GMG EnviroSafe

How Microsoft's Cloud Platform led to immediate customer acquisition and cleared the way for exponential growth

INTRODUCTION

GMG EnviroSafe is an industry authority in environmental, health and safety compliance services, with a focus on auto repair facilities. GMG management had effectively positioned the company for growth, but like so many growing organizations, GMG's potential was held back by legacy processes and technologies that had evolved over time. What's more, they were on the verge of closing a large deal with a major customer which would take them to the next level.

CUSTOMER CHALLENGE

Although GMG's systems were generally functional, it was difficult to further iterate on them to meet expanding customer volume and demand. They were leveraging a custom PHP-based application that required a traditional software development lifecycle approach and niche skillsets to maintain. Going to market with new capabilities was proving to be an expensive and time-consuming proposition. It was clear that in order to scale, GMG needed to focus on improving time to market for key feature functionality.

At the same time, GMG was becoming a major player in the automotive environmental safety space with several key customer acquisitions. "I knew there was a better way to do it, but wasn't sure where to start," says Brandon Thomas, CEO. What's more, rapidly evolving security and compliance requirements necessitated a new approach. "It's really a classic case of why companies look to the cloud to transform," says Mike Taylor, CEO of Innovative-e. "It's economics, but also scalability and the availability of new, innovative technologies that drive the discussion."

CUSTOMER QUOTE

"I knew we were wasting time on redundant data entry and inefficient internal processes, and that there was a better way to do it, but wasn't sure where to start."

- Brandon Thomas. CEO GMG EnviroSafe

Innovative-e recommended taking a closer look at Microsoft's Power Platform as an option. GMG had some exposure to M365 but wasn't necessarily a Microsoft centric shop. The potential of the Power Platform and its components, Power BI, Power Apps and Power Automate seemed intriguing to Thomas.

"We saw what was happening at GMG, and really, it's a common theme across a lot of our customers," says Bryan Quick, Director of Business Development at Innovative-e. "They struggle with manual, time-consuming processes and cumbersome, outdated solutions, and they're just really not familiar with the potential that modern cloud platforms provide."

SOLUTION

Innovative-e engaged with GMG at multiple levels. First, Innovative-e leadership established a virtual CTO role at GMG to understand business needs from the top down and build a strategic technology roadmap. By having a seat at the table, Innovative-e saw first hand what IT investments were going to be necessary to modernize GMG's business. "When looking to transform, it's important to pause and approach the problem wholistically and with clarity," says Taylor. "Innovative-e spent time to really understand my business wholistically and know what GMG is trying to do strategically," says Thomas.

Innovative-e also now serves as GMG's IT Help Desk across the board. This has led to a better level improved IT responsiveness and contextual knowledge of day-to-day incidents.

RESULTS

Together GMG and Innovative-e quickly turned focus to development and implementation of several purpose-built business critical Power Apps. The first was a re-platforming their main CRM system from a niche, inflexible 3rd party solution. It turned out GMG really didn't need the full capability of a CRM, and this was proving cumbersome. More often than not, GMG employees were needing to adjust their practices to bend to the way the CRM wanted to work. Instead, Innovative-e suggested taking the approach of simply building core capabilities into a Power App. That way, the tool functions precisely the way GMG works, without the extra weight.

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Another focus area for the Innovative-e/GMG partnership was a business critical, customer facing app called the "Hub" - it's how GMG's customers manage their security and compliance activities on a daily basis.

Innovative-e re-envisioned new feature functionality for the Hub on Azure and Power Platform. Meanwhile, the Hub's legacy aspects remain on PHP, for now. This hybrid approach is made possible by the flexibility of the toolkit. Key features were available in-market faster, and with less disruption. With this foundation in place, Innovative-e continues to maintain and expand functionality of the Hub using a simplified, more frequent software lifecycle. This fosters innovation and improves value to customers.

"By migrating to the modern Microsoft low-pro code platform and re-vamping our development and support processes accordingly, we've seen tremendous gains in direct customer acquisition and laid a foundation for future business growth," says Thomas.