

CRS TECHNOLOGY CONSULTANTS MOVES ITS BUSINESS TO THE CLOUD

WITH COMCAST BUSINESS

SITUATION

- Florida-based IT consulting firm with growing business and distributed workforce
- Sought business continuity and disaster recovery benefits of the cloud to ensure uptime during hurricane season

CHALLENGE

- Reduce on-premise hardware
- Move all critical business applications to the cloud
- Provide mobile workers with seamless access to critical applications wherever they are located

SOLUTION

- Comcast Business VoiceEdge™
- Comcast Business Internet

RESULTS

- Innovative, cloud-driven business model
- Reduced hardware footprint
- Unified communications
- Faster connectivity for time-sensitive communications
- Savings

FLORIDA-BASED IT CONSULTING FIRM BOOSTS EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AND ITS BOTTOM LINE WHILE GETTING BUSINESS CONTINUITY BENEFITS WITH BUSINESS VOICEEDGE™ AND A 100 MBPS BUSINESS INTERNET CONNECTION OUT TO THE CLOUD

20 YEAR-OLD IT CONSULTING FIRM LOCATED IN “HURRICANE ALLEY” SEEKS SANCTUARY OF CLOUD COMPUTING TO ENSURE ON-GOING OPERATIONS

CRS Technology Consultants is an IT consulting firm based in southwest Florida. The company has been in business for more than 20 years, and its local and remote employees – including those located as far away as Wisconsin – offer nationwide IT consulting and support services for small- and medium-sized customers that aren't able to hire in-house staff. It also serves large enterprises that need project support. In some cases, CRS employees serve as a fully outsourced IT department.

Company headquarters are located in what is widely known as Florida's "Hurricane Alley," and the company's physical business – in terms of its office headquarters and the equipment it contains – is at risk from June 1 – November 30 each year. With the advent of cloud services, the company founders recognized an opportunity to help protect its business, and thus the business of its customers, year-round, by eliminating on premise hardware and moving its systems into the cloud. In addition to achieving business continuity in the event of weather-related outages, CRS also realized the cost and efficiency gains cloud services brought to their organization.

ADVANCED UNIFIED COMMUNICATIONS SERVICES HELP MOBILE TEAM STAY CONNECTED

CRS set out to move all of its business operations to cloud-based services for business continuity, and to support its growing client base and distributed workforce. While functions like storage and email were logical to switch over, there were others that were not. As the company researched its options further, it discovered that it could even move its phone service to the cloud.

The company was using a traditional on-premise phone system for its communications needs, but when they decided to go fully cloud-based, they were intrigued by Comcast's Business VoiceEdge cloud-based unified communications (UC) solution.

"We had been dealing with basic telecommunications products for years. When we got serious and looked at the features, functions, and benefits of Business VoiceEdge, it was an easy choice," said Jordi Tejero, owner of CRS Technology Consultants.

Business VoiceEdge is managed over Comcast's nationwide IP network so that CRS can enjoy connectivity without the capital investment and hardware management that typically come with traditional private branch exchange (PBX) phone systems. Business VoiceEdge further offers CRS productivity-enhancing unified communications features such as a softphone, which allows

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employees to make and receive phone calls from their MAC or PC; HD video calling; a teleworker option that allows users to route office calls to their home office or mobile device; as well as a mobile app to manage these features from an iOS- or Android-based smartphone. For CRS, this offers tremendous advantages in terms of employee productivity. For example, if an employee is not feeling well but still up for working, they can stay at home and make and receive calls as if they are in the office.

“Just recently, we had a team member that was stuck at an auto dealer while his car was being repaired. In our old world, it would have been, ‘Okay now he’s out of pocket for three or four hours.’ Instead, he fired up his laptop and used the Comcast Business VoiceEdge app on his smartphone to continue handling customer service tickets seamlessly,” added Tejero.

Further, the cloud-based UC system helped CRS to cut costs. “We are saving money over what we were previously paying for our old phone system, and now we have a completely cloud-based solution that gives our team full freedom to work from wherever they need to,” he said.

COMCAST BUSINESS UPGRADES INTERNET TO 100 MBPS TO SUPPORT CLOUD-BASED BUSINESS MODEL

As CRS moved more line-of-business applications to the cloud, it found it needed a faster, more scalable connection to support timely access to its applications by employees and customers. The company was already using Comcast Business Internet, so they called their local sales rep and upgraded its connection to 100 Mbps. Comcast was able to add capacity quickly without having to install new equipment or schedule a site visit.

Having software in the cloud and available throughout the organization, helps CRS ensure everyone has central access to the same information without having to hunt it down.

“Now if we have an issue that goes on for multiple days or involves multiple engineers, it’s all being worked from one ticket, one central place,” Tejero explains. “Everybody has access to that. Even if that saves every employee ten minutes a day, the numbers add up really quickly.”

CRS has further increased productivity by limiting the amount of time engineers spend on site at client offices. Employees are able to do as much as 80 percent of their work remotely by leveraging applications such as a cloud-based remote monitoring and management tool (AVG’s Level Platform), which allows CRS engineers to monitor their clients’ networks and connected devices.

“If one of their workstations has, say, a bad block on its hard drive or a server seems about to fail, the system alerts us, and we can run diagnostics and repairs remotely,” Tejero explains. “If that doesn’t work, we’ll go on site and swap out the equipment before it ever takes the client down.”

Further, CRS has chosen cloud providers that fully integrate with each other. For example, when Level Platform detects an issue with a client network, it automatically generates a service ticket in ConnectWise, a cloud-based IT automation solution. The system can then close the loop by informing the client that an issue has occurred, and keep them informed until it’s resolved.

For Tejero, it’s all about liberating his clients from worry and getting on with their business.

“Working in the cloud has freed us up to help our clients move their business forward,” he said. “Since they don’t have to spend the dollars on fixing stuff, they’re able to spend those dollars on truly forward-thinking IT initiatives that can grow their business.”