

# SEPHORA

## Beauty Product Retailer Enables Work-Life Balance with Office 365 ProPlus

### Overview

**Country or Region:** United States

**Industry:** Retail—Beauty

### Customer Profile

Sephora is a worldwide retail beauty business with approximately 1,650 stores in 29 countries. Its North American headquarters is located in San Francisco, California.

### Business Situation

Because it is dedicated to innovation and encouraging a healthy work-life balance among employees, Sephora's North American headquarters sought a solution for connected, modern communications and collaboration.

### Solution

Sephora upgraded to Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus because it is easy to deploy and it capitalizes on modern devices and anywhere access to information, enhancing the work-life balance for employees.

### Benefits

- Improves productivity
- Enables a better work-life balance
- Eases administration
- Mitigates risk of business disruption
- Lowers costs

**"From a technical standpoint, I see Office 365 ProPlus as the smoothest upgrade I've done."**

*Marvin Correa, Senior Manager of Enterprise Engineering, Sephora*

Sephora is a global beauty retailer with approximately 1,650 stores in 29 countries. Its North American headquarters is located in San Francisco, California, where its IT staff wanted to capitalize on new devices and anywhere access to information to improve productivity and enhance the work-life balance for employees. As a first step, a test group at its San Francisco office deployed Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus and Microsoft Exchange Online, giving employees access to company email and documents whether they are working from home, traveling for work, or using their own modern devices. The IT staff also took advantage of the deployment and telemetry capabilities in Office 365 ProPlus to help its employees be productive during upgrades and avoid compatibility issues.

“Employees no longer have to lug a laptop home every night. Instead, they can use the latest version of Office from a tablet, a smartphone, or even their home PC and stay connected.”

Marvin Correa, Senior Manager of Enterprise Engineering, Sephora

### Situation

Founded in Paris, France, in 1970, Sephora is a worldwide beauty retailer with 1,650 stores in 29 countries and more than 21,000 employees around the world. Its North American headquarters is located in San Francisco, California, and employs nearly 1,000 people. The company has built a reputation for innovation in retail and beauty, and that innovation extends to information technology. Shah Nagree, Vice President of IT Operations and Store Systems at Sephora, says, “Our customers see our stores and products as current and stylish. We feel it is important that our employees must also see that we are at the forefront of technology.”

As a core value, Sephora strives to offer an ideal work-life balance to its employees. “We talk about how to improve this daily,” explains Marvin Correa, Senior Manager of Enterprise Engineering at Sephora. The IT staff at its North American headquarters aimed to provide employees with devices like smartphones and tablets, and needed software that would empower people to check company email and documents whether they are working in the office, from home, or while they are traveling for work. Nagree adds, “Work is becoming more meshed with our personal lives, but we do not want people to work more—we just want them to stay connected and be able to work from wherever they are. We decided that one way to manage this is to give them better access to Microsoft Office tools on their multiple devices.”

Employees were already very familiar with Microsoft Office as their standard productivity tools for email, calendar, documents, presentations, and spreadsheets. When they upgraded from Microsoft Office 2003 to Office 2007, the IT staff spent a significant amount of time training employees on the new ribbon.

Although the IT staff looked forward to upgrading to the next generation of Office, they feared having to spend a lot of time retraining employees. In addition, the IT staff must consider compatibility issues with macros, plug-ins, and line-of-business (LOB) applications that could disrupt business operations.

For messaging, Sephora ran Microsoft Exchange Server 2007, which was hosted by a third-party provider. Because its hosting provider did not have a continual upgrade model, Sephora had begun to consider different email hosting options. In addition, its messaging solution was comprised of workloads from multiple vendors—Exchange Server for email and calendar, Symantec for archived email, Voltage for encryption, and MessageLabs for spam filter—so the IT staff wanted to explore the cost and efficiency benefits of consolidating these into one solution from one vendor.

To address these challenges, Sephora reached out to Microsoft for assistance.

