Kristin Mondi

Ed Panzeter

CASE STUDY:

UHS

US Cloud: We're joined by Kristin Mondi and Ed Panzeter from United Healthcare Systems. Thanks for your time, guys. Okay, so tell me a little bit about UHS.

Kristin: Sure. We are a large healthcare organization running acute hospitals, freestanding emergency rooms, and a small health insurance company, in addition to joint ventures with independent physician management. In total, we have a large healthcare footprint and we're about 90,000 employees.

So, we have a good bit of IT. We host a lot of the applications and technology pieces out of corporate, but there's also a small presence at the facilities themselves. So, there's over 450 of us at the corporate office that are in IT.

US Cloud: Ok, so quite big. As a large organization, I would think that Microsoft would put a high premium on your account. Tell me, what was the situation where you started looking for support?

Kristin: We used to have Premier Support through Microsoft and at the time of renewal we were getting ready to start switching over to O365. When they brought us the price of Unified Support it was more than triple what we had paid. So, I was given the task to go and investigate other ways to get support and I reached out to a company that we use occasionally for references like this, and they suggested US Cloud. I met with US Cloud and we set it up the first month as a trial basis.

US Cloud: Proof of concept?

Kristin: Yes, and we overlapped our two contracts. We told everybody 'Don't call Microsoft', call US Cloud', so they would have a good feel for what it was going to be like. And everybody loved it so we were able to continue with our support through US Cloud.

US Cloud: Interesting. Most of the folks that I have talked to talk more about the level of service US Cloud provides. But it sounds like since you were more focused on the price increase?

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Kristin: Well, support was poor when we had Premier, but we knew that, and everybody loved how responsive US Cloud was when we switched over. Actually, we just paid for a three-year agreement with US Cloud and a lot of the folks that are working on break-fix type of scenarios love it.

US Cloud: Ok, so the service was good, but, but there must have been significant trepidation about moving away from the OEM for support. How did your team approach that?

Kristin: Like I had said before, we weren't getting great service through Premier Support and the discussion was really 'we're trying it for a period of time' if we had to do it, we could go back to Microsoft. But honestly, UHS is very dollar driven. So, when it was 3X, It wasn't a huge lift for us to make that jump.

US Cloud: So, I know healthcare IT, in relation to other industries, has significant pressure to ensure there aren't critical downtimes that impact patient care. How do you balance that cost concern with wariness about getting break/fix support?

Ed: I think our experience with that is much more positive than any experience we've ever had with Microsoft, and I think that's one of the reasons that we were successful in this change. It's a big pill to swallow for an organization, especially a large organization, to step away from first party support. A big part of us being successful in moving to US Cloud was that responsiveness.

US Cloud: Once you were on-board with US Cloud, what were the growing pains like?

Ed: It was more organizational for us than anything having to do with US Cloud. I mean, we really had a pretty smooth transition and again, the quick response times and relationships make people more likely to use it.

US Cloud: You mention the relationships, tell me about your account management experience? Does that differ from your previous experience with Premier? Is it similar?

Ed: We've been really fortunate. I think we always had good account managers with Microsoft. But you were always well aware that you were in a bucket with many others, whereas, with US Cloud, we've found it much more responsive.

If we hit Mike up with a ticket, I'll e-mail him and say, 'Hey, here's the ticket we just opened. We have this issue. We're working in this direction' and he'll get back to me usually within fifteen minutes and say, 'Hey, do you need me to escalate?'

He always keeps us updated. He's always been responsive and gotten back to us very quickly. So that's where US Cloud is different. It's more relationship-driven than Microsoft, where their TAM has 120 customers, and they'll get to your e-mail when they get to it.

US Cloud is super quick and intimate. I can't think of a better word to use, but intimate in a non-weird way.

US Cloud: That's great, well, thanks very much to both of you. I'll remember not to ever send you a new Yeti cooler. Do you have any suggestions for our service? Anything we can improve for you?

Ed: Continue concentrating on providing those differentiators that you know make you different from Microsoft in both your attitudes and the culture.