

Consistent value over time

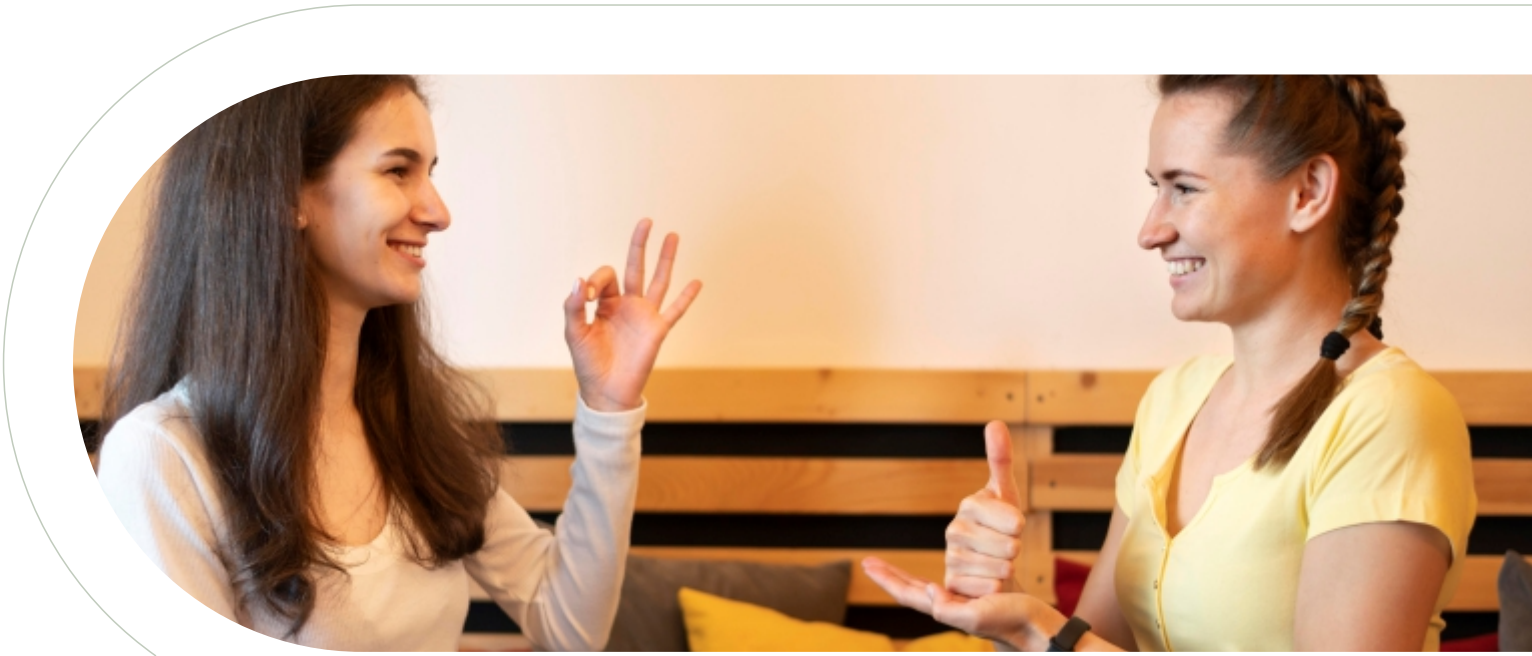
# DEAF AOTEAROA'S LASTING PARTNERSHIP WITH KINETICS



Over the course of more than a decade, not-for-profit Deaf Aotearoa has benefited from consistent value from its relationship with managed services provider Kinetics.

With the experts taking care of its technology estate, Deaf Aotearoa is free to concentrate its efforts on supporting Deaf people across New Zealand, backed by a partner which understands its business, technology needs, and organisational goals.

Deaf Aotearoa is the national organisation representing the voice of Deaf people, and a national service provider for Deaf people in New Zealand. The organisation works closely with Deaf communities, government agencies and other organisations to increase awareness, promote New Zealand Sign Language and strengthen the rights of Deaf people. Deaf Aotearoa is one of 133 ordinary members of the World Federation of the Deaf and is also the New Zealand representative.



