

SUCCESS STORY

MAKING THE CLOUD A REALITY at Baltimore City Public Schools



What Data Networks Did for Baltimore City Public Schools

- Stepped in to help configure and implement Quadro Tech automated email archiving technology
- Migrated Baltimore City Public Schools to Office 365 on a very tight deadline
- Provided email archiving process testing, performance-tuning and knowledge transfer services
- Ensured Baltimore City Public Schools had a long-term, reliable solution in place

Abstract

Data Networks transformed this public school system's software licensing, file storage, and email archiving into a cloud-based architecture.

The challenge

Baltimore City Public Schools serves the needs of public education in Baltimore City. It is the fourth largest public school system in the State of Maryland with 83,000 students enrolled across 180 schools and programs including Pre-K, elementary, middle and high schools as well as special education centers and alternative schools.

BCPS' school board and district administration manage an annual budget of approximately \$1.35 billion. A significant portion of this budget rests with BCPS Information Technology (IT) staff for investments in servers, PCs and other equipment. "We're always seeking innovative ways to deliver state-of-the-art technology to our teachers and students while maximizing return-on-investment," says Ken Thompson, BCPS' Chief Information Technology Officer. "Transforming our traditional office software licensing, file storage, and email archiving into a cloud-based architecture was a very high priority for us."

BCPS had been seriously considering a move to the cloud for some time. The operational improvements (including configurable, automatic software updates) and financial benefits (software-as-a-service licensing) were simply too good for such a large school district to pass up. Within a window of two months, and on a strict not-to-interfere with school activities basis, the school district needed to migrate its user community (students, teachers and administrative staff) from on-premise Microsoft Office applications like Outlook to Office 365.

The scope of BCPS' Outlook migration included an extensive transfer of email archives to the cloud. Historically, BCPS IT staff utilized Symantec Enterprise Vault for archive management and had developed an automated process to handle all archiving.

While this team maintained the existing Symantec-based archiving process effectively and were a talented group, moving to a cloud-based archival solution required additional expertise and manpower. BCPS partnered with Microsoft and QuadroTech, a leading email migration software provider, to help execute the migration. QuadroTech's responsibility was to help BCPS technicians perform the email archives migration from the Symantec vault to Office 365 using their software. BCPS IT staff could easily operate the QuadroTech application once configured, but therein laid the problem: QuadroTech's consultants were spread too thin at the wrong time, having too many client commitments and making them unable to satisfy BCPS' project timeline requirements.

The solution

As they have for numerous enterprise projects in the past, BCPS turned to Data Networks. As a Microsoft Cloud Productivity Partner as well as an authorized QuadroTech reselling partner, the company's consultants have implemented the software extensively and offer significant configuration expertise in Microsoft Cloud Technologies.

Quickly, Data Networks formed a small team of QuadroTech subject-matter experts on site at BCPS. "Our systems engineers work hard to stay on top of the latest advances in our partner platforms such as QuadroTech," says Todd Rechen, Data Networks Senior Engineer. "This helps us stay responsive to our clients' needs, regardless of the timeline." After assessing the progress that had been made to date, Data Networks consultants performed all of the following with the assistance of BCPS to complete the archive migration from Symantec Enterprise Vault to Office 365:

- Selected a small sample of user mailboxes and utilized them to test the migration of archives in accordance with the different email filter configurations
- Validated that all archive email data inserted into Office 365 matched original data from Symantec Enterprise Vault
- Conducted all remaining user mailbox archive migrations based on a detailed BCPS-provided schedule
- Shared final knowledge and lessons learned with BCPS IT staff members on how to maintain email archiving from Office 365 using QuadroTech software

Mission accomplished

Since Office 365 and specifically Data Networks' QuadroTech solution has been in place at BCPS, the school district has observed tremendous performance and user convenience benefits. According to Thompson, "We're very satisfied with our results thanks to the Data Networks team. Both Office 365 for daily office productivity and QuadroTech archiving to the cloud are consistently at virtually 100% uptime. In addition, the new architecture which Data Networks helped us configure properly proved reliable right from the start."

About Data Networks

Data Networks provides effective technology-based solutions to meet your unique needs. Our solutions are specifically developed to help you drive productivity and manage change.

INNOVATIVE TECHNOLOGY

By partnering at the highest levels with the industry's most respected manufacturers, Data Networks can deliver the right products for your environment with the most aggressive pricing possible. Our strong vendor relationships also bring technical training opportunities, expedited help desk resources, and professional service liaisons for consulting and project engagements.

INSPIRED ENGINEERING

Our goal is to be your trusted technology advisor. So we staff highly-qualified engineers who bring years of experience and the most advanced technical certifications to every engagement. We assign them a single area of technical focus, a unique approach that allows them to continually update their skills and expand their specialized technical knowledge. And we arm them with documented best practices developed over more than 30 years of public-sector service.

We invite you to learn more at datanetworks.com or by calling 800-283-6387.