

CASE STUDY

ATKINSON & ASSOCIATES

ATKINSON & ASSOCIATES BUILDS
FOUNDATION TO SUPPORT GROWTH
OPPORTUNITIES WITH CLOUD-BASED
VISTA AND VIEWPOINT TEAM™



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Atkinson & Associates is a Lancaster, Calif.-based construction management firm with a small, but diversified and growing portfolio of projects. The company's work ranges from just \$75 jobs to \$27 million projects. Among them, apartment buildings, retail and restaurant space, churches and small office buildings. The company formed in 1989 and has been a Viewpoint Vista client for nearly the same amount of time.

CHALLENGES

- Increasing burden of maintaining hardware and software updates internally
- Limited productivity, process automation with on-premise software
- Data security risks due to VPN vulnerability and limited backup capabilities

SOLUTION

- Moved operations to cloud version of Vista to relieve IT strain and expand functionality
- Implemented Viewpoint Team to streamline documents and project management
- Automated project processes and produced real-time reporting

RESULTS

- Freed up significant time and burden from IT responsibilities
- Increased data storage and security measures, including more reliable disaster backup
- Achieved cost savings through reduction of overhead and manual processes
- Boosted productivity by expanding real-time access to data across project teams



CHALLENGE

George “Junior” Atkinson’s official title with his company is Vice President. However, as many do that work for small, but growing contracting firms, he wears multiple hats. He heads Atkinson & Associate’s IT operations and strategy, produces detailed reports and business intelligence and manages relationships with project owners, architects, engineers and more. For Atkinson, technology is a vital part of his day-to-day work. That’s why when his company came to a critical fork in the road over whether to replace expensive servers and other hardware or move operations to where many other businesses were heading — the cloud — the choice was relatively simple. Atkinson knew he needed a cloud solution that provided productivity, profitability and peace of mind.

“I would always have weekly backups, but I would also do a daily backup just to make sure everything was there. The problem with me is that I’m more than just the IT guy. We don’t have a dedicated IT guy because we’re not a large enough company,” Atkinson said. “Not always having time to focus on IT, my hard drives were filling up with data backups. When it wouldn’t back up, maybe I didn’t catch that for a month or two months.”

“ *Time is money – for me not to have to worry about constant maintenance of the servers and software updates internally, it’s much less time and less stress for me.*

— George “Junior” Atkinson, Vice President, Atkinson & Associates



SOLUTION

Atkinson saw and really liked Viewpoint Team, the cloud-based document and project management platform that ties together back office and field processes with a common set of data. At the same time, the constant attention needed to maintain on-premise servers, hardware and databases was wearing thin. He also noted that by opening up a VPN for users to connect to the on-premise software, the Atkinson network seemed more interesting to potential threat actors, as those nefarious criminals started targeting the company's network more frequently. "All of a sudden I saw all of these other people trying to get into my computer. I'd look at the logs where they'd ping the computer or try repeated user log-in attempts, etc.," Atkinson said. "We started to like the idea of moving to the cloud," he said.

Atkinson & Associates decided to move its data to the cloud version of Viewpoint Vista, while also implementing Viewpoint Team. The implementation took about a week, and though there was some downtime in his company's operations, Atkinson called it a smooth overall process. "I would say it's a quite simple move as long as you factor in downtime — because there will be some. But Viewpoint is great at planning that out with you."

Now the company is operating in the cloud, allowing its employees to access up-to-date data immediately no matter where work takes them.

"Usually in the owners' meetings, the owners will have questions and in many cases without a cloud-based system, you'd just have to say, 'I'll have to get back to you,'" he said. "Now, if the owners need something, I can get it to them right away. You save time two different ways: A) you can give the information to the client right then without having to wait, and B) when you do get back to the office, you don't have to be focused on trying to chase paperwork and catch up with requests."

“ | *If something goes wrong, we're protected.*

— George "Junior" Atkinson, Vice President, Atkinson & Associates





RESULTS

Moving Vista to the cloud took an enormous IT burden off of Atkinson. “Time is money — for me not to have to worry about constant maintenance of the servers and software updates internally, it’s much less time and less stress for me,” he said. “It’s basically buying out my stress.”

The added security and data backup capability of the cloud provided additional peace of mind. Should a disaster or other incident occur, business will not be interrupted as data is protected. “If something goes wrong, we’re protected,” Atkinson said. “And I know we can get back up and running quickly.”

It isn’t just the IT operations that benefitted. Atkinson said moving to the cloud has significantly boosted the productivity of users and the business as a whole. For example, the company used to employ project secretaries tasked with drafting, managing and distributing subcontracts on projects. Sometimes in excess of 60 pages each, it could be a struggle to effectively produce three a day. Now through Vista, Atkinson & Associates can produce even more detailed contracts, manage them efficiently through automated workflows and share them out in real time to all relevant parties — all at a fraction of the time.

“I could pump out 20 a day if I wanted,” Atkinson said. “That’s where we’ve seen some nice cost savings. I’ve actually eliminated the position of project secretaries at our companies.”

“

I like the ability to log in anywhere, from any computer. If you have to run out the door, you can grab your laptop and just log right back in to where you left off. Everything is just where you left it.

— George “Junior” Atkinson, Vice President,
Atkinson & Associates



RESULTS Cont.

Another feature of Vista in the cloud Atkinson finds particularly appealing is the ability to work remotely, effectively. "I usually have my laptop at the jobsites and I can log right in during owners' meetings and pop open a SL if someone has a question. We can do that in real time versus having to call back to the office and ask someone, 'hey, can you look this up?' I like the ability to log in anywhere, from any computer. If you have to run out the door, you can grab your laptop and just log right back in to where you left off. Everything is just where you left it."


The freedom and capabilities the cloud provides allows Atkinson & Associates to work smarter, adapt quicker to project challenges and be a responsive, productive contractor. The company is rolling out Viewpoint Team on its upcoming projects to even further streamline work, and Atkinson even created its own domain, Atkinson.team, which directs project team members to the Viewpoint Team login page.

"It works out very well and is quick and easy for the engineers to use to see drawings, documents and more related to Atkinson projects," Atkinson said.

Learn more about the cloud version of Viewpoint Vista and Viewpoint Team by visiting viewpoint.com.

ABOUT VIEWPOINT

Viewpoint, a Trimble Company, is a leading global provider of integrated software solutions for the construction industry. Viewpoint software enables customers to integrate operations across the office, team and field to improve project profitability, enhance productivity, manage risk and effectively collaborate across the broad construction ecosystem. With nearly 8,000 clients, including more than 40 percent of the ENR 400, Viewpoint's innovations are transforming the construction industry by fully integrating operations across financial and HR systems, project management tools and mobile field solutions.



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