## Situation

General manager Mark Crooke says that as a Not for Profit, Deaf Aotearoa looks for quality services that don't break the bank. "If we had the funds, we'd have a full-blown IT department, but that's not the case," he says.

And while cost is one aspect, he stresses that quality is another. "Technology is essential to everything we do, and getting it right directly affects our organisational performance."

Prior to engaging with Kinetics, he says IT was handled by a smaller provider. "As we started to scale up our organisation, more rigour was necessary for achieving efficiency and effectiveness, and security controls. We also wanted a more strategic approach for our architecture and services – after all, technology changes fast, and we wanted to benefit from any developments which could help our service delivery, while avoiding those which might be nothing more than a distraction."

**When complex requirements arose – including the potential minefield of licensing management, or the mooted introduction of new solutions or services, Crooke says Deaf Aotearoa knew it was out of its depth. "We needed experts," he confirms.**

# Solution

With Kinetics coming on board, Crooke says Deaf Aotearoa found (and over time has developed) a mutually beneficial relationship of trust. "We get the expertise we need, when we need it. Whether that's guidance on overall IT strategy, or procurement of equipment and services necessary for our people to get their work done, or getting software licensing optimised, Kinetics takes care of it all."

He explains that it is notable that as times and technology have changed, Kinetics' support and advice have kept pace. "We can't keep up with the latest trends and requirements, but they can and do. That's meant a 'right sizing' of the services provided, while also facilitating our direction."

It is, Crooke adds, akin to having a mentor. "As we've grown and established regional offices with their own IT requirements, Kinetics has taken care of it. And as we've gone from predominantly on-premises IT to cloud and moved from hard drive-driven backups and maintenance to online, they've made sure our systems are fit for purpose."



Drawing particular attention to cybersecurity, Crooke says that as Deaf Aotearoa holds personal and other sensitive data, it has an ethical and regulatory duty to protect it.

"Data security is very high on the agenda. It is essential that we have the right risk and data management policies for our trading relationships including with banks, as well as resilience plans. This is increasingly a requirement to trade and impacts our ability to obtain insurance."

With Kinetics, he says this crucial aspect is fully addressed from multiple perspectives including policy, process, protective software and services, backed by training for Deaf Aotearoa personnel.

# Results

Working with Kinetics has an overriding benefit for Deaf Aotearoa summed up in one phrase says Crooke. Peace of mind. "If we look at licensing - which can be a complex issue - we know we're getting the maximum for the least amount of money as a not-for-profit. In terms of hardware procurement, we're getting excellent value for money thanks to Kinetics' buying power and knowledge of our requirements. And in terms of IT strategy and execution, we benefit from emerging technology when appropriate."

On the latter, he points to artificial intelligence, which offers both opportunity and risk. "AI is here and now. Kinetics works closely with us to see how we can best apply it within our environment and to the benefit of our people. Through training and workshops, they're helping establish policies first, with a managed approach which reduces risk, while exposing the benefits."

With a recent new appointment, Deaf Aotearoa now enjoys the balance of an internal first-level support person addressing immediate needs, with Kinetics providing proactive cyber-maintenance and strategic guidance. By engaging closely with the internal person, Kinetics is transferring skills for a cost-effective solution which leaves more money available for Deaf Aotearoa's operational targets.

Ultimately, Crooke says sound support means Deaf Aotearoa staff members can take their IT for granted, as it is fully supported and always reliable. "It's round-the-clock. When issues do crop up, we always have someone ready to take care of it. There's simply no need to worry about it."

As for value for money, there's a simple test. "We wouldn't be with Kinetics if that wasn't the case," smiles Crooke. "As an NFP, there's sometimes a temptation to look at cheaper options. My advice is don't do it when it comes to crucial infrastructure and services like your IT estate. This stuff is crucial to our value proposition, and by using quality equipment supported accordingly, we achieve more."

