

City of Oregon City

Enhancing government services with cloud-based email



SNAPSHOT



Industry: Government

Focus: Email & Productivity

Solution: Microsoft Office 365

Benefits

- Guarantees email availability with a financially backed 99.9% uptime SLA
- Eliminates costs of supporting an on-premises email server
- Frees IT staff to focus on improving City services rather than server maintenance

Overview

As its old email server approached end-of-life, Oregon City's municipal government looked for a new and improved email solution that would be more cost-effective to maintain. Teaming up with Tangent, the City migrated to Office 365. Now, with cloud-based email and Office applications available anytime, from any location, government employees can work more efficiently than ever to serve Oregon City's 33,000 citizens.

Optimizing resource allocation

Located at the confluence of the Clackamas and Willamette Rivers, Oregon City is the county seat of Clackamas County, Oregon, and home to more than 33,000 people. Like many municipal governments, the City of Oregon City constantly strives to optimize its resource allocation – making the most of its budget and workforce to improve the lives of its citizens.

As part of this mission, the City is pursuing an ongoing strategy to expand its virtualized IT environment and transition to cloud-based technologies; aiming to minimize the resources required to support its IT systems. So when its Microsoft Exchange 2007 email server began to approach end-of-life, the City knew it had an excellent opportunity to reduce costs while enhancing employee productivity.

The city decided to replace the aging hardware and transition to a new Exchange server. David Knoll, IT Supervisor at the City of Oregon City, explains: “We had planned on hosting the new Exchange on a virtual machine using Exchange 2013, but we were looking to reduce the resources required to support it onsite, and also improve uptime and reduce risk.”

With these criteria in mind, the City quickly realized that a cloud-based solution was the answer – it would entirely eliminate both the need for an on-premises server, as well as the risk of data loss or downtime in the event of an onsite disaster.

David Knoll comments: “We were looking to cloud-base our email entirely, to be available even if our systems went down.”

Migrating to the cloud

After assessing the various cloud-hosted email services on offer, the City found that Microsoft Office 365 was the best fit, thanks to its superior availability and disaster planning capabilities.

The City already had an implementation of Office 365 that it was using for web-based Microsoft Office applications and SharePoint collaboration tools, but it didn't have the Exchange component. “Not having the Office 365 Exchange component was limiting these services” explains David Knoll - so migrating the City's email to Office 365 was a natural progression.

“Our implementation went very smoothly, better than we could have hoped. The project team was available and attentive, thoroughly knew the process and pitfalls, and was able to work through issues quickly and completely.”

—David Knoll, IT Supervisor, City of Oregon City

With its sights set on transitioning its email to Office 365, the next step for the City was to find a technology partner that could help carry out the migration. The City received bids from a number of companies, but most of the offers failed to meet its exacting standards.

David Knoll recalls: “The shortcomings were in part based on the complexity of the solutions offered, and the costs. Some employed proprietary tools, and some required a physical walk-around to each user upon migration.”

In contrast with these excessively convoluted and expensive proposals, the City found that Tangent's offer was precisely what it was looking for.

“Tangent's proposal was complete, understandable, well-thought-out, and came in at a low cost,” says David Knoll. “The project plan required a lot of upfront time working with Tangent, but resulted in very little user disruption.”

The clarity and cost-effectiveness of the proposal, coupled with Tangent's responsiveness to questions and wealth of experience from other migrations set them apart from the competition, making it an easy choice for the City of Oregon.

David Knoll continues: “Our implementation went very smoothly, better than we could have hoped. The project team was available and attentive, thoroughly knew the process and pitfalls, and was able to work through issues quickly and completely. Deadlines were kept, in fact for the most part it went faster than expected.”

To help streamline the adoption of the new platform, Tangent provided training during the implementation phase, ensuring users could make the most out of Office 365 and transition without difficulty.

“Given the complexity of the project and what could have gone wrong, we have been very impressed with Tangent’s delivery on their promises and would recommend them for a similar project without reservation.”

—David Knoll, IT Supervisor, City of Oregon City

“From the beginning we felt in good hands,” says David Knoll. “From the well-prepared scope of work and project plan, to the kickoff meetings, to the deployment and preparation of hybrid servers and cloud services, to the attentiveness and care the Tangent team took to complete the project with us as partners. I truly believe Tangent has our best interests at heart and took great care to make sure our needs were being met. In particular, Tangent’s technical staff was superior in every way and available whenever we needed them.”

Reliable, secure, cost-effective

With its mailboxes migrated to Office 365, the City of Oregon City is enjoying a host of benefits: “Improved uptime and disaster planning, reduction in mailboxes and improved use of Shared mailboxes, and better interfaces for webmail and phone email access,” reports David Knoll.

Now that its email is hosted on the Microsoft Azure cloud, the City no longer has to devote so many

resources to maintaining an on-premises server, saving both time and money, and enabling it to redistribute those resources to other City services. Reducing the number of mailboxes it is using is also helping the City make savings in license costs.

With Office 365’s intuitive webmail and mobile interfaces, government employees can access their email at any time, from any location, and with any device – dramatically improving productivity. Collaboration is up as well thanks to easy-to-use shared mailboxes.

Office 365 is also proving to be a more reliable platform. Microsoft guarantees almost 100 percent uptime, and since everything is saved to the cloud, there’s no risk of data loss if an on-premises system goes down.

The City is additionally taking advantage of Tangent’s ongoing support services. “A few issues have come up,” says David Knoll, “and Tangent has been able to assist with them quickly.”

David Knoll concludes: “Everything about the project has been a positive experience – from the very reasonable cost of the services provided, to the timeliness of completion, to the overall expertise and understanding demonstrated by the project team.

“Given the complexity of the project and what could have gone wrong, we have been very impressed with Tangent’s delivery on their promises and would recommend them for a similar project without reservation.”

About Tangent

Tangent is a Gold certified 27-year Microsoft Partner specializing in technical product consulting and cloud-based professional services. Tangent offers the Microsoft Office 365 portfolio for quick and seamless Deployment, Certified Training of the world’s leading productivity & collaboration tools, and Support Packages to ensure you are getting the most out of your Office 365 solution. For more information, please visit <http://www.tangent.com/microsoft-cloud/> or contact cloudsolutions@tangent.com

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