

Controlling more pests with Office 365

March 31, 2017 - Posted by US SMB Team



After 15 years in technology, Brannon Gillis never thought he would find himself working in the pest control industry. That all changed after he met some team members at Arrow Exterminators. Gillis is now Vice President of Technology at Arrow Exterminators, which sees double-digit revenue growth year in and year out. What sold Gillis on joining the Arrow family was the company's culture which, he says, focuses on treating people right and helping them succeed.

Once Gillis came on board with Arrow, he saw that the company's service professionals needed improvements with technology to help their productivity—and he knew he was the person to provide this help. Home evaluators providing solutions and preparing estimates for potential customers often found themselves competing against others who could print out estimates on the spot. Arrow's home evaluators had to return to the office and send the estimates later by email. Potential customers could begin to wonder if Arrow would be faster in controlling pests than what it was in delivering estimates.

Arrow's service professionals needed a solution to make them as productive at customers' homes as they were in the office. To make that possible, Gillis turned to Microsoft Office 365. With the help of solution provider OnPar Technologies, Arrow deployed Office 365 to the company's 1,700+ team members. Home evaluators and service professionals now access the cloud service on iPads, which enables them to write up proposals and deliver them while they are in the potential customer's home.



Not Just Controlling Bugs

"Using Office 365 in the field was a huge win for us," says Gillis. "It shows potential customers that we're not just able to eliminate bugs—we're business savvy about the latest technology. It increases customer confidence in us which ultimately helps us close a sale."

Of course, Office 365 is more than email and Arrow is taking broader advantage of it all the time. The company uses OneDrive and SharePoint sites to replace a confusing array of file servers and third-party cloud solutions for document storage, collaboration, training, and other needs.

OnPar helped Arrow to migrate to Office 365 in what Gillis calls “a relatively short” 60 days, given the size and complexity of the project. Gillis particularly praises the extensive communication and prompt service from the solution provider. “OnPar did a phenomenal job,” he says.

Getting More For Your Money

Gillis wanted a new solution that was relatively cost effective as well. He got that with Office 365. After several months of the Microsoft cloud service, he says it’s been “completely reliable.” That’s a big relief after the single point of failure inherent in Arrow’s previous email solution. “We schedule customer visits and payments via email,” he says. “When our old system went down, it had a huge negative financial impact on us. We’re not taking that hit with Office 365.”

Security is another concern that doesn’t concern Gillis with Office 365. “Microsoft makes a major, ongoing investment in security for Office 365,” he says. “If there’s an issue, they address it immediately. We get the level of security and support you’d think you have to be a Fortune 100 company to get.”

One of the biggest surprises of Office 365, according to Gillis, is the continual addition of new features—without additional cost.

“I log into the Office portal and every week there’s always something new for us to use,” he says. “We receive an email about a new feature, download it, and use it. No one tries to sell me anything. No one is nickel-and-diming me. Microsoft is just making Office better and better all the time. Everyone’s happy about that.”

Gillis pauses and qualifies his comment: “Well, he says, “everyone’s happy—except for the pests.”

Written by: Cindy Bates

Cindy Bates leads the company’s efforts to help SMBs realize their full potential through the use of technology. The blog is where she shares SMB stories, technology insights, and business strategies.

Web: <https://blogs.business.microsoft.com/en-us/2017/03/31/controlling-pests-office-365/>
