Voss Herad

What do digital transformation and sharing culture mean for a municipality?

Over the last two years, the Voss Municipality has put great effort and work into renewing their technical platform. During this period, they have directed the spotlight on culture, way of work, responsibility areas, and competency, to name a few. On this journey, they have had a good traveling companion in the team from CloudWay.

CloudWay has run several workshops and delivered «Proof of Concepts» (PoCs) for several areas, such as:

- Microsoft Viva and Teams Organization-wide success
- Secure Remote Work from Anywhere
- [Securing Identities](#)
- [Endpoint Management](#)

We talked with [Trond Arne Myklebust](#) (Digitalization and IT Manager) and [Kim André Vaksdal](#) (IT Consultant in Voss Municipality) to learn more about what they have done, why they did it, and what experiences they would like to share with others.

Background

The IT department in Voss Municipality consists today of 7 persons. Five IT consultants, an apprentice, and a manager. They have two environments with approximately 4500 users and around 2700 devices (PCs, servers, and other equipment).

After a series of analyses and evaluations done in 2020, it was obvious that there was a critical need for upgrading, renewing, and automation wherever possible. The complexity and scope of integrations and flow between different systems, new functionalities, and mobile solutions would give increased useability value and area of use for digital tools. At the same time, the need for availability and expectations from the surroundings increased. To a great extent, Voss Herad are changing the way they work internally and externally. Covid-19 has led to increased use of working from home and digital communication. This also contributes to a change in, and escalation of, the threat situation.

"Digital security is central to what we do. At the same time, it is important to remember that this is not only related to technical solutions. It is just as much about organizational and human factors. Increased use of ICT at work and in new situations can be a challenge for many. " – Trond Arne Myklebust Voss Herad

Voss Municipality found that extensive changes were necessary, including ensuring management support for required actions. What did they do?

To ensure that the ongoing work got the required resources and priorities, they organized it into a project where Kim André Vaksdal was in charge. Key factors for the project's success have been the clear ownership and assigning Kim André as project lead, both for progress and delivery quality.

The project is still in progress. However, some of the central deliveries so far are:

- Migration of approximately 2000 users to Exchange Online
- Co-Management in Intune for over 800 devices after a Proof of Concept run by CloudWay and steadily moved workload, such as patching of OS on the same day as Quality updates were released
- Migrating app distribution to Intune
- Implemented PatchMyPC to patch all 3rd party apps
- Implementation of av Azure- ARC with patching on-premise servers 2-3 days before release.
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All these activities are done in parallel with daily operations and maintenance in addition to user support for 4500 users. As a result, it has been challenging, and they sometimes needed to make some difficult and unpopular decisions.

In addition to the technical platform, they put an effort into the interface between the IT department and the rest of the organization. They set up good governance (for everything from buying to decommissioning) of digital solutions in their own organization and believe that the model they have built can be useful for others.

Clear areas of responsibility and understanding roles are central to involving the correct resources and management at the right time to make good decisions. ICT Governance is not only the responsibility of the IT Department. The whole organization needs to understand that cross-organizational collaboration is the only way to succeed.

Voss Municipality believes they have achieved a lot. Still, there is a long way to go, and they believe in the direction they have set, not the least in the collaboration partners joining them on their journey, such as CloudWay.

Sharing good practice with the community

Voss Municipality is part of several networks and forums for the public sector, and they see that others have many of the same challenges and problems as they have had previously. The team at Voss Municipality has worked hard to build a culture of sharing within their own organization and would like to share their experiences and lessons learned with others. This is why they are happy to share with others who might benefit from hearing what they have done and achieved so far.

As mentioned above, there is still some distance to go, and Voss Municipality is just as much open to hearing about other experiences and lessons learned. Perhaps together with others, we can find good solutions to current and future challenges.

Voss Municipality got help from CloudWay, in several areas. What value did the partnership bring?

Voss Municipality is adamant that the collaboration with CloudWay has been central to how far they have come today. Not only for correctly setting up the environment but also for providing them with an improved understanding and «know-how» for the reasons behind the setup.

For Voss Municipality, CloudWay is not just a vendor. They are a collaboration partner where everyone in the company is genuinely interested in helping the municipality achieve and maintain an environment set up according to best practices. This has been clear through a genuine interest in the people in CloudWay. Their continuous competency and experience transfer sometimes go beyond the original scope and what was expected, in a positive way, of course.

How would you summarize what they have achieved in changes and results of the CloudWay deliveries?

There are different ways to illustrate this. From a technical perspective, we have gotten help building a good and secure foundation for endpoint management.

CloudWay has provided insight into how important it is to be observant in the interaction between people, organizations, and the technical part. At all times, Voss thinks about how the changes made in the technical platform affect workflows and work processes. Although technical changes can be quick to implement, still the user adoption and understanding of the change for end users takes more time.

Voss Municipality has adopted the concept of [digital wellbeing](#) and are now working continuously to spread knowledge and build a culture around this in the organization, using different channels.

The team in Voss Municipality has also gained insights into how to operationalize strategic goals and a better understanding of how they can work cross-organizational to achieve current goals and objectives. Previously they have perhaps underestimated the time required to implement organizational changes. Solutions are not implemented before the employees are using it as part of their workday. One thing is to make something available. It is something else to implement it. At the same time, Voss Municipality has gained a better understanding of the value of completing some things instead of waiting for everything to be 100% ready. The key is to fix the little things, the things you know about.

"It is the sum of the small moves that make the change!" - Trond Arne Myklebust

What would you like to do more?

The collaboration with CloudWay has inspired us in several areas. First, we see great value in building up an internal competency environment. In addition, we would like to participate more in external expertise environments to get inspiration and impulses from others.

As a manager, it has been central for Trond to encourage the employees to seek development for their expertise and on a personal level. This is why he needs to make arrangements so the employee can participate in different expertise forums, take studies and courses, and collaborate actively with other field actors. Building the employee's personal and technical development makes the employee and the municipality stronger and more resilient.

Where to now, Voss Municipality?

As mentioned previously, the municipality still has some distance to go, and within the IT sector, Trond guesses it might be a utopia to think we will ever reach the goal. They will most likely continue working on building and maintaining a stable, flexible, and scalable environment for the organization, built by best practices. The municipality will probably need some help and assistance on the next steps on their journey, and they hope that CloudWay will continue to be their traveling companion.

"It was a pleasure working with Voss Municipality throughout the process. I am happy that we managed to inspire them to implement Digital Wellbeing, a clear roadmap for their solution and move to a modern managed solution. The success of this collaboration illustrates the type of customer that suites CloudWay best, the competent and coachable IT department. Where CloudWay can help make the good choices, do competency transfers and be hands-on for complex implementations." - Ståle Hansen, CEO CloudWay