

Office 365 Advanced Security and Compliance Solutions

Case Study: Olive + Goose



OLIVE + GOOSE

Company Profile:

Olive + Goose is a leading IT solutions company, with a wide base of customers in the US and worldwide. The company's vision is to help organizations succeed in the transformation of their IT environment by delivering world class SaaS solutions.

Location:

Seattle, WA, USA; Charlotte, NC, USA

“Every Office 365 engagement that we’re a part of has a component of security discussion or deployment and implementation with a customer...

Our primary focus is making sure the customer is doing well, and that approach has worked well for us. We make sure their security and compliance needs are met, while also helping them save money.”

- Ethan McConnell, Vice President

Microsoft security paves the way for partners.

Office 365 provides flexible and familiar tools for collaboration across teams, devices, and platforms. However, lack of cloud security knowledge, and IT expertise to get ahead of security and compliance risks is a top challenge holding back further SaaS adoption.

Seattle firm Olive + Goose has built a successful business targeting the Office 365 security and compliance space. Their team has extensive experience with Microsoft technologies, giving them the ability to create deep customer engagements based on their experience of what's most relevant and valuable to today's organizations.

One factor Ethan McConnell, Vice President at Olive + Goose, highlights in their success is Microsoft's cohesive security story. The integration of security and compliance features within Office 365, and extending out across the broader Microsoft technologies, cost-effectively provides customers with the capabilities they need – all from a single vendor.

Olive + Goose is happy with their decision to focus on Microsoft technologies for their customers' security and compliance needs because they're able to offer an integrated solution in which the pieces are designed to work well together. With new capabilities being added on a regular basis, their customers benefit from being able to add functionality as it becomes available. Customers approach them with their concerns or needs, knowing Olive + Goose has the capability to offer strong recommendations based on their experience and knowledge.

Because they deal with features like eDiscovery, Data Loss Prevention (DLP), and Advanced Threat Protection on a regular basis, Olive + Goose has the knowledge base to immediately help customers with real world issues. According to McConnell, providing security and compliance services has been a huge win. Customers look to them to help manage the full range of Office 365 capabilities. It's not uncommon for individual projects to lead to on-going managed service engagements.

Value propositions that pay off for customers, and partners.

Designed to help customers uncover and protect against advanced threats, Advanced Threat Protection (ATP) in Office 365 Enterprise E5 offers a compelling customer story. “ATP is valuable because if there's an attack, or if a customer has had ransomware or an attack on their customer base in the past, it's a must-have. The value prop is super easy to understand, and it can be turned on very quickly. The value add for us is that we're able to layer on services and extra capabilities on top of that as well,” explains Olive + Goose Founder and President Ankur Kothari.



Advanced Security Management in Office 365 E5 is another technology that makes it easy to get a customer's interest. As Kothari puts it, "Customers want to know what's going on in their organization and make sure they're protected. It's an easy one to quickly put in, understand, and get up and running. The value prop is quite clear to most customers."

For example, one Olive + Goose customer was very concerned about keeping their IP confidential from hackers or industrial espionage. They were using an expensive solution that did a review of certain communications between sales people and end users. Because of Office 365's native capabilities, they could offer similar functionality, all included with Office 365 E5.

"The customer told us that they wanted to facilitate collaboration and external sharing, but still wanted to control and monitor the capabilities from a compliance perspective," explains McConnell. "Since Microsoft offered that tool natively, as part of the solution, it made the value proposition that much greater for the Director of IT to go to the board and say "I want to buy this." It also made it that much more comforting for the Director of Information Security to be ok with this. It was a win:win on both sides."

McConnell explains how Advanced Security Management (ASM) also opens the door to add even more cloud services: "With ASM, every customer we talk to is concerned about what their users are storing. They want to have insight into that data."

New services mean more business on the horizon.

According to McConnell, new security and compliance capabilities mean even more opportunity ahead. "Customers are asking for more intelligence and insights into threats – it's something they need and have been asking for constantly. Threat Intelligence Dashboard is going to be very valuable and will really enhance the solutions we offer."

They also see strong potential with Advanced Data Governance (ADG) in Office 365 E5.

"Advanced Data Governance is a game changer," said Kothari. Seeing Advanced Data Governance in action paves the way for a faster sale. McConnell added: "If there's anything to demo to a customer, it should be the data governance piece..your average IT department or information governance person, they'll look at that ADG demo be very impressed."

"We had a week-long engagement with one customer recently and we showed them Advanced Data Governance. Their response was: "From a compliance perspective, I'm seeing the future. I didn't expect this to be this good at this point. "It's a game-changer."

- Ethan McConnell, Vice President

Turn cloud averse customers into cloud advocates.

Olive + Goose enjoys working with customers who have reservations about moving to the cloud. While they are more challenging, according to McConnell, "I like those customers because, when you do get in there and get that time with the CISO or Director of IT who's worried about security, and get the opportunity to explain how Microsoft approaches security, it's almost as if you take your adversary and you've turned them into your biggest advocate...That's a big play for us."

Staying informed sets partners up for long-term success.

The Olive + Goose team stresses that it's important for partners to stay tuned into Microsoft's direction and roadmap. Their suggestion to partners: "Be proactive in knowing what Microsoft is doing in security and compliance, because if they're not doing it today, they're going to be doing it tomorrow. Eventually, customers will look at that other solution as a drain on their cost center vs. something they already own in Office 365."