

British construction conglomerate streamlines communication and collaboration across several subsidiary brands through a multi-faceted tenant migration

United Living Group, a UK based construction conglomerate, - aspire to be a Partner and employer of choice, supporting the increasing demand for quality, well maintained, sustainable infrastructure and housing.



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2019, United Living merged with the Fastflow Group, a highly specialised group of companies providing solutions for rainwater management in building projects moving the organisation a step closer to their goal of increasing market share. United Living engaged Bytes Software Services for assistance merging their disjointed IT estates made up of multiple Microsoft 365 (M365) tenants to a single-tenant platform on which to operate, collaborate and secure the newly combined Group. For Greg Morley, United Living's Group CIO, there were several objectives for a successful migration; providing a 'single source of truth' and single point for administration, consolidation of licensing across the group, enabling remote working capabilities and establishing robust governance, security and compliance management all whilst reducing the scale and quantum of risk associated with such a complex project.

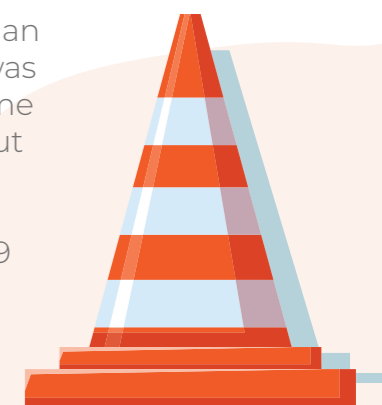
United Living's challenge was how to bring together four standalone Fastflow businesses, each operating independent IT infrastructure with unique set-ups and

processes. For example, one of the four Fastflow companies required a migration from an on-premises Microsoft Exchange server to United Living's M365 tenant, and the other three required a tenant-to-tenant migration to United Living's M365 tenant. A poorly managed migration can have significant impacts such as resource burden, poor information governance and the spreading of insufficient processes, poor user experience and adoption.

Knowing they would need to leverage a third-party tool for the migration but lacking in the team or knowledge to manage it, United Living engaged Bytes Software Services and Insentra to support this consolidation. Bytes drew on their years of experience leading Microsoft licensing knowledge to consolidate, right size and align the correct technologies across M365, Azure Active Directory and authentication. Bytes worked with Insentra as a best in breed partner to deliver the strategic planning and complex migration delivery of the project. Together, delivering fully on the required outcomes to complete the project.

UNFORSEEN CIRCUMSTANCES

- 1 The sudden interruption by the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in national and localised lockdowns raising the status of this project to critical
- 2 Post-merger integration of disparate systems and networks is an obstacle for IT under normal circumstances. Still, the project was exacerbated by company employees having to work from home under COVID lockdown restrictions as it required offices to shut nationally
- 3 In another unforeseen consequence of the extended COVID-19 lockdown, staff accrued considerable unused annual leave, resulting in a period where project team members took short breaks during critical stages of the project, potentially impacting delivery



INSENTRA'S APPROACH

From the beginning United Living knew the scale and complexity of the project required external expertise to facilitate the migration. The difficulty of merging tenancies when companies are at disparate levels of adoption of Office 365, from no adoption through to full adoption, leaves businesses a risk of data loss, disjointed policies and governance of data, poor solution adoption, lack of information governance and poor user experience of necessary technologies post-merger. Utilising Insentra's strategy and roadmap advisory service; MapOne, United Living and the Fastflow Group were able to collaborate and develop a plan which detailed the complexities associated with merging tenancies and defined a tried and tested approach to execution. This was transitioned to an official project delivery plan with detailed timelines, milestones and success criteria attached to End User Experience, Building the Organisation Strategy, Function Integration of Core Systems and Applications and finally, Identity.



The overall delivery [of the project] had an excellent relationship between project teams, a personal touch and an obsessive partnering approach, not to mention outstanding technical expertise and project management at every phase of the project delivery"

Greg Morley
Group Chief
Information Officer

DELIVERY

Insentra used the Quadrotech Cloud Commander (QCC) tenant to tenant migration software – a high-performance software application which quickly and securely migrates and consolidates emails and other related records from one environment to another. Using the Cloud Commander tool avoided considerable expense and data loss associated with manual migration and saved time.

