

Celtic Healthcare Enables Rapid Growth with Office 365

Cost Savings Project Also Powers Productivity



Celtic Healthcare initially leveraged Office 365 to prepare for rapid growth of their hospice and home healthcare business. By moving email to the cloud, they'd reduce cost of managing internal servers, applications and licensing, and IT could focus on growth initiatives. **But the upside has proven even more valuable.** *Office 365 keeps expanding the tools that help Celtic innovate within its booming business.* "Once we moved email, we've loved that Microsoft keeps providing new features for us," said **Director of IT Jonathan Bost**. "We use the video portal, Planner, Groups and now Teams. We wouldn't use these tools if we had to deploy on-premises."

Celtic's Innovation Extends to Associates Too

Doctors' offices, hospitals, senior living communities, and families choose Celtic's home health services because of their extraordinary service to their patients. Around 275 associates provide support services from HQ near Pittsburgh, PA. Nearly 1000 in-home nurses, therapists, and health professionals provide care to patients, and an additional 200 field associates provide support.

Senior VP of IT Greg Teamann explained his strategy. "We are supporting a distributed and highly mobile workforce, caring for our patients at their place of residence," said Teamann. "It is imperative that solutions supporting our workforce are reliable and easy to use, but equally important is having effective training programs backed by responsive support when issues are encountered to ensure staff can remain focused on patient care."

Hospice & Home Health Professionals Improve Care Using Office 365

Back office Support Services associates at HQ and home offices take advantage of:

- Skype for Business for Enterprise Voice, meetings, IM, and Presence (integrated with Celtic's EMR system)
- Exchange Online for unlimited inboxes and voicemail
- OneDrive for Business to store docs instead
- Office 365 Groups and Planner to share plans, delegate tasks
- SharePoint for company files
- Office 2016 thick clients

Nurses & field clinicians use:

- Exchange Online for secure remote access to email
- Skype for Business for online meetings, IM/Presence
- Office Web Apps to view and create files from any device
- OneDrive for Business to store all documents and leverage Office Web Apps
- Office 365 video for training

CELTIC HOSPICE & HOME HEALTH

13 locations
HQ in Mars, PA

<https://www.celtichealthcare.com/>

Director of IT:

Jonathan Bost

Office 365 Groups, Planner, and OneDrive Make M&A Easier

Office 365 Web Apps and OneDrive have been helpful during mergers. “We co-author due diligence spreadsheets in Excel in real-time, without having to deal with version controls or lock outs,” explained Bost. With guest access to Groups, Celtic can invite members of new companies into a virtual team. “Prior to Groups, we had to create guest accounts in AD and Exchange, and staff had to manage multiple credentials,” said Bost. Planner helps merger teams efficiently manage their tasks. “Our merger and benefits enrollment teams are managing tasks at a high level using Planner, and we’re seeing Groups as a convenient way to create a shared OneNote.”

“As a remote team, Planner has really enhanced our ability to communicate,” said **Stephanie Miller, Staff Development Specialist**. “It allows us to organize and maintain meeting minutes to ensure everyone is on the same page, even if they were unable to attend. We can identify which projects we’re working on and our Manager can track progress. They can also identify project distribution and see if items need to be redistributed, and who is available to take on another project.”

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Mobile Caregivers Keep Up with OneDrive and Office Web Apps

“We use IM, Skype, and OneNote daily,” said **Clinical Informatics Supervisor Gwen Boyer**. “Working remotely, it’s our main form of communication with each other. I have created an Informatics Team notebook in One Note that allows any team member to update document contents. We are able to have the most current information and workflows, physician practice contacts, weekly huddle meeting notes, and other documents in a central location making this extremely easy to use for our team.”

“The mobility of Office 365 is great,” said Bost. “From any web browser, the clinical staff can get anything they need.” Nurses and clinicians had been storing files on their local hard drives, but now view and edit files and email attachments through Office Web Apps. They create/store their files on their OneDrive. For such users, E1 licenses have been more cost effective than Office Pro Plus.



Field and HQ Stay in Sync Using Skype for Business

On the front lines, clinical staff are using Skype for team meetings and compliance training. “Our clinical teams have meetings where they meet as a group to review patient cases,” explained Bost. “They still meet in person, but each face to face meeting still has a Skype component to it, because there’s always someone that can’t be physically there.”

Home Health Operations Manager Cyndi Campanale said “Any meeting that can’t be in person I use Skype. Anyone that I need to reach, I use IM. I use Skype all the time to IM and would not be able to live without it.”

