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Solutions & Success

The Inside Story



**Client
Industry
Respondent**

CW Lighting
Construction
Michelle Holman, Managing Partner

I.T. Matters' Proactive Support Allows CW Lighting To Minimize Costs And Avoid Major Problems

CW Lighting represents commercial lighting manufacturers in the Houston area, working to promote their products and win contracts on upcoming commercial jobs. They specialize in commercial, architectural and industrial lighting for nearly four decades. CW Lighting depends on their IT environment to keep their staff productive and their clients happy.

While they currently enjoy an effective partnership with I.T. Matters, CW Lighting did not always have the level of IT support they needed.

CW Lighting Was Struggling To Scale IT With Their Business Growth

“We had a couple of growth spurts,” says Michelle Holman, Managing Partner, CW Lighting. “When I started at the company we were eight people, and we were just using an IT guy that was working out of his garage.”

Over their years in business, CW Lighting has steadily grown, gaining new clients and expanding their staff. While, for a period of time, they were getting the support they needed from an independent IT provider, it wasn't long before they knew they'd need a more formal type of IT support.

“As we grew, that arrangement didn't scale with us,” says Michelle. “We had to move to an actual IT company.”

Outgrowing an IT environment can quickly lead to debilitating issues that affect business-wide productivity. As CW Lighting rapidly expanded, it wasn't long before they moved past the capabilities of their infrastructure.

“It just wasn't scalable, we were having a lot of issues with the server going down, and we just couldn't get the support we needed,” says Michelle. “They were very competent with smaller businesses, but we outgrew them, and they weren't able to scale our infrastructure accordingly.”

Michelle always preferred to find new partners and vendors through word of mouth. If CW Lighting was going to make a change this significant, she wanted to trust that it would be with the right IT team. Fortunately, a business contact suggested I.T. Matters.

“At that point, it felt like we needed to make a change, and we were referred to I.T. Matters by one of the other partners in the business,” says Michelle. “They were very happy with them.”

I.T. Matters began assessing CW Lighting's IT systems and both their immediate and long-term needs to start planning for expansion. They helped CW Lighting to seamlessly scale their IT environment and ensure their means of communication and collaboration were not disrupted.

“They had more of a team environment and obviously had the personnel to be able to work with us and scale with us for the future,” says Michelle.



The I.T. Matters Team Learned To Support CW Lighting's Specialized Software

Given the nature of their work, the CW Lighting team relies on highly specialized line of business software. It's uncommon for other types of businesses to use these apps, and so, the CW Lighting team was accustomed to their IT support being able to provide fully informed assistance when an issue occurred.

"We have very specific softwares that a typical office would not use," says Michelle. "Unless you are in our industry, you wouldn't know anything about them."

As a part of the support service they provide, I.T. Matters arranged for a technician to specifically assist with CW Lighting's needs and to be trained to support their specific line of business apps. This ensures they have a familiar contact that can deliver consistent service.

Furthermore, in order to guarantee continuity of support, I.T. Matters also made sure to have additional staff members trained to support those line of business apps. This ensures that even when the assigned contact is out sick or on vacation, another team member would be available to provide immediate, expert assistance.





I.T. Matters' Support Is Designed To Eliminate Repeated Problems (And Their Associated Costs)

"We did feel like we were wasting a lot of money prior to I.T. Matters, having them resolve the problem every time they came out," says Michelle. "We felt like that would be a cost-savings to us."

One of the more frustrating aspects of the support CW Lighting relied on before I.T. Matters is how they approached problem-solving.

Michelle and the CW Lighting team found that if the same problem occurred again and again, the IT support technician would always have to start the resolution process from scratch each time. Instead of learning from the experience and streamlining the solution next time, they would take the same amount of time to fix the problem.

I.T. Matters, on the other hand, have a much more effective support process in place. Each and every issue they handle for CW Lighting is carefully documented. That ensures that, if the problem occurs again, they can easily identify it and apply the proven solution, drastically reducing how much time it takes to resolve it.

"They were very diligent," says Michelle. "If we have the same problem later on, we're not paying for somebody to figure out the problem all over again."





I.T. Matters Helps CW Lighting Plan Ahead For IT Expenses

One of the many reasons why CW Lighting appreciates I.T. Matters' support is because they help them plan ahead. The fact is that, as a business like CW Lighting grows, it will need to invest more and more money in the infrastructure needed to support its larger staff and operations.

"We had outgrown our server situation, which is one reason why everything was crashing all the time," says Michelle. "They were very upfront with us that we would have to make an investment to scale up in the future."

By helping them see the big picture and plan months in advance, I.T. Matters makes it easier for CW Lighting to budget for major IT projects. There are no surprise fees or costs that catch Michelle off guard.

"They were very proactive in looking at our situation long-term," says Michelle. "These are things that we don't think about, and were not brought to our attention with our previous IT support."



I.T. Matters Keeps CW Lighting's IT Environment Reliable And Backed Up

CW Lighting operates within very strict time-lines in order to help their clients win contracts. The manufacturing and construction industries in which CW Lighting works is very unforgiving when it comes to downtime.

"If the server goes down and we can't bid on a job, we could lose the job because we can't get the pricing out in time," says Michelle. "Even being down a day can set us back thousands of dollars."

Fortunately for CW Lighting, they can rely on I.T. Matters to ensure their IT environment is always running the way they need it to. They keep CW Lighting's systems supported and optimized in order to keep downtime at a bare minimum.

"Having that reliability is very important," says Michelle. "I.T. Matters is very proactive."

I.T. Matters also helped CW Lighting correct a critical data continuity vulnerability. After partnering together, I.T. Matters discovered that CW Lighting had no form of reliable data backup in place.

"We really weren't backing up our information regularly," says Michelle. "If we had gone down, and if things weren't being backed up correctly, it could have taken four or five days to get that info back."

Without a reliable backup, one small instance of data loss could have resulted in ongoing downtime for CW Lighting. I.T. Matters worked with Michelle to find an appropriate backup solution that fit their needs and their budget.

"They gave us three or four options of things we could do to correct our backup," says Michelle.

I.T. Matters Prepared CW Lighting For Remote Work A Month Before the COVID-19 Pandemic

“When the pandemic hit, we were working with I.T. Matters, even a month before anyone even thought about closing down,” says Michelle.

Due to how quickly the pandemic developed, many organizations were unable to prepare for the shift to a remote work setting. Doing so would have required careful planning, methodical execution of new processes, and expert implementation of new technologies.

“We were able to start putting some things in place so that we were ready,” says Michelle. “I don’t know if any of our competitors handled it even remotely as well as we did.”

Fortunately for CW Lighting, they can rely on I.T. Matters for expert assistance. In line with their proactive approach to IT management, the I.T. Matters team was ahead of the curve and started preparing CW Lighting for remote work a month before it would be necessary.

“When we did have to start sending people home, it was seamless,” says Michelle. “That, to me, was the cherry on top that explains how important it is for us to have someone working proactively for us like I.T. Matters.”

The I.T. Matters team ensured that everyone working remotely for CW Lighting had what they needed to be productive and secured. All of it was arranged far enough ahead of time that the pivot to remote work went off without a hitch.

“I don’t know if our customers even knew we had sent people home. It was amazing, and it was all thanks to I.T. Matters,” says Michelle.



I.T. Matters Is “An Extension Of The CW Team”

Since partnering with I.T. Matters, CW Lighting has enjoyed seamless and effective support for their entire organization. They know they can rely on I.T. Matters to always look out for them and help them plan ahead.



We consider them to be an extension of the CW team,”

- Michelle Holman,
Managing Partner, CW Lighting.



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