



Out with the Old, In With the New: Catapult Systems Helps School District Revamp & Upgrade Outdated Infrastructure

Upgraded Office 365 infrastructure enables Oceanside Unified School District to seamlessly eliminate productivity gap while satisfying thousands of students and employees.

Located near San Diego, California, Oceanside Unified School District (Oceanside) covers approximately 66 square miles and is bordered on the west along the Pacific Ocean. Operating 23 school sites and serving nearly 20,300 students, Oceanside employs more than 2,000 individuals to ensure that every student graduates and has the ability to succeed in the global community.

Oceanside was looking to upgrade the district's outdated Exchange infrastructure and was ready to migrate the district's 2,300 faculty mailboxes from their on-premises Exchange 2003 organization to Office 365 Exchange Online. Oceanside's old infrastructure was becoming problematic, causing the IT department to spend hours of time trying to remediate recurring issues and dissatisfaction among users regarding numerous required backups. Additionally, Oceanside was interested in using SkyDrive PRO as a solution for the storage needs of their end users. Growing at an extremely fast pace, Oceanside was severely lacking storage, going from 2 to 5 exchange servers in just one year. They were also having multiple issues with their outdated software including failing backups and issues connecting mobile devices.

Oceanside was already aware of the many positive features that Office 365 had to offer and users were already familiar with a Microsoft-based platform; they just needed someone to help implement it. Catapult Systems' (Catapult)

reputation as one of the top integrators for Office 365 and previous proven experience contributed to Oceanside's decision to work with Catapult.

"We were very excited to work with Catapult on this project. Some of the other system integrators didn't give us a lot of confidence and didn't have the level of expertise and experience that Catapult had. Moving fully to O365 is a complicated process but we felt that based on their experience, Catapult could take us there," said Nathan Huggins, Systems Analyst at Oceanside Unified School District.

One of the biggest concerns for Oceanside was being able to make the transition as seamless as possible for its 20,000 student end users. Calendar sharing for a group of 3,000 users was also a big concern for Oceanside and was something that they did not want compromised during the upgrade.

How Catapult Helped

Prior to the full deployment, Catapult was able to successfully implement a pilot program for a

select number of users to migrate over to Office 365 Exchange Online using their existing on-premises Active Directory credentials. By using existing credentials, calendar sharing and all other features Oceanside was accustomed to did not suffer. This pilot also included the use of SkyDrive PRO, offering users the massive amount of storage they required. During the pilot, the entire configuration was tested to verify mail flow, mailbox migration and free/busy sharing to ensure a positive, smooth transition.

Completing a successful pilot deployment, the full migration of 2,300 mailboxes was deployed. Directory Synchronization was configured to synchronize the users, groups and contacts to Office 365, enabling a unified Global Address list to be shared between Exchange on-premises and Exchange Online. Creating a hybrid cloud environment, an Exchange 2010 server was deployed, allowing for free/busy lookups between on-premises and cloud-based mailboxes. Lastly, Active Directory Federation Services were configured for single sign-on capabilities with the new tenant.

With Catapult providing the necessary tools, expertise, and processes, expectations for quality, delivery time, and cost were exceeded, delivering quality results for Oceanside.

Results

Utilizing Office 365's built-in disaster recovery program, Oceanside no longer has to worry about managing backups or upgrades, freeing up time and resources for the IT department, allowing them to focus on more prominent issues.

"We have added 20,000 students to our email system, which would have been impossible on our old, outdated infrastructure that could only hold so many. The financial considerations of doing that without a hosted solution would have been astronomical," says, Huggins.

In addition to taking advantage of Office 365's efficiency and stability, the school district is able to benefit from the added features of Lync, OneDrive, and SharePoint. Specifically, OneDrive gives users the ability to create and share documents from anywhere and on any device. Moreover, Lync is quickly becoming the favorite desktop sharing utility in the district, specifically video conferencing and instant messaging which is helping employees become more productive while reducing travel expenses. Since Oceanside has never had a true intranet, SharePoint online gives them the ability to collaborate in a way that they never could before. Many of their departments have moved their files to SharePoint sites and are discovering new ways to work together with message boards, shared calendars and group tasks, including creating home bases for different departments of the school district, highlighting their area of focus.

Overall, the advantages experienced with the deployment of Office 365 have proven to be invaluable. Huggins is confident in the future use and capabilities of Office 365 for Oceanside Unified School District stating that, *"Catapult employees helped with the learning curve and provided a high level of confidence that I didn't have before"*.

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*Nathan Huggins
Systems Analyst
Oceanside Unified School District*