



*Resultant*



## **Damar Services Finds True Partnership and Technology Reliability**

Where caring for people with developmental disabilities is the focus, having to fight technology had created daunting frustrations for this imperative resource. Damar went looking for an IT managed services partnership that would support its strategic growth and put client care first.



## SETTING THE STAGE

Damar Services was founded more than 50 years ago by two parents struggling to find support for their children with developmental disabilities. The organization answered a tremendous need, and it has grown and expanded its offerings from residential services to a school, therapeutic environment, foster care services, outpatient mental health, and a host of other critical support services for helping clients live rewarding lives.

That growth has accelerated quite a bit, and Damar has seen revenue grow by 88% in just the past five years. What began as a family endeavor had maintained a very intimate approach to serving clients: everything that could be handled in house was, because it was important that the employees and clients got to know each other. It was equally important that Damar could vet and background check anyone who came into contact with clients.

Technology was more than the organization could handle in house, however, and had been outsourced for years, with a rotating slate of employees from the IT managed services provider (MSP) embedded at Damar.

## ABOUT DAMAR SERVICES

Damar is one of America's leading providers of services to people with developmental, behavioral, and intellectual disabilities—and the people who love them. Damar helps families meet the challenges of autism through applied behavioral analysis (ABA) and other services, and it offers residential services, transitional living, schooling, mentoring, foster care, crisis centers, and outpatient services, including therapy and counseling to support clients of all ages through various disabilities.



## THE PROBLEM

“Our dream was that our technology would work like our electricity, and it never did,” said Jenny Peters, Chief Strategy Officer for Damar, “As we’d grown, it had been kind of pieced together with paper clips and glue.”

Leaving their IT MSP and foregoing that accumulated knowledge was a risk, but with an impactful staff change from the provider and a number of lingering issues, Damar was ready to try something new in hopes of a smoother technology experience.

Damar had network and wireless issues that created duplicative processes to keep up with medical records; on rainy days, the 82-acre campus would lose wifi access, and electronic medical records—which are a constant and important resource for every employee who works with clients—couldn’t be accessed or updated. Email security had been lackluster, and equipment inventory management hadn’t been codified in any reliable fashion. Details like a nonfunctioning boardroom conferencing system and requiring redundant log-ins to use the printer made workdays less efficient for Damar’s 1,000+ employees.

The big picture left something to be desired, as well: Technology strategy hadn’t been part of the conversation between Damar and its former IT MSP, which prevented Damar from achieving the kind of alignment between technology and organizational strategy that would not only stave off IT surprises but help improve and expand its services.

Damar’s family approach to its organization and its rocky technology history made one thing imperative to the organization’s leadership: They wanted a Resultant team member onsite full time to address day-to-day concerns.



## OUR APPROACH

After a meticulous RFP process, our team emerged as a different kind of IT MSP: “We were hoping for a partner,” Peters said, “and that’s exactly what we found.” Even so, trepidation was high after working with just one partner over the past several years. Disruption, the Damar leadership feared, would be part of the shift.

Our team worked closely with the Damar staff, spending time observing and discussing the technology frustrations they faced. We worked with leadership to uncover their goals—not just for technology—but for the organization itself so we could best collaborate with them toward a plan that would serve that growth. And then we got to work.

“We’d expected onboarding to be more challenging than it was,” Peters said. “We worked for weeks with your team when we transitioned. They kept assuring us everything would be fine, and we kept not believing them. And then it was fine. And now—we were just joking the other day—our technology really does run like our electricity, which was always our dream. Huge issues aren’t taking us down, taking us out of productivity for hours on end. That started with our transition team, who met us where we were and helped us get up to speed.”



## THE OUTCOME

Improvements happened fast, like getting that troubled boardroom conferencing system up and running and implementing two-factor authentication to protect Damar's email. Our team quickly brought the inventory management and loaner equipment processes up to speed and improved third-party vendor management over Damar's security, camera, phone, and other providers.

More critical to day-to-day functioning came from moving the organization's wifi past constant outages to steady reliability. Employees now can depend on their connectivity, which makes their constant need to access and update medical records significantly less cumbersome.

Damar immediately appreciated having ready support employees could rely on: "The biggest improvement for our staff overall is the help desk support, which is responsive and super knowledgeable," Peters said. "We never feel like they're far away, and that's fantastic."

In addition to remote support, Damar has a dedicated Resultant expert on site full time. Not typically part of our IT MSP contracts, providing an embedded employee was something Damar felt strongly about because the organization prioritizes relationships, access, and familiarity.

Our onsite team member helps manage vendors, address issues, and work with Resultant help desk experts toward troubleshooting. He can be there to support Damar while living our core values and providing a personal touch, but he's part of a bigger team of experts that ensure quick resolution to whatever issues arise.

"Eric is just spectacular," Peters said. "He's so insanely helpful and so bought into our mission that we feel like he's part of our family."

Because he knows how Damar's teams work, he's also invaluable for helping to devise the organization's technology strategy, which has come a long way in recent months. Our team and Damar's meet monthly to assess, plan, and troubleshoot, keeping tabs on Damar's technology strategy and helping its strategic growth initiative move steadily forward. Because a premier element of that growth initiative is employee-based, Damar has welcomed improvements to its onboarding process, which has been streamlined to reduce errors and licensing costs.

## IMPACT

In all aspects of its work, client safety is Damar's primary concern, and Peters notes that working with Resultant has elevated safety all around: "Our electronic medical records system works," she said. "For some clients, we need to update every 3-5 minutes because there's a critical need for support, and we can keep updated to the minute." Peters also points to having one point of contact managing all third-party providers keeps a steadier eye on security throughout all Damar locations.

Peters appreciates something outside the IT MSP agreement just as much. She's seen several Resultant employees on campus as volunteers, providing play time and connection for kids in the residential treatment center. It's a mark of commitment, she said, and characteristic of the kind of partnership Damar had hoped for.



**"For us, technology was always a problem—never a solution to anything. Now's it's a solution for so many things. We don't have the worries we had a year ago. We trust Resultant and know that they have our backs."**

**JENNY PETERS**

CHIEF STRATEGY OFFICER, DAMAR SERVICES

