International Educational Society Moves to the Cloud

The Background

The American Society of Cataract and Refractive Surgery (ASCRS) is an international, educational society with more than 9,000 members. Its mission is to advance the art and science of ophthalmic surgery and the knowledge and skills of ophthalmic surgeons by providing clinical and practice management education and by working with patients, government, and the medical community to promote the delivery and advancement of high-quality eye care.

Since its founding in 1974, ASCRS has led the field through significant advances in technology and clinical science through its educational programs, publications and on-line resources. ASCRS has become the surgeons' primary source of up-to-date clinical information, published research, and regulatory information affecting the practice of medicine.

The Challenge

ASCRS was at a crossroads. With its outdated, on-premise Exchange server, updates and maintenance was draining the organization's IT resources. ASCRS' small IT staff was spending a tremendous amount of time on maintenance and repairs with very little benefit.

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Richard Mraz, Director of Technology with ASCRS, was fairly certain that moving to the cloud would solve many issues, but he first consulted with Nortec to determine what cloud solution would be best for his organization, as well as what the process would entail.

The Solution

Nortec began by providing a detailed explanation of various cloud solutions and plan of implementation. Mr. Mraz chose a hybrid solution, so Nortec was tasked with setting up the on-premise server, domains, mailboxes, and user profiles. Nortec and ASCRS then copied all of the data to the cloud and went live. Mr. Mraz says "everything went pretty well. We had a glitch in copying some of the data to the cloud, but we just went back to local server and re-synched." The timeline from preparation and set up to implementation and finalization of the project took about 4 weeks.

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The Benefits

Mr. Mraz says that one of the biggest benefits of moving to the cloud has been the savings in time and resources for his limited staff. Rather than performing manual updates and maintenance, his IT employees are now able to concentrate on other efforts. Another benefit has been the Office 365 E3 license, which comes with the Office 365 subscription. The E3 license provides free copies of Office applications for each desktop, as well as upgrades and new versions as they become available – automatically. "Now, everyone has access to Office 365 – including SharePoint - which we didn't have previously. Everyone can store documents and see each other's calendars, which enhances collaboration." Mr. Mraz also points out that because the applications reside in the cloud and are integrated into Office 365, no maintenance – or server space – are required.

For more information on Nortec, please contact us at georgeh@nortec.com.

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