auxis

Auxis Leads Infrastructure Modernization Journey that Drastically Improves Security at Logistics Services Company

Client Profile

Our U.S.-based, privately held client is a leader in supply chain logistics, cost management, and shipping bill process and payment, primarily for large companies worldwide. Originally founded more than 90 years ago, the company has estimated annual revenue of $74 million, processing hundreds of millions of freight bills every year for hundreds of clients.

Business Challenge

With cyber-attacks against businesses surging to an all-time high in 2021 - increasing 50% per week – it's no surprise that cyber risks **top** global enterprise concerns. The 2022 Allianz Risk Barometer found that the threat of ransomware attacks, data breaches, or major IT outages worry executives more than business and supply chain disruption, natural disasters, or even the COVID-19 pandemic – all of which heavily impacted businesses in recent years.

The **average cost** of a data breach for enterprises in 2021: a record-setting $4.24 million.

After recovering from a security breach, our client knew it needed to modernize its extremely legacy IT environment to reduce its cyber risks. **Some 40% of its infrastructure included unsupported operating systems (OS) and end-of-life desktops and other hardware - rolling out a welcome mat for hackers because vulnerabilities could no longer be patched.**

Companies that rely on obsolete hardware and software **can also risk hefty fines and even legal action if they don't comply with government or industry regulations.** That's especially true if a data breach directly relates to the use of older technology.

Auxis was hired to mitigate the client's security concerns by implementing an infrastructure modernization journey.

Solution & Approach

After a thorough assessment, Auxis devised a multi-step strategy for **modernizing the client's IT environment and drastically improving its security stance.** The final stage, migrates the client from its on-premises data center and disaster recovery sites to the Microsoft Azure cloud platform.

Migrating workloads to the cloud enables the client to benefit from Microsoft's robust security measures. In 2021, Microsoft announced plans to invest **$20 billion** over the next five years in cybersecurity – four times its previous investments of $1 billion per year to protect its services.

It also allows the company to reap other cloud benefits like cost efficiencies, increased speed to market, enhanced agility, and 24/7 redundancy that provides better protection from disasters.

Initial phases of the Auxis modernization solution included:

1. **Microsoft 365 migration.**
   The client operated **2007 versions of Microsoft Exchange and SharePoint that were long unsupported,** causing gaping security vulnerabilities. Auxis implemented the **Microsoft 365 platform,** delivering access to the suite of cloud-based Microsoft productivity tools that make it easy and efficient to get work done in the modern enterprise, including email, SharePoint, OneDrive, and Teams.

   Auxis also **helped the client take advantage of Microsoft 365's robust, multilayered data security options,** implementing key features like multi-factor authentication (MFA) to increase the security of user logins and the latest anti-malware and anti-spam email protections.

   Storing data in Microsoft's cloud-based OneDrive platform also significantly enhances security, with data encrypted on Microsoft servers and file transfers delivered via an encrypted network connection.

2. **Modernized computer hardware with mobile device management for end-users.**
   Auxis managed replacement of the client's **footprint of legacy laptops and desktops running the unsupported Windows 7 operating system** with current, secured computers.

   Upgrading the legacy hardware enabled Auxis to **further enhance security by implementing BitLocker device encryption and MS-Intune,** a secure cloud service that enables mobile device management (MDM) and mobile application management (MAM).

   Intune manages how company devices are used and **lets organizations create security policies** to control applications. For instance, an organization could choose to prevent emails from being sent outside the company.

It also **puts controls in place for a more secure and compliant environment,** managing automated updates to patch vulnerabilities or bugs and ensuring security measures like antivirus features are in place.

Auxis further used Intune to simplify desktop support for the client's global and largely remote workforce, leveraging Microsoft Autopilot to enable **remote workstation imaging and application of security policies** for end-user devices.

3. **Modernizing legacy wide and local area network (WAN/LAN) architecture.**
    The client's original network upgrade project scope focused on basic equipment remediation. But Auxis' IT experts proposed that updating legacy WAN/LAN architecture at global office locations left the company better positioned to support its business and cloud migration.

    For instance, Auxis determined that nearly three-quarters of the networking equipment was end-of-life – and the remaining devices became end-of-life within a few months.

