Project Plan for: Cloud computing via Microsoft 365 or Google for Nonprofits

Project description

This project focuses on deploying a cloud solution for robust file-sharing, productivity, and collaboration internally and externally. You will assess your current needs and environment, and then install one of the two most common cloud-based productivity solutions used by nonprofits: Google Workspace for Nonprofits or Microsoft 365.

Solutions in this area include:
- Microsoft 365
- Google Workspace for Nonprofits

Why take this on / what impact to expect:

If you complete this project, you can expect some or all of the following benefits to your staff and organization:

- Give users access to productivity software across multiple devices to enable them to work from anywhere
- Condense the number of different applications used into one integrated suite to improve interoperability between applications *and* boost staff comfort and productivity as they use a consistent set of applications
- Allow users to safely and securely share files from any location
- Manage projects more cohesively among internal staff and/or external parties
- Use supplemental communication tools like instant messaging/chat, voice communications, video conferencing, and calendar sharing to further enhance collaboration

Estimated project timeframe: 4-8 weeks

Project deliverables

At the end of this project, you will have:

- Cloud software suite installed to meet your productivity, file sharing, and collaboration needs

Project milestones & who leads:

The major steps involved in executing this project and who leads them are below. Keep in mind there may be more sub-tasks than what's noted here, but these are the major steps:

Milestone	Who leads?

1. **Assess current state**
   a. What productivity/file-sharing/collaboration solutions are in place now? Are staff already using several Google products or several Microsoft products? If so, it may make sense to stay with the solutions staff are already familiar with.
   b. Are staff able to back up, share, and collaborate on files easily?
   c. Are staff able to remotely collaborate on files with ease?
   d. Are you confident in backup and restore capabilities?
	Your org

2. **Create requirements/define your needs**
   a. Based on above, create a list of "must-haves" & "nice-to-haves" of what you need in a new solution. i.e., What must the solution do, from where, for who?
   b. Will the solution need to interface/integrate with existing solutions?
   c. What resources are available to help you select and implement a new solution, in terms of budget, time, and expertise?
	Your org

3. **Explore options**	Your org

a. Using the requirements above, compare Microsoft 365 and Google Workspace for Nonprofits to decide which is a better fit for your organization. Refer to the resources and links below to help. b. If helpful, demo/trial both solutions to understand how they work c. Consider what training/documentation/support is available for install & use		
4. **Choose solution, install, and train** a. If needed, contract for external help, procure the chosen solution, and deploy it across your organization b. Ensure all elements of the solution you need are installed and tested c. Set up a training plan for staff to ensure they can successfully use the new tools d. Consider your approach to ongoing support and training on the solution	Your org and/or solution vendor	

Estimated project budget:

If you follow the approach outlined in this project plan template, we estimate the project budget to be as shown below. Please keep in mind this is only an estimate and final cost will vary based on your choice of solutions/vendors, hardware, etc.

Description	Cost per unit	# of units	Est. budget
Subscription fee per user (if not using the free plans available)	$5 per user/mo		
Vendor fee to help with one-time setup of new environment, security, backup, uploading of files, system admin, et al.	$1,000 one-time setup		
TOTAL			

Potential solution providers/vendors for this project:

While the Nonprofit Support Program does not endorse the vendors/providers below, our work in the community indicates that many of your peers have used the vendors below for similar projects. It's essential that you do research and fully evaluate solutions and vendors against your specific project requirements to ensure a good fit. We've recommended additional resources to help with that under "Learn more before you decide."

Cloud software suites for productivity, collaboration, and file-sharing:
- Microsoft 365 for Nonprofits
- Google Workspace for Nonprofits

Vendors to help you properly and securely configure and deploy your software:
There are many qualified vendors in the Greater Hartford area who can help you with deployment of these solutions. If you already have a relationship with an IT support vendor, ask for their feedback on which of these solutions might be best for you, and request a proposal for deploying the solutions that best suits your needs.

You can also consider the following organizations who specialize in working with nonprofit organizations, but research them before you choose one – they may not all support both the Google and the Microsoft solution:

- Roundtable Technology
- Community IT
- Tech Impact

You can also check the New England Consultant Directory

Consider utilizing a Catchafire volunteer to help with select elements of your project implementation. More information about available Catchafire technology projects can be found here.

Learn more before you decide:

To learn more about how to evaluate these solutions/vendors before you continue, consider the following resources:

- What You Need to Know About Google G Suite for Nonprofits (techimpact.org) – some minor changes since this was written, but it's still a good overview of different applications/features and versions available.

- [Google Workspace: Nonprofit Resource Center](#) – Current pricing and plans
- [Office 365 for Nonprofits (techimpact.org)](#) – A free, downloadable eBook. Some of the pricing info has changed since it was written, but it is still a comprehensive overview of Microsoft 365 (formerly Office 365).
- [Compare Microsoft 365 Nonprofit Plans | Microsoft 365](#) – Current pricing and plans

Related considerations:

While you're working on this project, it is a good time to also consider the following:

- How will you train new staff members after the initial rollout of the solution is complete?