Quest

Multi-tenant consolidation drives business success

Accord Financial consolidates six tenants into one in just six months to enable even better financial services.

ACCORD
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Introduction

Microsoft 365 tenant-to-tenant migrations are becoming both more common and more complex all the time. Even as organizations are rapidly adopting the full breadth of workloads the platform offers, including email, SharePoint, OneDrive and Teams, merger and acquisition (M&A) activity is heating up. As a result, IT pros need to have an effective tenant migration tool at the ready. For Accord Financial Corp., that's On Demand Migration. Using this powerful solution, a small team was able to consolidate six tenants within just six months, delighting users and earning strong praise from top management. Naturally, Quest will be the company's vendor of choice for future tenant migrations as well.

Challenges

To better serve its clients, Accord Financial Corp. needed to unite all its commercial lending businesses under a single brand. Therefore, the IT team needed a way to quickly and securely consolidate six separate Microsoft 365 tenants.

Solution

With Quest migration solutions, the small migration team was able to complete the initial phase of the consolidation project in just six months, enabling the company to streamline its operations and present a unified brand to the world.

Results or Benefits

- Enabled consolidation of six Microsoft 365 tenants in just six months

- Delivered a fast, secure migration of all key workloads, including email, SharePoint, OneDrive and Teams

- Ensured users could continue to work and collaborate throughout the project

- Enabled the migration team to seamlessly transition to working from home

> **"Even with limited IT staff, we were able to consolidate six tenants in just six months with the help of On Demand Migration.**

Mark Iwankow, Director of Information Technology, Accord Financial Corp.

An aggressive goal: Consolidating six tenants in six months

Founded in 1978, Accord Financial Corp., is one of North America's top commercial finance companies. Accord helps small and medium-sized organizations across the U.S. and Canada manage cash flow and maximize opportunities by offering a broad range of asset-based lending solutions for financing acquisitions, restructuring or rebuilding, or simply transitioning to the next level of growth.

To deliver even faster and more flexible financing services, Accord needed to streamline its organizational structure and unite all its commercial lending businesses under a single brand. Bringing this business strategy to fruition required a significant IT effort: consolidating six separate Microsoft 365 tenants into one.

Merging six tenants is complicated enough, but several factors made this project even more challenging. First, the migration team was small, had limited budget and was struggling with long-haul COVID-19 symptoms to boot. Second, they were new to the organization and determined to deliver on two incredibly aggressive deadlines.

"Our goal was to have all the tenants migrated into the target within six months, with everyone's email flowing there and everyone using the same Teams address," explains Mark Iwankow, Director of Information Technology at Accord Financial Corp. "Then, we planned to finish the migration within the next six months by migrating all the file systems into OneDrive and SharePoint."

The audacity of these goals wasn't lost on Iwankow. "A lot of people, including IT pros at Microsoft, said, 'This is highly ambitious! How are you going to do it?'" he recalls. "But we did it. We were able to consolidate six tenants in just six months with the help of On Demand Migration."

The key to success: Choosing the right tools

Microsoft offers very limited tools to help with tenant-to-tenant migrations, and at the start of Accord Financial's consolidation project, there were even fewer native options. Therefore, Iwankow began looking for a third-party solution that would help his team migrate all Microsoft 365 workloads, including Exchange, OneDrive, SharePoint and Teams.

"On Demand Migration was at the top of our list. I had played with a demo of it at a previous employer, and we saw that Gartner named Quest the only vendor to deliver all 40 of the 40 basic features and functionalities expected in a cloud office migration tool," Iwankow says. "But we checked out pretty much everything we could find on the market, including CodeTwo and BitTitan. We looked at a lot of different suites — but nothing touched On Demand Migration."

On Demand Migration enables organizations to simply and securely consolidate and migrate their Microsoft 365 tenants, whether due to M&A activity or as part of a cleanup effort to reduce costs and complexity. An intuitive dashboard tracks progress in real time and delivers complete visibility and control, and users can continue to communicate and collaborate seamlessly throughout the project.

> **I wasn't disappointed in anything with the Quest migration solution. That's surprising to someone like me who's been in IT a long time. The product delivered exactly as promised, and then some.**

Mark Iwankow, Director of Information Technology, Accord Financial Corp.

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The process: Migrating all workloads with ease

Despite the fatigue and other after-effects of COVID-19, the team was able to keep the tenant-to-tenant migration project on track, thanks to the Quest solutions. "The first step was to analyze everything," recalls Iwankow. "The tenants were all in different states of adoption of Microsoft 365; some were just using email and weren't quite Teams-ready, while others were using all the different workflows. Once we started the migration jobs, we could easily track and control everything."

When the pandemic led to lockdowns, the project barely suffered a hiccup. "Because On Demand Migration is a SaaS solution, we lost only about half a day of productivity when everyone was sent home," notes Iwankow. "The next day was a normal work day for us, just handling the migration tasks from home instead of the office."

Using the Quest solutions, the team was able to clean up the Entra ID objects in each of the six tenants, pruning out duplicates and objects that were no longer being used. They were able to easily migrate email. SharePoint, OneDrive and even Teams. "With Teams being used so heavily across our organization, it was great to be able to bring over private chats so that our users could just pick right up where they left off," Iwankow say. "We brought over the chat history without much trouble, and then we were able to find each user and add that chat to their history."

"I wasn't disappointed in anything with the Quest migration solutions," Iwankow adds. "That's surprising to someone like me who's been in IT a long time. The products delivered exactly as promised, and then some. They are absolutely amazing."

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Mark Iwankow, Director of Information Technology, Accord Financial Corp.

The result: Happiness all around

With the Quest solution, the migration proved to be an unmitigated success. "The users are happy, the team is happy and the board is exceedingly happy," notes Iwankow. "We were able to make a tremendous impact across the company in less than a year, and we couldn't have done it without the Quest migration tools."

Iwankow's advice to others embarking on a tenant-to-tenant migration is simple: "Take it one piece at a time. Work with your identities and groups first. Find a group that hasn't been touched in three years, and try migrating it. You'll see just how quick and easy it is. Then, you'll have the confidence to move on to the other components of the migration. The steps are very easy to follow, and the software does the work."

> ## Whenever I talk to anyone who's migrating, I point them at Quest. You're not going to find anything better. The software makes migration easy.

Mark Iwankow, Director of Information Technology, Accord Financial Corp.

In fact, Iwankow recommends the Quest migration solution without reservation. "I don't generally go out and make overtures about a product, but whenever I talk to anyone who's migrating, I point them at Quest," he says. "You're not going to find anything better. The software makes migration easy. It's reliable — when it tells me it's done, it's done. I can count on it. I have no qualms about telling everyone to get the Quest solutions. And when Accord Financial makes future acquisitions, we're going to migrate their cloud tenants with the Quest solutions. That's part of our process now, because it's proven to work."

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About Quest

Quest creates software solutions that make the benefits of new technology real in an increasingly complex IT landscape. From database and systems management, to Active Directory and Microsoft 365 migration and management, and cybersecurity resilience, Quest helps customers solve their next IT challenge now. Quest Software. Where next meets now.

PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Products

- **On Demand Migration**

Solutions

- Microsoft Platform Management

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