### Solution

When Sephora described that it wanted anywhere access to email and documents and help with accelerating upgrades, Microsoft suggested that Sephora consider Microsoft Office 365. Office 365 offers the cloud-based versions of Microsoft Exchange Online, SharePoint Online, and Lync Online as a connected solution with the familiar Office applications in Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus. Office 365 ProPlus is the full client version of Office delivered as a service, and it includes Microsoft Outlook, Word, PowerPoint, Excel, OneNote, and more. The IT staff worked with Microsoft to form an early adopter test group of employees at its San Francisco headquarters. Sephora was interested in the full Office 365 platform, but it decided

to first deploy Office 365 ProPlus and Exchange Online to test its immediate needs and gauge the company's readiness for other Microsoft cloud-based services.

In January 2013, the IT staff, with support from Microsoft Services, set up Microsoft Active Directory Federation Services (ADFS) to enable single sign-on for the test group of about 80 employees. With ADFS in place, employees were instantly authenticated using their corporate credentials and no other action was required to install and use Office 365 ProPlus.

Correa says that the IT staff and employees found the deployment to be "extremely smooth," thanks to Office 365 ProPlus telemetry and deployment tools like Click-to-Run and Office side-by-side. To scope the initial upgrade, the IT staff used the telemetry tools to see what versions of Office employees were running and what documents and solutions were used the most. The IT staff chose to deploy Office using their existing Microsoft System Center Configuration Manager 2007 infrastructure and Click-to-Run, a streaming and virtualization technology built into Office 365 ProPlus. In the future, employees will continue to rely on Click-to-Run to deliver Office updates to their devices. As the software is streamed to the device, the employees can start work in the Office applications within minutes, even before the Office suite is fully installed on their computers. Click-to-Run also acts as an isolated environment for Office to run on employees' computers, so they can use the latest version of Office side-by-side with an older version of Office. The employees can then test the compatibility between Office and their macros, plug-ins, and LOB applications while using the new Office capabilities. If an issue arises, they can easily open the older version of Office on

their client and continue working with no disruptions to the business.

The initial group of employees is equally pleased to be working with the latest technology because they found Office 365 ProPlus easy to install and familiar to use. "Because the user interface in the new Office applications is similar to earlier versions of Office, people did not really have to change the way they work," says Correa. In addition, employees can install Office 365 ProPlus on up to five of their devices. When employees switch devices, they can take advantage of Office roaming settings capabilities to easily access their recently used documents, presentations, and spreadsheets right from the page or slide where they last left off. Nagree says, "With the new roaming capabilities, employees can leave their laptop at work and easily continue working on a document from a tablet, smartphone, or even from their home PC."

The employees are also excited about time-saving capabilities in Office 365 ProPlus. "To help save time, our finance and supply chain teams can take advantage of capabilities in Excel, such as Flash Fill, Quick Analysis Lens, and recommended PivotTables and Charts," says Correa. Flash Fill recognizes patterns and auto-completes the remaining cells so that employees can quickly build the data in their spreadsheets. They can use Quick Analysis Lens to discover ways to create compelling visual representations of Sephora's financial data. They can use recommended Charts and PivotTables to help find the best way to summarize data in charts and tables. Correa adds, "Even the capabilities in Office 365 ProPlus that are just nice to have, such as the weather built into your Outlook calendar view, are great timesavers. Everybody likes to check the weather, and now it's right there in Outlook."

“We are still working on our IT strategy, but using Office 365 ProPlus and Exchange Online as a service is helping us understand how we can benefit from all the cloud-based services in Office 365.”

Shah Nagree, Vice President of IT Operations and Store Systems, Sephora

Over the upcoming months, the IT staff plans to explore capabilities built into Exchange Online that would allow them to avoid paying for third-party solutions, such as unlimited online archiving, legal holds, eDiscovery, and data loss prevention tools.

