

CASE STUDY

Global Excel's Office 365 Deployment Soars with FSLogix

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

During the migration of an acquisition to centralized infrastructure located in its headquarters, Global Excel Management, which provides medical assistance, claims management, and cost containment services for global travelers, found users of the newly acquired company struggling with one- to three-minute login times when using Exchange Online. They also were wasting as much as 30 minutes each day searching for emails using Outlook Instant Search.

Using FSLogix, Global Excel reduced log-in times to a few seconds—saving 1,800 hours annually or C\$54,600 in productivity gains. FSLogix Office 365 Containers also allowed Global Excel to add Instant Search in Outlook, which improved end-user productivity by 3,510 hours annually—or C\$105,300. Further, with increased session density, Global Excel has been able to add new users to the existing Remote Desktop Services (RDS) environment without adding IT infrastructure.

HIGHLIGHTS

- > Reduced time spent searching for emails in Outlook by 3,510 hours annually—C\$105,300 in productivity improvements
- > Saving 1,800 hours annually in log-in time, equating to C\$54,600 in productivity gains
- > Avoided the cost (C\$20,000) of adding a Microsoft Hyper-V host by increasing session density
- > Increased session density by 20%, enabling 20% growth in users without IT infrastructure expansion
- > Mitigated volume of Office 365 helpdesk calls

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MATHIEU ISABEL, TECHNICAL ARCHITECT, GLOBAL EXCEL MANAGEMENT, INC.

Cool Facts About Global Excel Management

Employees: 900+

Founded: 1984 (independent since 2011)

Headquarters: Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada

Corporate Clients: 320+ in over 40 countries

Services: Medical assistance, claims management, and cost containment for global travelers and health and travel businesses

Website: www.globalexcel.com

Challenges

- > Add more Remote Desktop Services users without expanding IT infrastructure
- > Minimize Office 365 log-in times for users
- > Reduce helpdesk calls from Office 365 users
- > Activate Instant Search in Outlook

Solution

- > FSLogix Profile Container
- > Microsoft Office 365 on Microsoft Remote Desktop Services
- > Microsoft Office 365 Deployment: Microsoft Exchange Online and Skype for Business Online

Founded in 1984 as a subsidiary of Expert Travel Financial Security, Inc. and formed as an independent company in 2011, Global Excel Management provides corporate clients and travelers with medical assistance, claims management, and cost containment. The company manages 95,000 inpatient, outpatient, and non-medical cases and files annually, processing over US\$740 million in claims each year.

With a newly acquired company located in Miami that needed to use centralized systems located in Sherbrooke, Quebec, Canada, Global Excel opted to provide remote access using RDS. As the new users were using Office 365 Exchange Online, caching of Outlook files locally was a requisite in order to provide a responsive environment.

PROBLEMS WITH OFFICE 365 REMOTE DESKTOP SERVICES

“When we first onboarded users from Miami onto our RDS infrastructure, we used folder redirection technology to manage user roaming,” Isabel notes. “But we ran into significant roaming and caching issues. Our users log in every morning, and they can land on a different RDS session host in our server collection every time. Thus, synchronization of offline sessions with OST folders took between one and three minutes to complete, plus we experienced significant Outlook corruption issues.”

Isabel tried a couple of different approaches to resolve the issue. The first was to cache everything locally on user devices. However, this resulted in large, repetitive downloads of data and was not a practical solution to allow users from moving between different RDS session hosts. “This created elongated log-in times, and our users were quite frustrated,” Isabel notes. The second solution Isabel tried was to put data on a network folder using AppData redirection. But

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this resulted in data corruption and performance degradation. “Neither was a satisfactory option for our users,” Isabel says.

In addition to the log-in time delays and performance issues, Global Excel’s users also wanted to use Instant Search in Outlook. “They regularly need to search for different emails based on keywords,” Isabel comments. “Our helpdesk received ongoing complaints from users who were frustrated with log-in times, performance and corruption issues, and the inability to find emails in their Outlook instances.”

SOLVING LOG-IN AND CORRUPTION WITH FSLOGIX

Recognizing that the Office 365 status quo wasn’t sustainable, Isabel went in search of a solution that would mitigate log-in and corruption issues. He also wanted to find a way to turn on Instant Search in Outlook. Research on the Internet led him to FSLogix. “After a couple of calls with the sales and technical teams from FSLogix, we elected to implement a proof of concept to ensure that it would delivered as promised,” Isabel recalls. “It performed exactly as described, and we elected to implement FSLogix Profile Container.”

The rollout of FSLogix was done incrementally, with a limited number of users in production and more added over time. “The entire process was seamless,” Isabel observes. “Our system administrator tasked with the deployment worked with FSLogix Support Services to answer any questions whenever he ran up against issues.”

SIX-FIGURE PRODUCTIVITY GAINS

Global Excel has seen tangible outcomes FSLogix Office 365 Container. “Log-in times for our 140 users take a matter of a few seconds as compared to the previous one to three minutes it took to log into Office 365,” Isabel reports. This adds up to as many as 1,800 hours in productivity gains annually.¹ Assuming an hourly rate of C\$30, this amounts to more than C\$54,600 (US\$43,000).²

“[Office 365 OST issues were] having a real impact on the productivity of our users—time they could spend serving clients. FSLogix solved these issues. It’s been a great solution for us.”

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Adding Instant Search in Outlook had an even greater productivity impact. “Our users were spending an average of 15 to 30 minutes each day waiting on the Windows Search service to respond,” Isabel recounts. “Now, because we turned on Instant Search in Outlook, they are able to complete those searches in a matter of a few minutes.” Here, the productivity gains are impressive, tallying up to 3,510 hours annually—or C\$105,300 (US\$81,500).³

“The volume of calls to our helpdesk from frustrated users is much lower because of FSLogix as well,” Isabel says. “This allows us to focus on other more business-critical initiatives.”

Session density also improved with FSLogix. “This allowed us to add around 20 percent more users to our existing Office 365 environment without expanding our IT infrastructure investment,” Isabel says. “We increased session density by 20 percent, which enabled us to avoid the cost of adding a Microsoft Hyper-V host.” This saved Global Excel approximately C\$20,000 (US\$15,500).

Global Excel had reached a logjam with the onboarding of the remote users using Office 365. “It was having a real impact on the productivity of our users—time they could spend serving clients,” Isabel sums up. “But FSLogix solved these issues. It’s been a great solution for us.”

RESOURCES

¹140 users X 3 minutes X 5 days per week X 52 weeks / 60 minutes per hour = 1,820 hours.

²1,820 hours X C30 = C\$54,600

³30 users X 27 minutes saved daily (30 minutes - 3 minutes) X 5 days per week X 52 weeks / 60 minutes per day = 3,510 hours X C\$30 = C\$105,300.

ABOUT FSLOGIX

FSLogix is the leading innovator of solutions that reduce the amount of hardware, time, and labor required to support desktop virtualization platforms. With implementations ranging from less than 1,000 to over 50,000 users, FSLogix Apps enhances user experience and productivity, while reducing support requirements for IT departments. FSLogix is a Microsoft partner, Amazon Workspaces partner, VMware partner, Citrix Ready partner, Red Hat partner, two time Best of Synergy winner, CUGC Alumni, and a first-year sponsor of the CUGC Women in Technology Mentoring program. The company is headquartered in Atlanta, GA, with offices in Salt Lake City, Denver, Boston, the Netherlands, and London, England. For more information, visit www.fslogix.com.