Recognising migrations are complex engagements which deal with critical business information and often part of larger transformation projects, Insentra followed a rigorous project methodology which delivered the following against the client's requirements:

- ✓ Reduced organisational impact ensuring excellent user experience
- ✓ Consolidating tenants to single Microsoft 365 workload, futureproofing the organisation
- ✓ Minimal operational impact during the migration, for example, users experienced little to no downtime of email services
- ✓ Detailed tracking and reporting – Part of the project execution included the inclusion of detailed progress reports to keep the client informed
- ✓ Speed – Insentra's migrations run 24x7 and are delivered by a global team, so the project was completed on target to the initially agreed six-month deadline

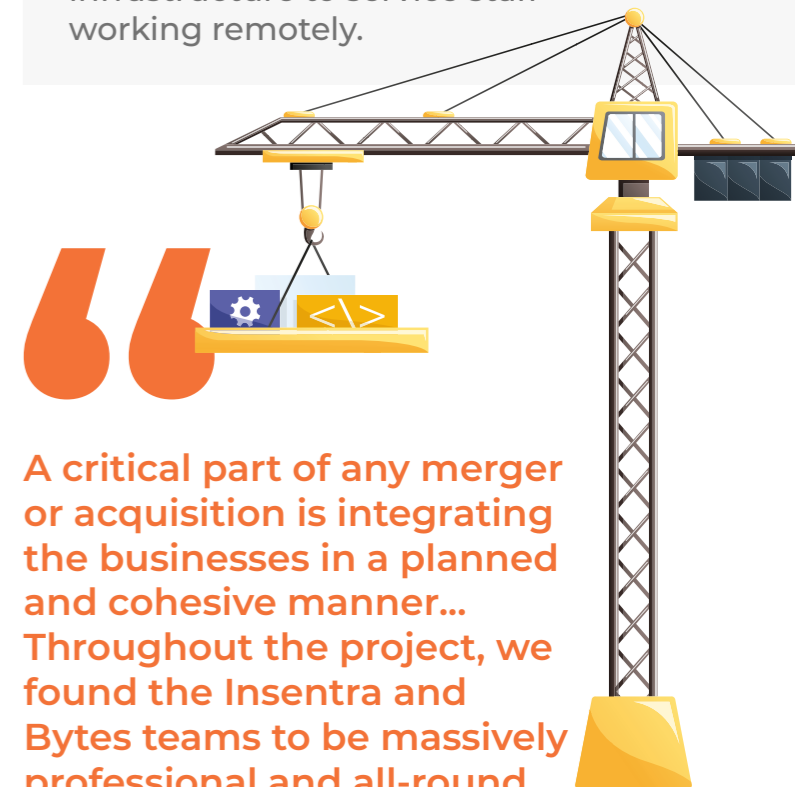
COLLABORATION

Being PartnerObsessed™, Insentra leveraged long-term relationships with Microsoft and Quadrotech to deliver this project. Insentra liaised with these vendors at every step of the project, following up on configuration and support.

PROJECT OUTCOMES

- 1 Continuity** – United Living's business continuity drastically improved as a direct outcome of this tenant-to-tenant migration by consolidating processes within a single tenant.
- 2 Agility** – Moving to single tenant gives United Living greater agility, not only for the IT team who have one place to manage all M365 services and processes, but also for the broader organisation who can collaborate effortlessly between brands.
- 3 Futureproofing** – Consolidation into a single Microsoft 365 tenant has helped future-proof the organisation and ready it for future cloud services, most notably in one of the businesses who moved from on- premises Exchange. This allowed United Living's staff to use Azure Active Directory for single sign-on from any location, facilitating secure collaboration and communication. This outcome also primes the organisation for further cloud investment and efficiency.
- 4 Security** – Having a single place to manage governance, compliance and security is critical for a lean IT operation. This was a very beneficial outcome of the migration project and reduced a lot of complexity for United Living's team.

Under the adverse circumstance of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the timing of project completion was well-placed for the UK entering a second national lockdown. United Living Group are in a stronger position with consolidated IT infrastructure to service staff working remotely.



A critical part of any merger or acquisition is integrating the businesses in a planned and cohesive manner... Throughout the project, we found the Insentra and Bytes teams to be massively professional and all-round friendly people. My team and I learned a lot from them and wouldn't hesitate to engage them again"

Greg Morley
Group Chief Information Officer

HOW TO CONTACT

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