GA Communication Group Stays Connected with AirWatch Platform

The Challenge
For a growing number of professional service companies, mobile devices serve as an extension of the office. Tablets and smartphones allow employees to collaborate, access corporate information and provide the high quality of service their clients expect, whether they are working at a desk or at an airport. Enterprise mobility also presents a set of challenges for businesses in the areas of security, business processes and end-user management. Addressing these issues with the help of an Enterprise Mobility Management (EMM) provider is an approach to ‘going mobile’ that many companies are taking, including GA Communication Group.

The Client
GA Communication Group is a marketing and advertising agency serving the healthcare and pharmaceutical industries. The full-service, Chicago-based agency provides its clients with the strategy, content and technology solutions to successfully deliver their message.

In order to streamline internal processes and manage its mobile fleet, the agency began researching EMM solutions, with specific requirements in mind. “We were looking for a solution to manage VPN access to the accounting and time entry system and a means to control the purchase and distribution of internally developed applications,” said Jason Dittmer, director of technology, GA Communication Group. The list of requirements also included a solution that could securely send and store corporate documents as well as a central dashboard that would provide an overview of all devices at a glance.

The Solution
Prior to selecting AirWatch®, GA Communication Group used another EMM provider but was not satisfied with the solution. “Switching to AirWatch was an easy decision,” said Dittmer. “AirWatch Secure Content Locker™ was a huge selling point for us. It provides an intuitive, simple way to securely store and share documents with other users.”

The agency’s mobile fleet currently includes 55 devices: corporate-owned tablets and mix of employee- and corporate-owned smartphones. Every department at GA Communication uses mobile devices. “We use

Solution Overview
- Customer: GA Communications Group
- Industry: Professional Services
- Geography: North America
- Features: BYOD, MDM, MCM, MEM
- Devices: 1 - 500
them for email, calendars, contacts, surfing the Web and staying connected outside the office,” said Dittmer, noting the account management team is the most involved set of users within the company, followed by the project management and the creative teams. As a Google Apps for Business agency, GA Communication uses Google Hangouts for video communication between employees while traveling or working from home, and WebEx for staying in touch with clients. “Having apps preloaded with these functions in the AirWatch App Catalog is vital,” said Dittmer. “With clients located across the country and employees in offices in San Diego and Chicago, we need the ability to access apps quickly and securely.”

Initially, GA Communication employees expressed hesitation about having their devices monitored. “All employees signed an agreement stating that if they wanted access to company email on their device, they would be subject to the MDM installation. We assured employees their personal information would remain separate from corporate data on employee-owned devices and it would even be a benefit to remote wipe devices if they were stolen,” said Dittmer. “Prior to AirWatch, a few employees lost their devices or had them stolen. Fortunately, we did not experience any repercussions from the incidents, but I feel better knowing I have more control over the device and can track or wipe the data if necessary.”

GA Communication implemented a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) policy which about 20 percent of employees participate in. “We have a very generous BYOD policy and will provide devices for employees as needed,” said Dittmer. “If employees opt to use a corporate-owned device, they are automatically enrolled with AirWatch.”

One of the most valuable benefits of AirWatch has been the ability to centrally manage all devices, which has resulted in significant time savings for the IT department. “In the past, the IT team had to configure and manage all devices manually,” said Dittmer. “Thanks to AirWatch, the time IT spends deploying apps, providing new services, making documents available and dealing with device issues has definitely decreased by at least fifty percent.”

Up Next

Dittmer plans to increase the use of the mobile devices managed by AirWatch within GA Communication’s sales and marketing teams. Employees will use tablets in meetings to provide examples of the agency’s work to prospective clients. The company plans to add Android and Windows devices to its mobile fleet later this year.