

Much-Needed Software for the Romanian Child Helpline



After running a five-year project that assisted children and adolescents in Romania with European Union financing through the Phare program, the Child Helpline team just couldn't call it quits, so Asociația Telefonul Copilului was founded in 2006. Since 2008, the organization is providing nationwide support free of charge, making Romania one of just three countries in the European Union offering this service.

The organization's activities range from informing and counseling regarding children's rights, to redirecting individuals to the institutions that can solve their issues, to following up on the cases and monitoring the institutions' response, to psychological counseling or just talking to the children about their problems.

Who are they?
Romanian Child Helpline

Where are they?
Bucharest, Romania

What do they do?
Assistance for children and adolescents through a free phone line

How big are they?
Six full-time employees

What did they receive?
Office Professional Plus 2007 X 3
Office 2007 Standard X 3

The outcome?
All PCs now run the much-needed software, at a very low cost

<http://www.telefonulcopilului.ro/>

Though call volume is large (6,400 beneficiaries in 2009, and the numbers are almost doubling each year), the team is relatively small. Its first priority is being near the phone when a child calls. Even middle-management is on the phone half the time, counselling children in need. The same client-centric focus is being applied to the organization's budget, which is not big to begin with. Thus, an IT investment was hard to make.

However, the team is highly depended on infrastructure in order to make things work — employees have a huge database to manage, and all information gathered is hosted on the organization's own servers. It is imperative that the software works well. If not, employees cannot properly continue a call as they are required to log key information into the database while talking. For these reasons, Asociația Telefonul Copilului is probably one of the few NGOs in Romania that has always invested in legal software, while having to make painful cuts to other vital needs.

TechSoup provided the organization with almost free access to the much-needed, robust back-office software, which is, in the words of Catalina Florea, executive director of Asociația Telefonul Copilului, "an incredible improvement."