



## Overview

**Country or Region:**Canada

**Industry:**Energy

## Customer Profile

Founded in 1993, Compton Petroleum had CDN\$186 million (U.S.\$190 million) in revenue for 2010. It engages in the exploration, development, and production of natural gas, natural gas liquids, and crude oil in Western Canada.

## Business Situation

Compton needs to adjust its cost structure quickly to match market conditions. It wanted to deploy IT solutions to provide advanced capabilities to employees at a set cost per employee.

## Solution

Compton will provide cloud-based services through Microsoft Office 365 to provide its employees with the latest email and collaboration technologies at a fixed cost per employee.

## Benefits

- Reduce administration and costs
- Reduce downtime
- Provide advanced capabilities for employees

## Oil and Gas Company Makes IT Costs Predictable with Cloud-Based Solution

“Microsoft wins in terms of overall cost, delivery, and the ability to offer rich coexistence with our current solutions.”

Darlene Fletcher, Supervisor, Information Services, Compton Petroleum

Based in Calgary, Compton Petroleum employs people throughout Alberta, Canada, to support the exploration, development, and production of natural gas, natural gas liquids, and crude oil. With a small IT staff, the company was challenged to provide up-to-date communication and collaboration services to employees. It was also saddled with high fixed costs from on-premises server solutions that did not allow it to adjust its IT costs as the company size changed with market fluctuations. Compton investigated cloud solutions for its communications needs and decided that Microsoft Office 365 offered the best service in terms of cost, delivery, and interoperability with its current solutions. After completing the transition to Office 365, Compton expects to reduce costs and make them more variable, while improving the services it provides to its employees.



## Situation

Compton Petroleum Corporation is a Calgary-based public company actively engaged in the exploration, development, and production of natural gas, natural gas liquids, and crude oil in the Western Canada Sedimentary Basin. It maintains about 190 individually identifiable email accounts for personnel who operate in locations throughout Alberta, Canada.

Communications and collaboration are important to the company because of the dispersed workforce; however, the company has limited resources to deploy IT solutions. Compton is using Microsoft Exchange Server 2003 and the Microsoft Outlook 2010 messaging and collaboration client, which, along with telephones, is the primary communications solution.

Compton subscribes to Microsoft Forefront Online Protection for Exchange for hosted anti-virus and anti-spam protection. Paul Parzen, Manager, Information Services at Compton Petroleum, explains, "We have a fairly simple infrastructure today, but there are many things we would like to do."

While the Exchange Server environment was reliable, the company had other issues that it wanted to address. For instance, the deployment has no redundancy, so when the server requires maintenance, the email system is completely down. Compton generally brings in outside consultants to resolve any issues that arise, which can be expensive. The company also tries to limit mailbox sizes to improve performance and control storage costs, but this requires monitoring mailboxes and helping the employees archive their messages to Outlook Data Files (.pst). "We knew we would have had to do an upgrade at some point," explains Darlene Fletcher, Supervisor, Information Services at Compton Petroleum. "There is cost and risk

associated with that, so we wanted to examine our options."

Another issue that the IT department needed to consider was the fixed costs associated with the solution. The oil industry is subject to severe fluctuations in price and demand, so Compton must quickly adjust its cost structure to the market. It noticed that IT costs tended to stay fixed even when the workforce was reduced, and it wanted to move to a solution that would vary with the number of employees. "For our industry, variability of costs is important. We want costs to go up and down with the size of the workforce," explains Parzen. "We have an IT strategy to reduce fixed costs and make everything as variable as possible."

## Solution

Compton Petroleum began investigating hosted email solutions because it felt these solutions could provide the variable cost structure it needed to help reduce administration costs. Compton believed Microsoft offered the best hosted solution. "Microsoft wins in terms of overall cost, delivery, and the ability to offer rich coexistence with our current solutions," says Fletcher. Compton also liked the fact that Microsoft backed the solution with 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week phone support and a 99.9 percent uptime guarantee.

Compton initially looked at the Microsoft Business Productivity Online Standard Suite, but before it could set up the service, Microsoft Office 365 was announced. Office 365 combines the familiar Microsoft Office desktop with enhanced cloud-based communication and collaboration services. Compton joined the Microsoft Rapid Deployment Program to test the email, conferencing, instant messaging, and presence capabilities of Office 365.

