



Kaizen
approach



How a Small Business Grew by Securely Leveraging the Cloud



THE CHALLENGE

In this instance, we were advising a company of computer security engineers who provided consulting and contracting services. They faced a common problem for small companies: scalability. This company's employees worked from their home offices or at client sites, not a primary location. Adding to the challenge, the company didn't have a central network for employees to VPN into, or a dedicated IT staff.

The company was outgrowing its ability to manage operations. Something needed to be done to manage back-office HR, accounting functions, contract proposals and administration. Losing a smartphone or tablet with business contacts and notes could be crippling. Passing around spreadsheets and multiple versions of documents was inefficient. The website, which was hardly an effective representation of services, needed updating. Deadlines were being missed. Data was being lost. Kaizen Approach recognized all of this as an IT problem, which could be solved with the affordability and flexibility of cloud computing.

THE SOLUTION

We'd love to say that leveraging the cloud was simple, but it leads to additional concerns. There can be security issues with virtualization and hosting providers. Outsourcing one's IT means losing direct control over the data, so you have to compare risks versus benefits. Privacy risks shift from a single employee's lost laptop to a hosting provider housing sensitive data and accidentally exposing, changing, or deleting it. The management team worried about data availability, effectiveness, and integrity of cloud-based services. This is where Kaizen Approach stepped in.

We were able to guide them through our proven methodology. Among many steps, we performed the following:

- **Defined overall requirements:** a file-sharing solution, a mobile security system, a recruiting /applicant tracking system and a customer relationship management (CRM) solution.
- **Prioritized projects:** file sharing first, then recruiting, then mobile security, then CRM.

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- **Developed a template** of desired features and functions for each project.
 - **Performed a market survey** of possible providers, with consideration of their security practices at the forefront. Particularly important practices that we considered included: encryption, authentication and authorization, data portability and data protection.
 - **Compared functionality of selected providers:** Watched demos and videos, and spoke to providers' engineers and salespeople. As these were all cloud solutions, performing trials and demos online could effectively emulate the actual user experience.
 - **Presented findings** to company leadership.
 - **Selected final services for a trial.** The trial period was successful, so we proceeded to implementation.

THE RESULTS

At the end of six months, we had applied these methods to assess and select services for our customer and completed implementation. For the company, cloud-based software as a service (SaaS) solutions have offered more security controls, have been cost-effective and are critical to running operations, becoming the backbone of IT. This is an advantage for any small business, as long as employers understand and accept that there's a cost/benefit tradeoff as far as risk is concerned. With more effective and efficient use of their employees' time, internal operations were smoother, communication among staff was more efficient, the website was revamped, more contracts were won and management could focus on growing the company.

Contact us to discuss your challenges and to learn if cloud-based solutions are right for your company. You can also view our full white paper [here](#).

CONTACT US