

Major Midwest University Academic Healthcare System Enhances Protection and Management of Health Data in Microsoft 365 with AvePoint

Customer Location

United States

Industry

Healthcare

Platform

Microsoft 365

Critical Needs

- Comprehensive backup for cloud services
- Reduce manual IT tasks
- Stronger controls when managing workspaces, including renewals
- Consolidation of solution vendors to reduce IT spend

Solution

- AvePoint Cloud Governance
- AvePoint Cloud Backup

★ Success Highlights

- Protection of 45+ TB of Microsoft 365 data
- Increased efficiency and reduced risk with simplified workspace management, renewal, and archiving
- Enhanced compliance and security with improved accountability for data owners
- Lowered maintenance costs and reduced helpdesk tickets by 20% with automated management and site consolidation

🔍 Customer Profile

The major midwestern university academic healthcare system includes an expanding network of partner hospitals with nearly 45,000 employees. As a leader in healthcare quality, medical innovation, and patient satisfaction, they prioritize patient care and are dedicated to cutting costs to allocate more funds towards improving the quality of care for their patients.

⚙️ The Challenge

As a healthcare system, the hospital places a high value on patient privacy and data security. However, as their Microsoft 365 environment grew more complex, maintaining these priorities became increasingly challenging. The lack of continuity and consistency in its Microsoft 365 environment was leading not only to potential risks, but inefficiencies and an unorganized digital workplace that resembled the “wild, wild west,” according to the head of IT for the hospital.

For instance, when they introduced Microsoft Teams, users could create new workspaces without accountability or guidelines. This led to a large number of unmanaged Teams and sites, which posed a risk to the hospital's data security and ability to meet regulatory requirements like HIPAA.

The hospital's IT team of only six staff supporting nearly 45,000 users was stretched thin, and they needed a solution that could better govern the use of Microsoft 365 – including ownership rules, access controls, and guest user management – while reducing IT burden and IT cost.

💡 The AvePoint Solution

The hospital first turned to AvePoint Cloud Governance. With Cloud Governance's ability to automate and control the management of workspaces, from creation to deactivation, the hospital could establish basic rules around ownership, renewals, and lifecycle management to reduce the risk of sprawl and non-compliance.

Immediately, the hospital saw tangible evidence that Cloud Governance was working. “With Cloud Governance in place,

the number of Teams sites plateaued,” says the head of IT. Users were still creating new sites, but with Cloud Governance’s automated lifecycle management, old and redundant workspaces were being archived or deleted. “Cloud Governance has helped everyone become better stewards of the data they own, ensuring that it is properly managed and protected.”

Cloud Governance is also beneficial for the hospital to meet its regulatory and compliance requirements. With the solution, they can schedule annual and compulsory reviews by workspace owners of all access controls to sensitive data to ensure compliance with regulations.

Additionally, the hospital must keep some content, such as data from a cancer clinical trial, for a specific length of time, which has led to a culture of retaining all data. While they’re not facing storage overages yet, the head of IT predicts it could be a problem in the future. Pairing Cloud Governance with AvePoint Cloud Backup alleviates this concern, allowing them to safely remove unnecessary content from production while still meeting compliance requirements.

With Cloud Governance’s lifecycle management, the hospital sets retention policies for content – for example, they hold emails for 2 years – so unnecessary content is archived after a certain amount of time. However, because of Cloud Backup’s reliable recovery, they can still maintain regulatory requirements and restore anything they need, if they need it.

Cloud Backup not only helped the hospital with compliance concerns but also provided a comprehensive backup solution. They can back up all their cloud services, including SharePoint Online, OneDrive, and Exchange Online, as well as granular objects like settings, permissions, and metadata, using a single product. This allows for faster restores to easily recover any lost data.

According to the head of IT, the fact that Cloud Governance and Cloud Backup work together is a significant advantage for the hospital. “Dealing with multiple vendors can lead to complications, and even finger-pointing if something goes wrong. When working with one vendor, there’s just people trying to solve your problems, without getting bogged down by questions

about who is responsible or if they have contacted the right person.”

Already, the hospital’s cost optimization efforts have mitigated this issue thanks to its streamlined vendor stack. Instead of working with various vendors for adoption and training, secure file sharing, and SaaS management, they have now standardized on AvePoint for all these solutions, reducing costs and saving valuable management time.

The hospital is pleased with the partnership with AvePoint and expects it to grow in the future. The head of IT says, “I want a partnership where I have one person I can go to and say, ‘Here’s what I’m dealing with today; how can I solve this?’ I believe AvePoint can be that partner because of the exceptional customer service and quality technical solutions they offer.”

The Bottom Line

The implementation of AvePoint solutions has given the hospital peace of mind to focus on priorities, like delivering exceptional healthcare services to their patients. The hospital has also seen a reduction in the number of IT helpdesk tickets by 20%, saving valuable time for their small IT team. The head of IT attributes this to AvePoint solutions empowering end-users to take ownership of their workspaces and reducing their dependency on IT.

“We needed a solution that just works because we can’t spend a lot of time on it. With AvePoint, we no longer have to worry about managing our Microsoft 365 environment, which frees up our time and resources to tackle bigger challenges and pursue innovative projects that make a real difference.”

Their next challenge is implementing governance in Power Platform, where they plan to use AvePoint EnPower to establish business rules and periodic reviews like those required for Teams owners. This will help increase visibility and control over their business-critical objects, ensuring data security and efficiency in Power Platform.

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- HEAD OF IT
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