**“We will free up about 400 GB of our storage area network for other solutions, which is a nice savings.”**

Paul Parzen, Manager, Information Services, Compton Petroleum

Compton plans to set up Active Directory Federation Services to enable employees to use the same credentials they use for their current mail accounts. They will test the rich hybrid capabilities to support the exchange of free and busy information between Exchange Server and Microsoft Exchange Online during the pilot and migration.

Moving to Exchange Online through Office 365 will provide Compton with a rich set of features not currently available to the company. Employees can split the 25-gigabyte (GB) mailboxes between their inboxes and a Personal Archive to make email management easier. With the Personal Archive, users can drag important items into an archive mailbox that sits alongside their Inbox, freeing up valuable space on the desktop and improving the performance of the mailbox. They can also use retention policies to automatically save items to the archive as needed, ensuring that administrators can access data during compliance audits.

Employees will have access to new email capabilities, such as Conversation View and Calendar Preview, to help better manage their inboxes. In Outlook 2010, employees can use Conversation View to organize and view their email messages by conversation topic so that they can access information more quickly. With Calendar Preview, employees are shown a slice of their calendar in a meeting request allowing them to read the request and check that date on their calendar at the same time. The IT staff will benefit from role-based access control, which the IT team can use to provide a limited set of administrative access to help-desk staff. With improved legal discovery capabilities, the IT team can also simplify searches across multiple mailboxes.

Compton is also evaluating Microsoft Lync Online to see how the instant messaging and presence capabilities can help improve communications. “I have been evaluating Lync with a colleague in China, and it has been really helpful for working across time zones,” explains Fletcher. “We also conduct a lot of meetings, so we see the web conferencing capabilities being adopted quickly.” Compton also plans to test the Microsoft SharePoint Online capabilities at some point in the future.

### **Benefits**

By using Office 365, Compton Petroleum can provide the capabilities that employees need to collaborate, while it reduces administrative tasks for the IT staff and provides a variable cost structure that meets the company’s goals.

### **Reduce Administration and Costs**

Compton now spends about 10 hours a week managing its email system. It believes the IT team could use that time more valuably on other tasks. The company expects the move to Office 365 to reduce this to only a few hours a month. In addition, the IT team can use the role-based access control capabilities to enable help-desk staff to expand the types of inquiries that they can handle without involving administrators. Fletcher explains, “Role-based access control will be very helpful. We can give the help desk the ability to create an account or check the status of accounts and free administrators to do higher-value tasks.”

“We will free up about 400 GB of our storage area network for other solutions, which is a nice savings,” notes Parzen. In addition, Compton will avoid the cost of hardware, software, and consultants to upgrade from Exchange 2003 to Exchange 2010.

## For More Information

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[www.microsoft.com](http://www.microsoft.com)

For more information about Compton Petroleum products and services, call (403) 237-9400 or visit the website at:

[www.comptonpetroleum.com](http://www.comptonpetroleum.com)

## Reduce Downtime

Compton did not configure any redundancy for its current email system. Although the solution is very reliable, even scheduled outages can interfere with employee productivity. By moving to Office 365, Compton can rely on geo-redundant data centers and a 99.9 percent uptime guarantee from Microsoft that will help it minimize downtime.

## Provide Advanced Capabilities for Employees

With the upgrade to Exchange Online and Microsoft Office 2010, Compton can provide employees with the latest capabilities in Outlook to help them manage their inboxes. By adding the Lync Online service to the environment, Compton can integrate presence information into Outlook and provide instant messaging and conferencing capabilities. With its limited IT resources, Compton could not have cost effectively provided these capabilities to employees by using an on-premises solution.

## Microsoft Office 365

Microsoft Office 365 brings together cloud versions of our most trusted communications and collaboration products—Microsoft SharePoint Online, Exchange Online, and Lync Online—with the latest version of our Office desktop suite and companion web applications for businesses of all sizes.

Office 365 helps save time and money, and it frees up valued resources. Simple to use and easy to administer, it is financially backed by a service level agreement that guarantees 99 percent reliability. Office 365 features robust security, IT-level phone support, geo-redundancy, disaster recovery, and the business-class privacy controls and standards that you expect from a world-class service provider.

For more information about Microsoft Office 365, go to:

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## Software and Services

- Microsoft Office 365
  - Microsoft Exchange Online
  - Microsoft Lync Online