redox
software

How Redox helped Lantra transform its online presence and showcase land-based careers

"It's indirectly generating new business for the training and qualifications part of our business. And it's allowing us to develop more streamlined ways of doing things."

There was a happy ending. But this story experiences a "fateful phone call" you never want to receive.

Marcus Potter is CEO of Lantra. His team had invested hundreds of hours on the project. Would they secure the code and achieve their goals?

Starting life as the Agricultural Training Board in 1966, Lantra is now an independent charity. It supports land-based businesses to attract and train people to work productively, safely, and sustainably in the sector.

Working with a nationwide network of training providers, Lantra certifies over 110,000 people a year.

Lantra first worked with Redox in 2017.

"We wanted to better manage all the information and documentation around our training and qualifications. We didn't have a system to pull it together in one place, so we engaged Redox. They quickly understood our business including legacy systems we needed to keep and integrate," said Marcus.

The website that would change everything

When the government withdrew funding from Sector Skills Councils in 2014, Lantra was forced to significantly cut back its work promoting land-based careers.

Fast forward to 2020, the charity was able to start reinvesting in careers from its own reserves. The trustees were concerned that existing information was fragmented and conflicting. This made it hard for potential new entrants, colleges, and employers to see the bigger picture.

Lantra decided to build an online careers site. As this would seamlessly integrate with its training and qualifications website, Marcus wanted to upgrade their online presence at the same time.

"We wanted more control to be able to edit and develop the website ourselves in-house. Our existing site wasn't very flexible, and we wanted a platform to build from," he said.

The project started well. A company called Think Booker started to build it, as they offered a booking system too (something Marcus wanted to explore). Even when Think Booker was bought by Flex Systems, development initially continued as planned.

Marcus had asked Redox to create a careers information database that would fuel the careers site. It covered over 250 different roles.

"For the careers site, we recognised early on we'd need to manage a lot of data and changing relationships connecting job roles, training and qualifications, and training providers. So, we wanted a database to manage this rather than being reliant on updating thousands of hyperlinks. Otherwise, we knew we'd lose track over time.

This aspect needed more specialist skills, so we turned to Redox because it's bang in the middle of what they do," explained Marcus.

Many months into the project, Marcus received the "fateful phone call". Flex was going into administration and the flagship site was only part-built.

When a longstanding relationship pays dividends

"I was worried. I knew how much time and money we'd already invested and how much had already been developed. My biggest concern was securing the intellectual property so we could complete the project. We needed to get hold of the code. So, I picked up the phone to Tom at Redox," said Marcus.

Despite the upset, all three businesses – Lantra, Flex, and Redox – had collaborated well on the project. Marcus and Tom agreed Redox would try and onboard the code from Flex. With active co-operation from Flex, this was achieved within three days. Tom also confirmed Redox could take on the entire project from this point.

"Because of our long relationship with Redox, there's a high level of trust between us. We let them challenge us, and not just say 'oh you're the client, you must know what you want.'"

"They know our business and have a good understanding of the data and systems that underpin it. There have been several times when they've come back and suggested a better way. It's a very valuable relationship," said Marcus.

One area where Redox helped Lantra enhance its project was illustrating career progression.

"Our sector has always been seen as low-paid and low-skilled. It's a big problem and isn't true anymore. We wanted to illustrate the many progression opportunities that exist in our industries. Jeni, our Head of Careers, and Tom at Redox came up with a graphic to sit under each job role to highlight future career opportunities. This will start to remove a big barrier for people coming into the industry," explained Marcus.

We want to help the sector attract talent and support individuals progress their land-based career. Having an online platform, informed by industry input, helps re-establish our position as a trusted resource.

Having a collaborative relationship with Tom was really beneficial. Redox likes to focus on the user journey and accessibility. This helps to make complex information easier to understand and navigate.

Adding career maps to the site was something that hadn't been done before. My visuals simply helped me make sense of the industry. But when Tom saw them, he said we had to do something like this on the site. So, we worked on it together.

Presenting information in different ways has created a more rounded resource that appeals to a wider audience. Plus, the site draws from our database and makes it so easy to add new content. We can then quickly link it to different job roles, allowing users to access everything in one place.

As soon as we launched, we had offers from the sector to support our work. We want our website to engage the industry and act as a call to action.

We have ambitious plans to grow the careers resource, making it more interactive and adding downloadable resources. I'd be delighted for Redox to help us to drive this forward in the future.

Jeni Adamson – Head of Careers – Lantra

Boosting reputation, productivity, and growth

When you create something that addresses wider industry needs, everyone wins. For Lantra, that's meant enhancing its reputation as a trustworthy source of land-based careers information.

"Our new careers site has been very positively received. We've had emails from organisations like the Chartered Institute of Foresters saying congratulations. The site has announced that Lantra is back in careers and a partner worth working with. We've now started lots of discussions with other organisations about how we can work together to make an even bigger impact.

And the more people we bring into the industry, the more people need training. So, our careers work indirectly generates new business for the training and qualifications part of our business," said Marcus.

The website upgrade enabled countless productivity improvements too. One example relates to how Lantra attracts and accredits new course instructors.

"On our old website, all we could do was promote the opportunity and ask them to manually send us their information to assess. Now, they can upload everything online. It's streamlining our back-office services and we've only just scratched the surface."

Meanwhile, Lantra's training partners are embracing new opportunities to promote their courses on the website.

"Quite a few are starting to list their courses on the Lantra site so that customers can easily see when and where courses are running. It's landed very smoothly. We allocated quite a lot of time for bug fixing but we haven't needed to use much at all," he added.

Further digital transformation

With the upgraded website and new careers site in place, Marcus feels Lantra can now move further forward with its digital transformation plans. He's already progressing many project ideas with Redox.

"We've got big plans involving Redox. The first area is to create a Learner Portal, so that anyone who trains with us has easy access to their training records. Instead of phoning us for copies of their certificates they can reprint them or share them online.

We're also implementing e-certificates and digital Skills ID cards that will be more convenient, secure, and sustainable than their paper and plastic predecessors.

We'd love the Learner Portal to become a sole repository for all their training records and enable direct communication between us and the learner. Then we can send training reminders and other useful information," he said.

Marcus also wants software to enhance the Lantra experience for trainers.

"We're going to create an online community for our instructors to support them and build a stronger relationship with them. We'll then be able to deliver information more easily and give them a forum to discuss issues together."

A third software goal is to develop an app. This will streamline the administration that takes place on the day of a course and record assessment results digitally. Developed by Redox, it's due to be beta tested in a few months' time.

Instead of creating paperwork, trainers will be able to use the app in remote locations. They'll instantly transmit information to Lantra's system as soon as they have an internet connection.

"That will make our instructors' lives a lot easier and massively improve our own productivity," said Marcus. *"Currently we've got too many people inputting information manually from paper returns. We want to free up their time for other work that will add much more value."*

The value of long-term relationships

Lantra has created an incredible online resource. That has partly been down to a trusting partnership with Redox. Thoroughly understanding how Lantra works, Redox supports them project by project on their digital transformation journey.

"Redox's unique selling point is their ability to understand our business and really get to the heart of things. We have a fair idea of what we need.

But when we discuss it with Redox, they often challenge some of our assumptions. That's certainly helped us refine what we do and how we deliver each project. Such close collaboration has been a big plus point," concluded Marcus.

redox software