    Once complete, Auxis will significantly improve connectivity and security at the client's U.S. and E.U. offices by redesigning and replacing the WAN/LAN architecture, including all network equipment, circuit technologies, switches, and firewalls.

    Upgrading to Fortinet firewalls, switches, and WAPs (Wireless Application Protocols) represent a key security enhancement, including AI-enabled application content, web, device, and user security - continuously assessing risks and automatically adjusting the security fabric and ecosystem.

4. **Microsoft Teams Voice migration.**
    To complete the transition to a modern office environment, Auxis **recommended replacing the client's end-of-life, unsupported phone system with Microsoft Teams Voice.** A cloud-based add-on to Microsoft 365 that integrates flawlessly, the Voice phone system enables users to receive business calls on multiple devices – delivering flexibility, scalability, and functionality with no need for expensive hardware infrastructure.

    After assessing the client's environment, Auxis seamlessly **migrated hundreds of end-users to the cloud-based phone system** with retention of the same numbers. Auxis also **designed an 800 number component with an auto attendant routing system, providing training and user guides.**

Results

Dramatically Enhanced Cybersecurity

Modernizing the client's unsupported and end-of-life infrastructure significantly improved its security stance, s**horing up protection with the latest security features and enabling regular patches, bug fixes, and security updates.**

Modernization also **increased the reliability of the infrastructure,** as outdated machines are often prone to failure.

### Seamless Collaboration for a Hybrid Workforce

Utilizing tools like Teams and SharePoint in the cloud-based Microsoft 365 platform significantly improved collaboration capabilities for the client's global, hybrid workforce.

Instead of juggling between applications, Microsoft 365 creates a **central place where everyone can connect in virtual meetings, edit files, share mailboxes and calendars, create and plan tasks, collaborate on projects, and more as if they were in the same room.** Real-time access eliminates confusion over versioning, ensuring everyone involved is always working on the most up-to-date document, presentation, or spreadsheet.

Mobile Connectivity

Upgrading to the cloud-based Microsoft 365 platform also delivered continuous availability that has been a **boon for productivity and mobility.** Storing files in the cloud enables end-users to work from any device at any location with an internet connection. If a location doesn't have internet or there's an outage, users can use OneDrive to work on files locally and sync later with the cloud.
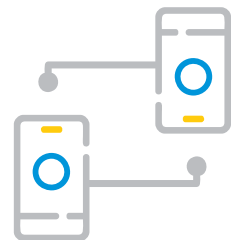
Nearly $600,000 ROI for Network Rearchitecture

Modernizing the WAN/LAN architecture **significantly decreased circuit costs,** delivering an expected ROI of nearly $600,000 within five years.

Improved Online Experience for End-Users

Modernizing the WAN/LAN architecture at the client's office locations **will increase bandwidth from 20Mb-300Mb to 100Mb-1Gb.** The higher bandwidth will significantly improve the online experience for end-users, including faster data transfer rates and a smoother experience when running multiple applications or supporting multiple users concurrently. The higher bandwidth is also **essential to support a full cloud solution for the client and employees.**
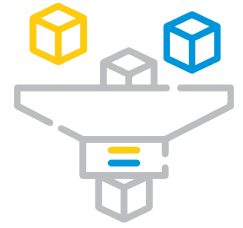
Optimized Desktop Support

The client's global workforce had largely transitioned to a Work From Home model during the pandemic, challenging desktop support. Implementing MS-Intune simplified support by enabling faster provisioning of new hires. It also enabled the client to **control costs because less desktop support staff was needed.**
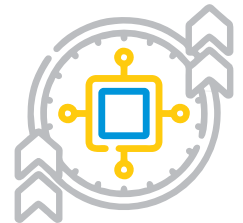
Ready for Microsoft Azure Cloud Migration

With the initial phases of the modernization journey nearing completion, **Auxis has started migrating workloads of the client's on-premises data center and disaster recovery sites to the Microsoft Azure cloud platform.** Once the project is completed, the plan is to shut down the physical sites, eliminating legacy servers that had become a security risk and delivering savings on colocation facilities and related costs.

The client also hired Auxis to provide management services for its updated infrastructure.