The IT staff also plans to explore Lync Online, which would help the company upgrade from its Microsoft Office Communications Server 2007 R2 on-premises solution with minimal IT support and resources. “Employees can take advantage of Lync client capabilities in Office 365 ProPlus, such as persistent chat rooms and the gallery view used during multiparty high-definition videoconferencing, to support efforts to educate our workforce on new products and promotions,” says Nagree. Because employees are not allowed to load Skype on their computers, the IT team is also excited about Lync federation with Skype so that employees can use Lync to connect with family and friends who use Skype. Nagree explains, “Some of our employees are on the road for two to three weeks at a time, and they want to see their families. We want to provide them with tools like Lync federation with Skype so they can communicate with their families face-to-face while they are traveling.”

### Benefits

By exploring the new Office applications in Office 365 ProPlus and the online services in Office 365, Sephora has opened new possibilities to improve employee productivity and achieve a better work-life balance. In addition, the IT staff can reduce administration and mitigate the risk of Office compatibility issues.

#### Improves Productivity

Through Office 365 ProPlus, employees can access the Office suite from more devices so that they can be more productive,

whether they are working in the office, on the road, or from home. “What we like about Office 365 ProPlus is that we can use its features anywhere we happen to be working,” says Nagree. As they continue to explore Exchange Online and Lync Online, the IT staff expects that the capabilities in the latest versions of Outlook and Lync in Office 365 ProPlus will further enhance employee communications and collaboration.

#### Enables a Better Work-Life Balance

Because Office 365 ProPlus is available on multiple devices, Sephora expects its employees can enjoy a work-life balance and still access email and documents when they need to get things done. “Employees no longer have to lug a laptop home every night,” says Correa. “Instead, they can use the latest version of Office from a tablet, a smartphone, or even their home PC and stay connected with colleagues through email and Lync, and also their family and friends through Lync federation with Skype.”

#### Eases Administration

By moving to Office 365 ProPlus, the IT staff reduced administration tasks, such as installing Office, applying upgrades, and testing for Office compatibility with macros, plug-ins, and LOB applications. “From a technical standpoint, I see Office 365 ProPlus as the smoothest upgrade I have done,” says Correa.

Microsoft delivers premium anti-spam and antivirus protection, geo-redundant data centers, 24-hours-a-day, seven-days-a-week IT-level phone support, and a financially backed 99.9 percent uptime service level agreement. The IT staff anticipates that this level of service can help them reduce time spent on server administration after the company moves to the Office 365 online services. They expect

they can repurpose this time to work on more strategic projects related to its retail business.

#### **Mitigates Risk of Business Disruption**

By using Office 365 ProPlus, the IT staff has decreased the risk of business disruption by using Click-to-Run streaming and virtualization technology to facilitate faster installations and upgrades. They can also use the telemetry tools to identify potential compatibility issues quickly. If compatibility issues are found, employees can use Office side-by-side to continue to work on earlier versions of Office as the IT staff works to resolve those issues. For employees upgrading from Office 2007 or Office 2010, they found the new Office user interface familiar and easy to use, and did not require significant training.

#### **Lowers Costs**

The IT staff is still exploring the cost savings from upgrading to Office 365 ProPlus and the online services in Office 365. For example, as Sephora begins to support employees and contractors using their own devices for work, they expect this will help reduce spending on desktop and laptop computers. It will also help reduce the cost of hardware maintenance and repair.

In addition, the IT staff expects to reduce costs by moving to Exchange Online. By consolidating its messaging solution, it can eliminate data center costs from its third-party hosting provider and the costs of third-party tools for security and archiving.

“We are still working on our IT strategy, but using Office 365 ProPlus and Exchange Online as a service is helping us understand how we can benefit from all the cloud-based services in Office 365,” says Nagree.

## For More Information

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

For more information about Sephora products and services, visit the website at:  
[www.sephora.com](http://www.sephora.com)

## Microsoft Office 365

The new Office provides anywhere access to your familiar Office applications—plus email, calendar, videoconferencing, and your most current documents—on almost any device, from PCs to smartphones to tablets.

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
  - Microsoft Office 365 ProPlus