



MICROSOFT OFFICE 365 CUSTOMER CASE STUDY

BISHOP AUCKLAND COLLEGE

Based North of Darlington in County Durham, Bishop Auckland College is a further education college with over 5,000 full and part time students.

The college initially approached Phoenix Software to tender for the renewal of its Microsoft campus licences. However, once Phoenix demonstrated how the college could take advantage of a new Microsoft licensing scheme to give every student a copy of Microsoft Office without having to spend any more on its software licensing, the scope of the project soon expanded to include a server migration and Office 365 deployment.

CHALLENGE

With its Microsoft licence agreements due to expire, Bishop Auckland College issued a formal tender to three local companies to bid for the renewal contract. Phoenix Software differentiated itself by recommending that the college leverage Microsoft's new Student Advantage programme, which had launched just nine days prior to Phoenix Software's proposal.

AT-A-GLANCE

Challenge

What started out as a basic licensing procurement project soon expanded into a comprehensive renewal of the college's email servers and the organisation's first major foray into cloud computing.

Solution

Student Advantage to provide every student with a licence for Office 365 at no extra cost. Plus migrating the college's ageing email servers to a hybrid on-premise/cloud server solution which combined the benefits of Exchange 2010 and Office 365.

Benefits

All students can now take advantage of Office 365, 25GB of online storage and the ability to edit documents from anywhere. The college has also been able to decommission one email server entirely while improving the reliability and functionality of its remaining on-premise servers.

During further consultation with the college, Phoenix Software also determined that the college's three ageing email servers (which were running Microsoft Exchange 2003) were not only causing considerable disruption to the college, but would also prevent it from taking full advantage of the comprehensive feature sets available in the new Microsoft software that the college was looking to purchase.

SOLUTION

As per its initial response to the tender, Phoenix recommended that the college make full use of the Student Advantage licensing scheme when renewing its core Microsoft licences. This would allow the college to provide every student with a subscription to Office 365 at no extra cost.

Phoenix Software also recommended upgrading the college's three onsite email servers so as to take full advantage of the Office cloud and the new features available with its new Microsoft licensing agreements. Phoenix proposed a hybrid cloud/on-premise solution whereby the student email server would be decommissioned entirely and all email accounts migrated to the Office 365 cloud (since cloud email is a feature included within the Office 365 licence), while the two remaining onsite servers would be upgraded to Microsoft Exchange 2010 so that the college could take full advantage of the features available with the latest versions of Office. It was determined that upgrading all three servers could be completed within the college's existing licensing agreements, so no additional licence purchase was necessary.

Wayne Longton-Worley, IT Services Manager at Bishop Auckland College commented, "We chose Phoenix because of their highly consultative approach at every stage of the tender process. They asked us more questions than anyone else in order to find the best solutions for us. What's more, of all the companies we spoke to, they were the only ones to suggest the Student Advantage programme and server improvements, which proved to deliver so much more additional value."

The college wished to deploy the upgrades during the Christmas holidays to allow for testing and decommissioning of the old systems. By conducting both projects in parallel over the Christmas holidays, the college would also save itself considerable disruption. Phoenix delivered the project on time. "Phoenix were realistic but ambitious with their timescales. But they delivered as promised. They said it would take 10 days and it took 10 days," said Longton-Worley.



BENEFITS

Enrolling the college in the Student Advantage programme immediately extended the scope of the college's new licensing agreements by providing every student with a copy of Office via the Office 365 subscription, for no extra charge to the college. Over 1,000 students took advantage of the Office 365 subscription in the first eight weeks alone and the college continues to receive daily enquiries.

In addition to providing all students with Office 365, the introduction of a common software standard also solved a problem that had been plaguing the college for some time – that of software incompatibility. Since students no longer had to resort to using bootleg or free software that was invariably incompatible with the official Microsoft software used on campus, students could now take full advantage of the features of Office applications knowing that the

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IT Services Manager
Bishop Auckland College

same results could be replicated at home, and that staff would view their assignments in the exact same way that they were conceived.

Since Office 365 is a comprehensive suite of cloud-based services, students have been able to leverage a number of additional benefits:

- Students can now work on files from anywhere and on any device, without the risk of version conflicts or the loss of important work as information is saved in real time.
- Every student gains 25GB of online storage in Microsoft OneDrive (in addition to a 50GB mailbox), so the college no longer needs to maintain costly onsite storage facilities for its students.
- The inclusion of Microsoft Lync with Office 365 also means that students can collaborate and share work more effectively, and staff can make themselves available to students in a more collaborative fashion.

Due to Phoenix Software’s quick thinking, Bishop Auckland College is also one of the first colleges to have benefitted from the Student Advantage programme in the UK, providing it with a significant differentiation for attracting more students over its nearby rivals.

Looking beyond the benefits of Student Advantage, the new hybrid cloud/on-premise server configuration has yielded numerous enhancements too. With the students’ email services now managed entirely by Microsoft, the college has one less email server to power, upgrade and maintain, while upgrading the college’s two remaining onsite servers to Exchange 2010 has enabled it to take advantage of a more sophisticated and reliable email service for its staff. What’s more, the seamless compatibility between the on-premise solution and the cloud services has enabled the college to experiment with moving selective groups of staff over to the Microsoft cloud too, helping to prepare the college for a potentially server-free future.

Wayne concludes “What started out as a simple licensing conversation has resulted in so much additional value for Bishop Auckland College. This was much more than a simple licensing renewal – it has brought the college thoroughly up-to-date! Most importantly of all, we have gained all of this additional functionality and resilience without having to spend any more money on licences. This is a credit to Phoenix Software’s deep understanding of our needs and the broader software market, and its professional approach to matching the two.”

HOW CAN WE HELP YOU?

To find out how we can help you transform any aspect of your IT estate, contact the Phoenix Team now on:

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