Feeding children in need during the pandemic

In 2020, the sudden pandemic shutdown challenged Toronto Foundation for Student Success (TFSS) to deliver breakfasts through school nutrition programs to over 110,000 students unable to attend in-person class.

KPMG and TFSS piloted a solution using Survey Monkey and Excel that delivered grocery cards to 3,500 students. KPMG then leveraged its Connected Enterprise framework and Microsoft Power Platform to scale the prototype and deploy a secure solution at lightning speed.

At a time when Canadian families needed it the most, KPMG and TFSS deliver grocery cards totalling $5.7 million in support to 60,000 families.

The Canadian team at KPMG put their Power Platform expertise to the test when they learned about the Impact of the pandemic on TFSS, an independent, registered charity providing invaluable support to the Toronto District School Board schools. TFSS acts as an advocate for students, helping them manage hunger, poverty, and violence in their lives. As part of their mandate, TFSS serves over 212,000 nutritious meals a day.

TFSS faced a daunting challenge at the onset of the pandemic. With over a quarter of children living in poverty in Toronto, 40 percent of children go to school hungry every day. With thousands of families in need, school closures during the pandemic brought an abrupt and unexpected end to their student nutrition programs. Over 110,000 young students suddenly lost access to healthy breakfasts.

In response, TFSS reached out to KPMG for assistance to modernize their program operations. KPMG moved quickly to initiate a pilot project using Survey Monkey and Excel that quickly distributed food cards to 3,500 children. With that proof of concept, KPMG then leveraged its Connected Enterprise framework and Microsoft Power Platform to scale up quickly, efficiently, and securely.

During the pilot project, KPMG conducted a two-hour digital transformation workshop exploring how digital technologies and real-world activities could allow TFSS’ student nutrition program to continue remotely. The findings and insights from this workshop enabled them to develop a robust technical plan.

In close collaboration with TFSS, Toronto District School Board, and The Toronto Catholic School Board, KPMG brought the plan to life. After conducting online training sessions, the pilot project went live on March 27, 2020. Outreach via broadcast email and voice messaging resulted in the registration of 3,500 children to receive...
Inspiring more positive change

News of KPMG’s work with TFSS spread quickly. The Breakfast Club of Canada, another school-based non-profit organization, reached out for assistance. A similar process assessed the Breakfast Club’s digital capabilities and implemented solutions that delivered food to children in need during the pandemic. The results were equally gratifying, supporting more than 500 in-school programs, 22 after-school programs, as well as health clinics in over 120 schools in low-income neighbourhoods.

As a result of both projects, KPMG piloted a hybrid pro-bono model for non-profit clients. This approach provides non-profits the ability to transform their operations digitally, leading to streamlined processes and more accurate and timely data to measure the impact of their programs—a key factor to secure ongoing and increased funding from stakeholders.

All told, KPMG committed itself to supporting Canadian families at a time when they needed it the most. And while many partners did amazing and important work last year, KPMG Canada’s success with TFSS truly stands out, earning the Social Impact/Community Response Impact Award.

Food for Kids succeeds

The success of the pilot project led to the creation of Food for Kids—a digital solution that scaled up the program to reach thousands more children. Ultimately, 60,000 families in Ontario successfully received 3,300,000 healthy breakfasts for their kids at home. KPMG distributed an impressive $5.7 million in grocery cards to families in need.

Importantly, this new program also made a cultural Impact at TFSS, helping to advance their digital transformation. TFSS improved their digital maturity in three areas: insight-driven strategies and action; digitally enabled technology architecture; and an aligned and empowered workplace.

A new approach for TFSS

Employees responsible for the Student Nutrition Program can now better manage site data, reports, and program allocation, as well as register and take daily attendance of students. TFSS employees spend less time doing administration, while benefitting from real-time insights into program functioning and finances.

Prior to the pandemic, the programs run by TFSS had three core functions: Registration, Verification, and Fulfilment. In just six weeks, the Connected Enterprise framework digitally expanded the core functions to seven, adding Program Management, Card Management, Financial Management, and Reporting.

With so much change in such a short period of time for such a crucial service, KPMG knew they had to deliver, and Microsoft applications made it possible. Power BI enabled the collection of data and analytics through the development of a Common Data Service (CDS) and the Reporting function. And they leveraged Microsoft Power Apps platform to support the seven core functions.