

Case study / ResourceSpace +

Tearfund



Christian charity [Tearfund](#) works around the world, partnering with churches in more than 50 of the world's poorest countries to tackle incredibly complex challenges, including poverty, responding to natural disasters and challenging injustice.

Tearfund first started using ResourceSpace as their [Digital Asset Management platform](#) in 2013, and we're incredibly proud to have supported the charity's vital work for over a decade. We were fortunate enough to be able to reflect on this long-term partnership with Margaret Chandler, Digital Asset Management Co-ordinator for Tearfund, and discussed the journey we've been on together.

As DAM Co-ordinator, Margaret receives all of the visual assets that are provided by their content gatherers working across the globe, manages the metadata tagging, controlling user access and permissions, and dealing with the many requests and enquiries that come in from across the organisation. It's fair to say that she knows the system like the back of her hand.

"I worked with Montala to set up Tearfund's configuration of ResourceSpace, and I continue to work closely with the team to maintain it and receive advice on the best ways of doing things" says Margaret.

"It was clunky and often crashed, leading to a lot of downtime." says Margaret.

In 2013, Tearfund migrated to ResourceSpace. Margaret reflects, "When we first began using ResourceSpace we decided to host it on our own servers. This was problematic, as it meant downtime if our servers crashed. There was also the challenge of added workload for our own IT team if issues arose. Moving to being hosted by Montala hugely improved our situation: downtime dropped to almost zero, and I was able to get technical assistance quickly and easily.

"My strong recommendation would be that you make the most of the option to be hosted with Montala. The DAM is on their servers and you don't have to worry about it—it's been a dream since then."

This relationship lasted for 10 years before, due to some internal changes, Tearfund decided to move to a different DAM provider. After trialing this new provider for three years, we realised that ResourceSpace was a better fit for our complex requirements and we returned to ResourceSpace.



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Margaret has worked with Tearfund's content assets for almost 30 years, and in that time the charity has used various different DAM systems.

"When I started we used to work with physical prints and slides, and you had to file them away before they got dusty. To locate physical images we had an in-house text-based program with codes for categories. For example, you could enter the code for images of water, and it would give you the filing references for matches. You had no visual preview way back then!" recalls Margaret.

"Sometimes we'd also have to entrust original prints to the Royal Mail and just hope they didn't get eaten up by one of their machines!"

When Tearfund went digital for the first time it was with an off-the-shelf system hosted on their own servers, but this was beset with issues.



“We’ve had loads of things developed, including bespoke functionality.”

Margaret found that the product offered by ResourceSpace was better able to adapt to the flexibility that Tearfund needed.

“Because ResourceSpace is open source, and we’ve got a good working relationship with Montala’s excellent customer service, we’ve been able to have loads of things developed over the years, including bespoke functionality,” says Margaret.

“I was suffering from repetitive strain injury due to a number of things inside and outside of work, not least building websites and playing bass guitar, but ResourceSpace used to be very click-driven in terms of selecting assets.

“We spoke to Montala and funded the development of the Bulk Asset selection and deselection function, which greatly reduced the number of click actions I had to make.”

That freedom to request bespoke changes or speak directly to our customer success team to develop new functionality is one of the biggest advantages to ResourceSpace being an open source platform, and the openness of our account managers to new ideas is something Tearfund has really benefitted from.

“If I have a weird or wacky idea I can chuck it out there and they’ll say, ‘Yeah that might work’, or ‘You shouldn’t do it that way, but you could do it a slightly different way’. It’s a massive advantage that it’s open source.



The openness of our account managers to new ideas is something Tearfund has really benefitted from

“There have been a few times we’ve asked if certain functionality existed, but it didn’t, and then Montala said they could develop that option, which is great.”

Tearfund has benefitted from developments like watermarking and autocrediting that they developed in partnership with Montala, but there’s one development in particular that Margaret highlights as making ‘a huge difference’ to her life.



“I really value the flexibility to develop things myself.”

However, it’s not just the developments we’ve been able to support with that has allowed Margaret to craft a DAM system that works for Tearfund, but also the things she’s been able to build herself.

“It’s so flexible, and we particularly needed the ability to implement granular access, and I’ve not seen that on any other DAM platform,” says Margaret.



Having the freedom to think outside the box is really valuable.

“Other platforms tend to be group-based, but we needed far more flexibility because we’re dealing with very personal data, so I simply used a metadata field to filter which user groups can see which assets—it’s been a really significant feature for us.”

Margaret was also able to combine her own expertise and ResourceSpace’s flexibility to solve an issue with the system that was causing a lot of frustration. If a user requested a large collection of assets, but just one of those assets was restricted to that user, the system would block the access but not identify the specific asset causing the problem.

“To get around that problem I was able to develop my own protocol for naming assets that made it easy to identify whether they were open or restricted. It’s simple, but having the freedom to think outside the box is really valuable.”

“ResourceSpace has been ahead of the curve in terms of AI functionality.”

Margaret has seen ResourceSpace change a lot in the 13 years since she was first introduced to the platform, but something she’s been most impressed by is the AI functionality introduced over the last 12 months.

“One of the things I was most excited about was that AI now creates alt text by default, which is wonderful for us. It was always a ‘do it on the fly’, extra job to do, so this now saves us loads of time on manual alt text creation.

“I also really value the AI Smart search which allows us to search everything based on visual similarity, rather than just metadata, which makes it much easier to find assets that might otherwise never be surfaced.

“It’s felt like ResourceSpace has been ahead of the curve in terms of things like AI functionality for some time,” concludes Margaret.





Ready to take the next step?

Want to hear more from ResourceSpace customers about what sets it apart from the competition? Check out our full range of [case studies here](#), or if you'd like to find out more about the DAM functionality that has supported Tearfund for more than a decade, book a free 30-minute demo by following the link below.

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