AVREM
TECHNOLOGIES, LLC

CASE STUDY | CLOUD MODERNIZATION



A Better Way Forward

How a Northeast Ohio home improvement franchise modernized its systems while making everyday work simpler for more than 75 employees.

CASE STUDY

October 2026

The client remained anonymous at its request.

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THE SITUATION

Problems Everyone Lived With

For a home improvement franchise operating six retail stores and a corporate office, access to accounting software and shared files was essential to keeping work moving.

Yet much of that work depended on aging infrastructure at the corporate location. Employees used VPN connections and a remote desktop environment to reach information that should have been readily available wherever they were working.

QuickBooks was a particular frustration. According to client leadership, its remote desktop server went down roughly once a month, sometimes taking unsaved work with it. Email could be unreliable, the design consultants' computers were managed separately, and IT issues sometimes remained unresolved for days.

The underlying environment presented risks beyond inconvenience. A single Dell server hosted several virtual machines, including Windows Server 2012 systems and an Exchange 2007 installation. More than 400 directory accounts existed although approximately 100 were active. Security policies were inconsistent or missing, and the organization was incurring PCI noncompliance fines related to the legacy Exchange environment.

The Objective

Avrem's assignment went beyond retiring obsolete equipment. The franchise needed more reliable access to its files and applications, consistent management across locations, and a practical way to support employees with different jobs and different levels of technical experience. Changes also needed to be introduced without overwhelming the business or interrupting daily sales operations.

The project began with Microsoft 365 planning in December 2024 and continued in phases through June 2026. The client remained anonymous at its request.

AT A GLANCE

7

Business Locations

75+

Employees Supported

10%

Azure Costs Below Forecast

CASE STUDY

The Work And The Results

Rather than replace the old server with another server, Avrem planned a phased move to Microsoft 365 and Azure. Each stage addressed a distinct dependency and gave the company time to adapt before the next major change.

THE SOLUTION

Three Phases

1. MOVE EMAIL AND PREPARE EMPLOYEES

A new Microsoft 365 environment, licensing designed around actual use, and a cutover employees could come back to work from the next morning.

2. STANDARDIZE COMPUTERS AND DOCUMENT ACCESS

Workstations moved to Entra ID and Intune, shared files to SharePoint and OneDrive, and a repeatable baseline for every device.

3. REBUILD QUICKBOOKS ACCESS IN AZURE

A dedicated Windows Server 2025 virtual machine, Azure Files, and Azure Virtual Desktop in place of the failing remote desktop server.

THE WORK

1. Move Email And Prepare Employees

Avrem reviewed active mailboxes and distribution lists, configured a new Microsoft 365 environment, and implemented email authentication and security controls. The team created training videos tailored to the client's environment, staged mailbox data before cutover, and scheduled the final synchronization and mail-routing change after business hours in March 2025. A technician was on site the following morning to support employees.

Licensing was also designed around actual use. Many employees could be served by lower-cost Microsoft 365 F3 licenses, but those licenses had storage limits. Avrem worked individually with users whose email or personal files exceeded the allowance, archiving and consolidating data to preserve what they needed without unnecessarily upgrading every account.

The migration team also worked through the practical details that determine whether an email cutover feels manageable to employees. Those included helping users enroll in multifactor authentication, introducing the new filtering system, and replacing the old Exchange webmail page with a link to Outlook on the web. The client did not need everyone to become a Microsoft 365 expert overnight, but employees did need a clear way to get back to work the next morning.

THE WORK

2. Standardize Computers And Document Access

After email had stabilized, Avrem coordinated workstation transitions with managers at each location beginning in December 2025. Computers moved from the legacy domain to Microsoft Entra ID and Intune management. Policies standardized access to commonly used applications, browser settings, Windows Hello, Wi-Fi profiles, and other everyday configurations.

Shared file storage moved to SharePoint and individual files to OneDrive, eliminating the old VPN-dependent file-share workflow. The team also identified legacy .doc and .xls files that could not be edited easily in the browser and developed a scripted conversion process. Windows Autopilot provided a repeatable baseline for configuring new or reset devices.

THE WORK

3. Rebuild QuickBooks Access In Azure

Avrem migrated the QuickBooks database to a dedicated, memory-optimized Windows Server 2025 virtual machine and placed company files on a performance-optimized Azure Files share. Azure Virtual Desktop provided three session hosts: two for routine QuickBooks access and a smaller host for employees who needed to open multiple company files and run specialized commission reports. Persistent user settings were handled through FSLogix profiles.

OUTCOMES

Simpler Work, Less Dependence On Legacy Systems

By June 2026, the franchise had retired three on-premises virtual machines and the physical server that hosted them. Employees no longer needed the old remote desktop server to reach QuickBooks or a VPN connection to open shared files. Management of workstations and user settings became more consistent, including for the design consultant team.

The migration removed the identified exposure from unsupported Exchange, Windows Server, and Office installations. The project team reports that the PCI fines associated with the former Exchange environment stopped. Azure operating costs have consistently been approximately 10% below the projected budget, while role-based Microsoft 365 licensing helped contain recurring costs.

Client leadership reported more dependable email, faster access to files, and less time spent troubleshooting individual devices. Although the technology change was substantial, its day-to-day value was straightforward: employees could spend more time doing their jobs and less time working around IT.

> *“Our remote server used to go down probably once per month. If you did not save something in QuickBooks, then you had to start all over. This really has saved us time and frustration in the long run.”*
>
> CLIENT LEADERSHIP

IN THEIR WORDS

The Client Perspective

In the client's questionnaire, leadership emphasized how much the relationship changed the experience of seeking help. Employees had previously waited days for support and occasionally tried resolving technical problems themselves. With Avrem, they had a consistent contact for questions and a team that kept them informed about planned improvements. The client acknowledged that onboarding more than 75 employees involved some bumps along the way, but described the response to those issues as timely and professional.

> *“I work directly with Avrem and I have never felt disrespected or as though I was wasting anyone's time. That is very important to me.”*
>
> CLIENT LEADERSHIP

WHAT THIS PROJECT ILLUSTRATES

Measured In The Work It Makes Easier

A successful cloud migration is measured in the work it makes easier, not simply the number of servers removed. Here, the technical architecture mattered because it gave seven locations a dependable, centrally supported way to operate, with a support relationship that the client could trust.

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NEXT STEPS

Considering A Similar Modernization?

Visit https://www.avrem.com to discuss the business requirements and the systems that support them.

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