

COVID-19 Response: Software Installation Enables Remote Productivity



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Problem to Solve

The ripple effects of the COVID-19 pandemic had turned staffing for a major medical research center upside down, impairing the organization's work and productivity. While previously about 70% of the center's staff members worked on-site daily, within a week due to stay-at-home restrictions, 70% of employees now worked from home, impacting up to 10,000 personnel.

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Seeking a consistent, secure solution to its online productivity and collaboration issues, the center enlisted Freed Associates (Freed) to rapidly implement an integrated solution of apps and services. Because of the size and complexity of this organization, an assignment like this might ordinarily take several months to accomplish. Freed had less than three weeks.

Strategy and Tactics

All affected staff would require identical access to an online suite of workplace productivity software. Rapidly rolling out software for up to 10,000 employees needed to be handled carefully to ensure enterprise-wide success. Freed led five key workstreams required for a successful product implementation:

1. **Program Management** – Employed rigorous project organization while collaborating with leadership and workstream owners to facilitate rapid progress.
2. **Software Testing** – Ensured the software’s functionality by testing it through a variety of typical work scenarios. Since most of the center’s work is proprietary and secure, Freed verified the software’s data security strength and usability.
3. **Communication Planning** – Led enterprise wide communication planning and rollout efforts to inform all impacted departments of software availability, training opportunities and support accessibility.
4. **Training** – Created tailored software training instructions including tip sheets and webinars while also collating a database of standard training content for employees.
5. **Post-Live Support** – Prepared the technical support team with protocols for handling user issues.

Results and Conclusion

Two weeks after work had begun, the software suite was rolled out to employees. The center’s remote employees quickly began using it, immediately improving their collaborative productivity. The center’s leaders were thrilled with how this software solution rapidly recouped the otherwise-missing productivity of 70% of its workforce.