

A Complete Technology Strategy Improves Assets and Infrastructure

Overview

Challenge

Michigan West Shore Nursery approached InsITe to assist them with creating an overall technology strategy for their aging infrastructure. They faced large up-front costs to resolve the shortcomings if done through traditional, on-premise solutions.

Business Solution

It was determined that a combination of Microsoft Azure for server hosting, Office 365, ATP and EMS for e-mail were an excellent fit for a system refresh vs. an on-premises refresh.

Key Benefits

As a result of this project, InsITe was able to significantly improve performance and availability of MWSN technology assets. In addition to that, faster and more reliable bandwidth, redundant server infrastructure, complete environment recoverability, and the capability for unlimited capacity were achieved. MWSN realized > \$30,000 savings over 3 years!

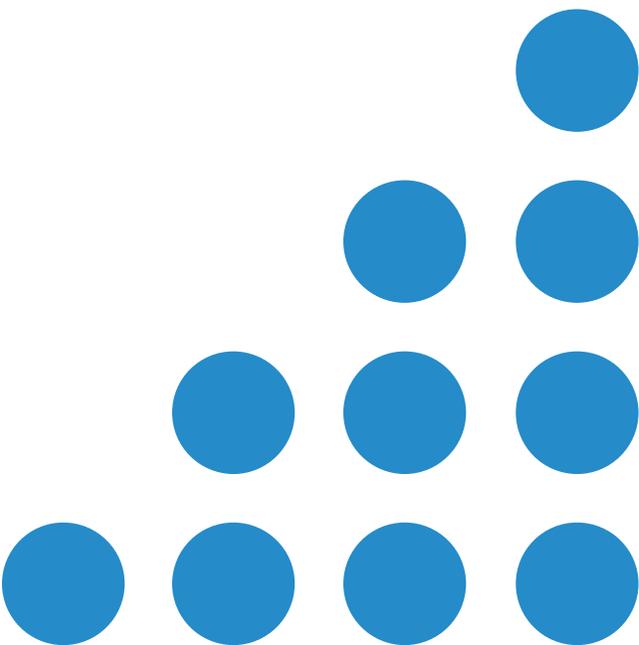
For Michigan West Shore Nursery, an aged infrastructure was hurting server performance and leaving holes in their security and identity access posture.

Michigan West Shore Nursery (MWSN) is a West Michigan based horticultural sales and marketing brokerage that sells and distributes annual, perennial and seasonal horticultural products throughout the United States. MWSN needed fast, reliable bandwidth, redundant server infrastructure and the capability for unlimited capacity and looked to InsITe for a cost-effective solution.

The Problem

MWSN was in need of an overall technology strategy. Much of their infrastructure was aged and in need of a significant refresh. Server virtualization was in use at their primary sales site which hosted their primary ERP application for them as well as for their key growers. Remote access was being used by their growers to access the ERP system, so heavy reliance on local internet uptime and bandwidth was required, but only cable internet was available within affordable range. Data protection and recovery was not possible with the current solution. In addition to this, MWSN was leveraging a third party e-mail services that was no longer holding up to the requirements of the business.

MWSN was facing a large up-front investment to resolve all of the shortcomings of their current systems if done through traditional on-premises solutions.



“We recently went through the transition of migrating our data to the cloud and I was pleased with how seamless the process went! Now we're already working on new solutions to analyze and share our data to better serve our customers. I'm very excited about the future and how we can securely utilize our data in ways we never imagined! Huge thanks to the InsITe TEAM for their service, knowledge and expertise! Game changer!!”

— Jeffrey Palsrok
General Manager, Michigan West Shore
Nursery, LLC.

The Solution

An initial technology assessment was performed to discover the complete infrastructure and applications environment. InsITe consultants met with key MWSN stakeholders to discuss business process, gain deep understanding of the business requirements for their current ERP system, as well as how the infrastructure was falling short of enabling the access, productivity and security they needed.

After assessment and review of the current technology landscape, and a complete cost analysis comparing on-premises deployment options with Azure cloud deployment options, it was determined that a combination of Microsoft Azure for server hosting, Office 365, ATP and EMS for e-mail were an excellent fit for a system refresh vs. an on-premises refresh. The InsITe Team discussed the benefits of cloud migration, along with soft-cost savings through process improvement, risk reduction through offsite hosting, disaster recovery capabilities, and reliable bandwidth to the shared server resources. Azure cloud was a clear winner for complete value.

A consolidated migration was planned which first involved migrating e-mail, intranet and collaboration functions to Office 365, followed by migration to Azure, to provide consolidated identity out of the box. The second phase was to deploy and migrate all server assets to the Azure cloud. InsITe engineers designed a low downtime plan for migrating the legacy ERP server over to Azure, as well as to build out new File, Domain Controller and application services servers to Azure. Our engineering and project management Teams were able to work closely with the MWSN Team to ensure a clean migration and complete adoption of the new services.

Complete Solutions with InsITe's Unique Approach

InsITe not only coordinated the technical migration of data, but we also spent adequate time discovering the existing processes for MWSN to ensure they wouldn't lose any key functionality, and to allow us to help improve processes at the same time. In conjunction with the Azure migration, InsITe also performed a Cloud Immersion Experience with the customer to provide them exposure to the Office 365 toolset in a controlled environment before throwing them into the completely new toolset. This allowed for quick exposure to the Office 365 tools, so MWSN staff were familiar prior to the migration.

Solution Components

Software

- Microsoft Azure
- Microsoft Office 365 Business Premium
- Microsoft EMS E3
- Microsoft ATP
- Microsoft Intune MDM
- Microsoft Outlook, Teams, Planner, Sharepoint, Forms and Flow, Power BI

Services

- Migration from third party e-mail provider to Office 365
 - Migration of all servers to Microsoft Azure
 - Deployment of new remote access capabilities for remote sites
 - Implementation of new disaster recovery system leveraging
 - Microsoft Azure Backup
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Our Team also developed a complete migration plan, including MWSN internal communication, training materials, and in-person training. Our migration approach was hands-on, blending personal touch and understanding with technical know-how. This combination allowed for the highest degree of return for MWSN.

During our initial assessment, it was also determined that a new ERP system would be appropriate to replace their current aged Cobol-based ERP system. The InsITe application development Team is now engaging with MWSN to select and deploy an appropriate replacement. The combination of application awareness and infrastructure optimization make the InsITe Team highly effective in extending the greatest possible value to our Clients.

The Results

As a result of this project, InsITe was and to significantly improve performance and availability of MWSN technology assets. In addition to that, faster and more reliable bandwidth, redundant server infrastructure, complete environment recoverability, and the capability for unlimited capacity were achieved. MWSN was facing an estimated \$30,000.00 up-front investment and \$10,000.00 ongoing annual investment to achieve on-premises performance and server reliability parity. Their Azure deployment was completed for under \$12,000 up front, and under \$300.00/mo ongoing cost under current conditions. MWSN realized > \$30,000 savings over 3 years!



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Produced in the United States of America
April 2018

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