is focusing on expansion and enhancing security measures. As the organisation grows, safeguarding data and system integrity becomes increasingly crucial. Priorities include strengthening backup procedures, disaster recovery, and penetration testing to protect operations.

Stellar will play a key role in supporting this expansion, ensuring that the IT infrastructure is secure as Workpower aims to expand across more regional sites. This strategic approach ensures that Workpower’s growth is fully sustainable and supported by flexible, resilient, and secure IT solutions.



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