Insurance Brokerage IT Overhaul Case Study

NIRIX Computing Differently.

Recently Gold Key Insurance went through a substantial IT overhaul. They were tired of updating software, managing hardware, hacked together solutions, expensive IT visits and were ready for a change. Of course, they were nervous of the risks associated with this change. They were unsure of data security/location, migration downtime, costs, and if their insurance specific software would continue to work.

This is Gold Key Insurance's story of how they substantially improved their operations by adopting a cloud based virtual desktop solution. You should find this case study helpful if you're part of an insurance brokerage that's frustrated with your IT, but want to know of the risks in adopting a cloud based virtual desktop solution.

An Insurance Brokerage's IT Frustration

If you're not the person who deals with IT at your brokerage you know the person who does. For Gold Key Insurance that person is Jayson Marshall. Jayson is a licensed broker who also wears the IT hat. When software needs updating or the printer doesn't seem to work Jayson gets to fix it. Here's how Jayson described his experience,

"It seemed I was spending a lot of my time just keeping everyone's computer up to date. I would update Microsoft Outlook and when I finished that I would have to update Adobe. There seemed to always be software updates and they were taking too much time."

The solution they were using at the time comprised of an onsite server (glorified computer) that every broker's computer would back up to. About once a week Jayson would swap out a hard drive, giving Gold Key about 2 weeks worth of backups. When the backups were needed it would take 1 to 2 days of downtime before any of their agents could start working again. They wanted a better solution.

For over a year the leadership at Gold Key had been considering using a virtual desktop for their brokers but were hesitant. On one hand they liked the efficiencies of having someone else take care of the software updates (especially Jayson), having their data and applications stored off site, and being able to work from anywhere that had internet access. On the other hand, they wondered how much downtime would there be to migrate to a virtual desktop? Would a new solution be able to run the critical software needed like Power Broker or Compu-Quote? Also, how much support would the virtual desktop vendor provide?

Looking for a Fix

Jayson's search for a better solution started with talking to other brokers to see what they were using. He also talked with some of the software providers to see what options they had. Most of the feedback Jayson gathered comprised of solutions that lacked required features or were too expensive to justify their use.

Through asking around Jayson found out IBAA just went through a virtual desktop migration to NIRIX oneDesktop solution. He later learned, from George Hodgson (IBAA's CEO), IBAA had a smooth migration and were happy with the service provided by NIRIX.

NIRIX oneDesktop for Insurance Brokerages

IBAA and Gold Key along with hundreds of other Western Canadian businesses, have migrated their

computers' desktops to oneDesktop. It's a virtual desktop where users access their personal desktops completely in the cloud. Here's how it works.

All of your applications and data that you have on your desktop now are hosted in a remote world class datacentre. When a broker logs into their desktop from a computer all of their work is being done on the server. Having your desktops hosted in the cloud results in many benefits:

- All of your software updates are handled by NIRIX. No more running around just to make sure computers are working.
- You can access your desktop, applications, data, and email from anywhere, anytime, over any internet connection. You can work from home or abroad.
- Your data and applications are offsite so in the event of a local disaster your data and applications are safe and ready to work.
- NIRIX is 100% Canadian hosted, owned, and operated.
- oneDesktop includes some of the best IT support you can find.
- Most insurance specific software is supported in our environment.
- Small downtime for initial migration.
- It's ideal for remote offices and mobile workforce.
- Easy to scale and manage as your brokerage grows.

For more information about oneDesktop go to
www.nirix.com/onedesktop

Does Gold Key Recommend oneDesktop?
When Jayson was asked if he would recommend oneDesktop he didn't hesitate to say yes. Saving time, having peace of mind knowing his data was secure and accessible, and ease of use were among Jayson's top benefits of using oneDesktop.

What about the downtime?
Jayson did mention one of his top concerns about migrating his business to virtual desktop was the downtime. This is what he shared of his experience with NIRIX when migrating his desktop.

"I was concerned that there would be a ton of downtime.

I didn't want to see all of the brokers waiting around with nothing to do while we waited to get the new system running. Luckily, when we migrated there was very little downtime.

On Thursday, I sent my hard drive to you guys with our data and you received it on Friday. Over the weekend, your CustomerCare team showed me how to upload the missing data that was created on Thursday and Friday. By Monday, we were on the new system. I did some training on Monday and answered some questions throughout the week as everyone began to use it. It was great."

What about the cost?
Everybody wants to know the cost. Here's how Jayson sees value with oneDesktop.

"The cost was not the cheapest among the solutions we looked at. Some of the cheaper options didn't have all the features we wanted while the more expensive options were more expensive for none to little added value. When I began to analyze all the additional costs of going with an alternative solution I began to see the value in oneDesktop's ease of use, peace of mind, remote access, and included support."

When looking for ways to make your insurance brokerage more productive you don't want to overlook the benefits of improving your IT. When asked if Jayson would have done it differently he said, "Once we started using oneDesktop I can't believe we hummed and hawed about it for a year."

Take a minute to talk to NIRIX about how oneDesktop can benefit your Insurance Brokerage. We have special pricing for IBAA members.

Thanks to Jayson at Gold Key Insurance for supplying the helpful feedback.

GOLD KEY INSURANCE LTD.

Gold Key Insurance is a family run, Southern Albert based Insurance Brokerage that's been providing farm, commercial, auto, and property insurance products for almost 25 years.