

Company:

A small law firm with a very simple setup had some known and unknown IT challenges when they turned to West Grove Consulting. Existing backend infrastructure was nearing end of life and lacked capacity for future growth while offering minimal security and data backup protections.

Challenge:

After a thorough analysis of hardware and systems setup, we developed a strategy to implement with recommendations on multiple fronts. Overall there were 8 distinct projects included in the upgrade and we worked with partners to implement objectives. The webpage was dated and they had no social presence leaving the impression that the firm's online presence needed attention. A battery backup system for the existing infrastructure was inadequate for current equipment including the phones system, file servers and networking. Existing networking needed to be upgraded and consolidated. The existing wireless network router was residential grade, and not a real firewall used to stop external threats as a first layer of defense. The legacy Window 2008 server file server was now at the end of service life, a risk to use for a primary container for mission critical files without off site backup. Antivirus software was a setup without any central management or monitoring on individual PCs. MS Office and Outlook on many PCs had old versions and hosted email was not setup with current best practices. Windows updates were unmanaged on all PCs in the network.

Solution:

After assessing the existing infrastructure and documenting setups, passwords, device addresses and user's needs, a project plan was developed.

Hardware recommendations included a new wireless firewall, network switching, UPS battery backup, and a SAN (Storage Area Network) file system device. Additionally managed antivirus, windows software updates services, Microsoft 365 Office Suite (integrated with hosted email), and web page migrations/development and were proposed.

The new equipment and software allowed offsite backup with Amazon Web Services, subscription based MS office clients with hosted email, and maximized up time not possible with the existing infrastructure. Some legacy equipment was re-purposed with downgraded non-mission critical roles in the organization as well.

Training on best practices for saving documents and utilizing existing copier's scan and email functionality helped to streamline office work.

The web page was migrated to a word press host with new content and profession images for a fresh look.

Results and Benefits:

All the projects were completed on schedule and below budget, with no service interruptions or outages during the pilot, transition of go-live phases. Within the first few months of the upgrade completion, the firm has been able to work more efficiently, in addition to safeguarding their data. The backend infrastructure can run on a battery for 2 ½ hours, allowing the phones to operate and file data not to be compromised by power outages. An off-site backup in the cloud with Amazon Web Services provides a low cost peace of mind as well. The remote access of systems and monitoring allows easy assistance when needed.

A few of the existing PCs needed to be replaced with more current hardware during the upgrade.

Next Step

Because of the success on this initiative, West Grove Consulting continued to work with this client to build upon the foundations laid out. The web page continues to be updated with current content and serves as a new marketing platform. In addition social media and internet marketing programs give the firm a bigger foothold in the current technology era.