Building a cloud environment to meet the reliability and security demands of the UK health sector

The customer:

A health software provider improving patient care

AxSys Technology Ltd., t.a. Excelicare (a subsidiary of US-based Practive Health, Inc.) is a HealthTech company committed to shifting the paradigm in healthcare from being provider-centric to becoming patient-centric. With clients primarily in the UK and North America, Excelicare's cloud-based healthcare platform builds on 20+ years of specialty solutions in clinical settings. Core to Excelicare's services is a holistic view of the patient's health built from the aggregated information derived from various integrated sources. This enables more effective care coordination and management and allows Excelicare to unlock solutions that simplify navigation of the healthcare system and ease collaboration among patients, their support group of family and friends, and providers. Excelicare currently has 13 employees in its' UK offices, with registered entities in the UK, the US, India and Canada.

AxSys recently migrated two of their clients to the Excelicare Managed Cloud Service based on Microsoft Azure, and also facilitated the transition of an existing client from an on-premise environment to Azure. At present the Excelicare deployments utilise Windows 2016 and SQL 2016 as well as Windows 2019 systems.

The challenge:

A move to a secure, robust cloud environment

AxSys' existing UK IT provider was not delivering the level of reliability the company needed. At the same time, some of AxSys' customers were keen to move to public cloud-based services to manage workloads more flexibly and reliably. **(Cont'd.)**

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>
> — James McQuade,
> Associate Director,
> Cloud Operations at Excelicare

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The challenge:

A move to a secure, robust cloud environment (Cont'd.)

"We had some clients in Canada on Microsoft Azure, so we'd already seen how beneficial it could be and we had knowledge of that environment that we could put to good use," said James McQuade, Associate Director, Cloud Operations at Excelicare. "So we decided to begin migrating some of our Windows servers hosted in data centres to Azure."

To achieve this, AxSys decided it needed a reliable partner that could provide cloud-based services and the high performance levels its clients needed to fully realise the benefits of a connected health platform. As its UK clients include a range of NHS Trusts handling often highly sensitive information, security and compliance were also significant factors.

"Reliability was our biggest goal with the move, so that our client systems would run as they needed to," said James. "Scalability was a big element as well – the ability to easily and automatically extend what we already have was a big plus."

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The solution:

Cloud and connectivity for stringent health sector demands

Lumen provides AxSys with Microsoft Azure services including high-performance Azure ExpressRoute connectivity and managed services with round-the-clock support.

AxSys chose Lumen because of its experience in migrating complex environments to Microsoft Azure, combined with the ability to build and deliver the multifaceted HSCN-compliant networking solutions that are needed by NHS organisations.

"We already had a relationship with Lumen, which was providing connectivity for AxSys, so it seemed like an easy transition for us," said James. "We had a number of meetings with the Lumen team to work through what we needed from the new environment, and we're pleased with the outcome."

Lumen worked closely with AxSys to make sure that the implementation of the Microsoft Azure environment was efficient and met the organisation's needs for security, reliability and flexibility. An Azure Landing Zone was created to provide confidence and smooth the migration of customers onto the platform. Lumen managed network delivery and workload integration for maximum performance and security, and also helped with education and facilitating enablement across the organisation.

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The benefits:

A secure, flexible cloud environment with strong support

The new Microsoft Azure solution provides AxSys with a far more reliable environment to run its applications and provide services to its clients, with fast and responsive support for troubleshooting.

"The system has been running well, and our clients seem happy," said James. "If we have had any issues, Lumen have responded rapidly. The team has got back to us speedily if they're able to resolve the problem, or if not, they've quickly raised the issue with Microsoft. Having that direct link to Microsoft has been a major benefit to us as well."

AxSys can now provide the public cloud-based solutions that its customers have been requesting. Azure's scalability also allows the company to flexibly respond to the changing needs of its customers and to keep up with demand as it brings new clients on board.

The Lumen solution is highly secure and enables AxSys to produce compliancy reports to demonstrate to its clients that NHS security requirements have been met.

"We had a lot of help from the technical team at Lumen, particularly on the integration into the secure HSCN network," said James. "That was a huge benefit, as we may not have been able to achieve that without their expertise. Inevitably, we came across a few stumbling blocks and the technical team were able to find a workaround."

"In terms of the future, we're looking at moving more clients onto Azure and expanding the existing environment with Lumen – so it's onwards and upwards with the business and with working with Lumen."

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