Hawk Marketing Services

Hawk Working with a 99.9% Uptime Since Their Move to the Cloud

Who They Are

hawk

Name:
Hawk Marketing Services

Industry:
Marketing and Communications

Products:
Marketing and Public Relation services and consulting

Implementation Partners:
Atlantic DataSystems (ADS)

Solutions:
Sage 300, Microsoft Office 365 and Managed IT Services all hosted on the leading cloud infrastructure - Amazon Web Services (AWS)

The Challenge

- Modernize applications and IT operations
- Move away from outdated, on premise servers that tied employees to the office
- Need easier access to email and files for better collaboration

The Solution

- A Leader in Cloud Infrastructure - Amazon Web Services (AWS)

The Results

- Employees can work securely and quickly where and when then need to – 24/7.
- Increased flexibility and stability in IT environments
- Reduced costs enabled by standard billing
- Easy access to files and documents when and where needed
- Increased uptime and reliability – 99.9% monthly uptime in core business applications

The Challenge

Hawk Marketing Services (Hawk) is New Brunswick's largest marketing services consulting agency, specializing in communications strategy, digital e-marketing, and efficient project management. With approximately 25 full time staff, the technology environment at Hawk is a mix of Mac, PC and Windows servers. Core production requires large volume of data storage, as well as a centralized Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system.

With some of New Brunswick's largest businesses as their clients, maintaining a fast pace is no small feat. Delays of even a few hours during the creative and design process can cost Hawk significant financial loss. The company needed to be able to access and share files and documents without delays or constraints in storage capacity and server downtime. "If we don't innovate quickly and adapt to new technologies, we won't be able to work as efficiently and potentially miss out on new opportunities," says Ruth MacDonnell, Hawk.

Prior to Hawk moving their operations to the cloud, they ran eight physical servers, 17 PC workstations and nine MAC workstations. Not only that, Hawk's Enterprise Resource Planning solution – Sage 300 – was also running on-premise. The costs of maintenance fees, support and infrastructure, along with unpredictable uptimes of an on premise ERP solution were becoming an increasing concern for Hawk. Their on premise Managed IT Service offering presented constant challenges for employees to remotely access the server, creating a bottleneck and impacted project timelines and productivity. The bottom line being that Hawk was spending money for on-site servers that hindered rather than helped efficiency.

The Objective

Creative minds make for a flexible work/life balance. Hawk employees needed fast local access when in the office, and easy remote access when offsite working non conventional hours – when the creative urge strikes. Approximately 25 employees needed to access files out of the office on any given day, and they needed a simple, secure way to do so. "Our employees work creative hours and needed to access and store files from any location, at any time of day. We needed to empower them with a solution that had local access as an option for those situations", recalls MacDonnell.

Hawk's accounting team could simply not afford any unscheduled downtime. Yet, their on premise ERP installation often couldn't meet the demanding uptime requirements of a modern agency environment. Hawk needed a solution that would increase their employees' speed and agility to meet project deadlines well before they are due, while reducing costs to run its infrastructure.

> **❝** As a forward thinking company, we recognized that there might be opportunity to explore a change in the technology we use to better collaborate on projects. Through discussion with ADS, our cloud Partner, Amazon Web Services (AWS) was selected as the best fit for our business needs. **❞**
>
> Ruth MacDonnell, Hawk Marketing Services

The Solution

As a forward thinking company and a big believer in not being tied to a physical building, Hawk partnered with ADS – a leader in cloud technologies across Atlantic Canada - to rollout a holistic, cloud based service offering. Hawk was ready to kick the worry and maintenance of on-site IT infrastructure to the curb, reducing capital expenditures and boosting their team's collaboration through the cloud. When deciding on the right cloud environment, there was no question. Recently names by Gartner Research as a "Leader" in the new Magic Quadrant for Cloud Infrastructure, Amazon Web Services (AWS) is the leading cloud service provider. Moving their entire operation - ERP solution, email and core business applications - to the cloud removed all of Hawk's servers except for a production server that is backed up on the cloud, storage and core applications from the premises. Hawk's new environment consists of four main parts:

- Data storage, access, archive and retrieval. Production files are backed up to the cloud and accessible via a desktop and internet connection.

- Sage 300. Valuable business critical data is protected in secure, world-class AWS data centers - providing anytime, anywhere access. Time is better spent running a business and less on IT.

- Microsoft Office 365. Exchange server email and Microsoft office licenses migrated to Office 365. This provides a highly reliable and efficient mail system using the same look and feel that employees are familiar with.

- Support and maintenance of all these systems managed by leading cloud provider, AWS and monitored by Atlantic Data Systems.

"Since migrating to the cloud, our employees can easily collaborate and access critical, real-time customer data a lot more fluently than we could with our on premise solution. This benefit allows us to develop and maintain stronger relationships with our clients," states MacDonnell. AWS has enabled Hawk to continue business scalability and keep moving ahead with virtually anywhere access of Microsoft Office across devices. Employees now have the freedom and flexibility to be more productive wherever they're working.

Moving their operations to the cloud has kept their team online and running around the clock - delivering a 99.9% uptime. Hawk can now rest assured that their mission-critical operations are being continuously managed in the cloud and monitored by ADS.

> **"** ADS is our IT Partner, but we feel like they are an extension of our own in-house IT team. They're always available to answer our questions and have helped us bring our vision of working in the cloud to fruition, seamlessly. **"**
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> Ruth MacDonnell, Hawk Marketing Services

Moving Forward in the Cloud

Hawk already has a collection of ground breaking ideas to even further empower their employees. Immediate plans to manage their internal communication using Skype for Business is the next step on their journey to the cloud. Ensuring everyone involved in a project is kept in the loop means Hawk can run more efficiently – saving both time and money. Because AWS is the global leader in cloud technology, Hawk also has access to world-class technical resources that provide them with as much support, training and guidance as they need.

With the help of Atlantic DataSystems, Hawk has learned how to leverage the cloud in a more sophisticated way – leaving them with the scalability, resources and peace of mind to focus on growing their business. "ADS is our IT Partner, but we feel like they are an extension of our own in-house IT team. They're always available to answer our questions and have helped us bring our vision of working in the cloud to fruition, seamlessly," states MacDonnell.

About ADS

ADS is a leading ERP and IT solutions provider throughout Canada for small to mid-sized businesses (SMBs) delivering strategic and technical consultancy, IT outsourcing services, and a comprehensive range of ERP and CRM solutions to help growing companies better run their business.

Through extensive industry knowledge, proven and consistent service delivery, and strong technology capabilities, ADS builds long lasting partnerships with our customers to enable a measurable return on technology investment. With offices throughout Atlantic Canada and Ontario, the ADS team of experts is committed to helping businesses leverage technology to achieve their goals.

For additional information, visit: www.atlanticdatasystems.com