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“There’s a lot of Skype collaboration, being that we’re geographically dispersed,” said Bost. “We see people sharing screens and IM’ing for questions.” Even the basic capability of presence helps. “With the staff being so mobile, it’s nice to know when they’re at computer or not. They spend a lot of time in their car, and Skype makes it easier to determine what methods of communication are available to them.”



Skype Delivers Dial Tone and More at Headquarters

Celtic has used Microsoft Unified Communications since LCS 2005, and usage has grown organically. After looking at Cisco’s IM solution, Celtic found traversing firewalls and VPNs materially increased cost and added complexity for their end users. Realizing that IM capabilities came with their Enterprise Agreement, they deployed IM as a pilot in IT. “Shortly after, HR got wind and wanted on board, then the building department wanted in, and soon we rolled out to all office staff,” said Bost.

Now, all 280 employees at headquarters use Skype for Business for dial tone and phone service. When their Cisco Call Manager was at the end of its life, Celtic looked at several solutions, including Cisco, who proposed an entire rack of physical hardware. They also looked at ThinkingPhones, and ShoreTel. “We found that deploying Skype was not only more cost effective, but was the path of least resistance since users already adopted IM and conferencing,” said Bost. “Skype was already part of the culture of the organization. Other options had similar functionality, but there was no other solution that brought it all together like Skype. It was easy to turn on all the features of Skype instead of getting piecemeal solutions that didn’t integrate properly.”

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Adding Enterprise Voice was simple, and effective. “We liked the mobile nature of the soft client and that it just worked from anywhere,” said Bost. “It worked on my home internet, it worked from Starbucks. As long as I have a decent Internet connection, the softphone works. Skype uncoupled the back-office staff that were tied to their desks, and allowed them to work more freely remotely.”

That freedom has allowed Celtic to work remotely when they’d otherwise have been out of touch. “We’ve closed offices in Pennsylvania due to weather, and with previous phone and meeting systems, there was a lot of lost productivity,” said Bost. “We couldn’t even forward work calls to cell phones. With Skype, if snow is forecasted for tomorrow, we take our laptop and headset home just in case.”



Learning and Development Content Stored on the Video Portal

Celtic’s education and staff development teams had been using SharePoint and YouTube to post educational videos for internal use. Office 365 Video makes it simpler to distribute content to 1,000 caregivers in the field. The management team uses the video portal to distribute announcements.

All This and Cost Savings, Too

Celtic has realized cost savings in licensing, servers, and administrative overhead. There's also been a per user savings as well. "At the time, our staff had full Office Pro licensing," Bost continued. "As we grew, there'd be a substantial day one cost for each new user. We took the opportunity to scale back the software we were deploying, and with the subscription model, smooth out the licensing costs."

When showing the financial benefits to management, "We presented ROI on a cost per user basis, compared to the alternatives," said Bost. "It came down to ThinkingPhones and Skype. Cisco priced themselves out when we spec'd out a highly available configuration. On a per user per month basis, ThinkingPhones was a higher cost, but had the benefit of being cloud-based with no infrastructure to manage. But you had to pay for each additional feature, whereas Skype came with everything enabled out of the box, and we didn't have to pick and choose who got what functionality."

Addressing Concerns with a Qualified Partner, Enabling Technologies

"We were most concerned with reliability and uptime, and no longer being in control of the underlying infrastructure," said Bost. "Compared to my expectations, uptime has definitely been good. Compared to on premises, there have been less instances of downtime, even with our old highly available environment." Downsides are minimal. "The only bad thing is that when an issue occurs, we aren't able to help fix it. It's more highly available than I could've deployed on premises."

"Uptime has definitely been good."

"The other concern we had was the process of transitioning to the cloud," said Bost. "We talked with a couple companies we'd worked with in the past that said that they could help. Enabling brought to the table the experiences of doing migrations in the past, caveats about what works and doesn't," he continued. "We talked through many different aspects, SSO options, and worked to find the best fit, migration path, and timing for our needs."

"Enabling's scope of work and proposals are always very well done and very thorough," said Bost. "We had another company provide a one page bid with no talk of plans or methodologies. Enabling's proposals are well thought out, very methodical, and you will see the plan right up front."

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For Other Healthcare Organizations

Bost offers this final advice: "Don't be afraid, the cloud is a good thing! It's easy to use, easy to manage, and offers other added benefits coming with the bundled packages."

To point your company on a similar path to success as Celtic, contact info@enablingtechcorp.com

