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Value Recovery Group Improves E-Mail Reliability

Transitions Services to the Cloud

Value Recovery Group, headquartered in Columbus, Ohio, serves as an umbrella company to a diverse portfolio of businesses that specialize in optimizing the value of underperforming assets that were once deemed a challenge.

Due to the breadth of businesses operated by the company, numerous consultants utilized the company's e-mail system in addition to two staff offices in Columbus. With the addition of a third office in Washington D.C. employing 30 more associates, the company knew they were placing far too much dependency on their small, dated e-mail server. The timing was right to begin exploring the transition to the cloud.

Reliability of the Cloud

With a workforce of 100 people, Value Recovery Group was finding it hard to justify revamping a server room and upgrading to the level of reliability found in cloud-based services. Ted Schaefer, CIO of Value Recovery Group, knew the company needed to begin placing less dependence on their central services, especially when it came to their remote offices. A power outage at headquarters meant all remote offices lost e-mail access as well. In addition, Schaefer was aware that the Exchange component of their previous e-mail system was costly to maintain and required expert knowledge for support.

"We couldn't afford any e-mail downtime so the best solution was to involve a technology partner who had ample experience with cloud-based e-mail services," stated Schaefer. "We looked at other cloud services aside from Microsoft but our associates were familiar with Outlook and thus felt that was the way to go to not disrupt productivity," he continued.

While the company's internal IT resource – InfoGuard – knew their e-mail system inside and out, they didn't have the knowledge for the migration process which brought on its own set of unique challenges. Having a technology partner work with InfoGuard to obtain the internal knowledge was the best of both worlds.

CHALLENGE

Asset recovery company with diverse portfolio of businesses that was placing far too much dependency on their small, dated e-mail server.

SOLUTION

Microsoft Exchange Online

RESULTS

Improved Outlook web access and system availability. Remote offices no longer affected by headquarter power outages. Transition enabled the company to catch up on deferred maintenance.



"We would get the expertise of BCG Systems and the historical internal knowledge of our own people," commented Schaefer.

A Secure Solution

In preparation for moving to the cloud, Schaefer had been doing his due diligence in the months leading up to the transition to learn about all the options available for cloud-based e-mail services.

"One of the things that's critical to the collections business is security," stated Schaefer. "In late 2010, Microsoft obtained Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) compliance which was a head turner for me. The fact that they could provide Outlook at a reasonable cost, and employees wouldn't have to change anything, was a big selling point for us."

Two other firms under exploration by Value Recovery Group claimed to offer the level of expertise required by the company, but upon further investigation, it was evident that BCG Systems had been through the process many times and truly had the knowledge required of the project.

"We had a complicated system with a variety of companies working under one umbrella," noted Schaefer. "Everyone worked on their own e-mail system which led to disparate systems. We wanted to bring all e-mail under a single platform and account, and BCG Systems helped us do just that."

Confidence Gained from BCG Systems

While Ted had a pretty firm idea of where he wanted to take the company's e-mail services based on his own research, he was pleased to have gained confidence in his decision from BCG Systems. "BCG Systems assured us that the solution we selected would work reliably without any obstacles in terms of speed and uptime," he commented.

This was Value Recovery Group's first venture in the cloud so they wanted to do it in a minimalist way, meaning they didn't opt for additions such as SharePoint. "BCG Systems advised us as if they were part of our business and kept it economical for us," said Schaefer. "They acted in a consultative manner, not trying to sell us components that weren't of value to our business."

Positioned for Productivity

Since transitioning to cloud-based e-mail services with the help of BCG Systems, Value Recovery Group has benefited from improved Outlook Web Access and system availability. Now with the next generation of Exchange, employees can log in to access e-mail from anywhere and are pleased with the improved functionality. And, system availability seems to be a thing of the past. During a recent electrical outage where an underground cable exploded near Value Recovery Group's headquarters, internet and e-mail was down for 12 hours for headquarters employees but remote offices were not affected.

The transition also enabled the company to get caught up on a lot of deferred maintenance on e-mail system, including purging old records and archiving.

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Ted Schaefer
CIO, Value Recovery Group

About BCG Systems

BCG Systems is a single-source provider of business management software, hardware, and infrastructure planning. Nationally recognized for providing exceptional information management solutions and service, BCG Systems designs, implements and supports cost effective ERP, CRM, and networking systems — in addition to custom applications and Web development. BCG Systems' certified professionals combine experience, commitment and ingenuity to maximize the return on each client's technology investment.

