Maryland-National Park and Planning Commission Enjoys Benefits of Kronos Cloud Services

Created in 1927, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) oversees the development and protection of natural resources in Montgomery and Prince George's counties, which border the District of Columbia. M-NCPPC’s mission is to manage physical growth and plan communities; protect and steward natural, cultural, and historic resources; and provide leisure and recreational experiences. M-NCPPC employs nearly 6,000 people, including salaried exempt and nonexempt career employees, members of four collective bargaining units, and term contract and seasonal employees.

**CHALLENGES**
- Dated workforce management solution that soon would no longer be supported and lacked the latest tools to leverage operational efficiencies and savings
- Data center with older servers that had reached the end of their lifecycle and required replacement

**SOLUTION**
- An automated workforce management solution hosted in the cloud that provides access to the latest tools for increasing productivity, controlling labor costs, and mitigating compliance concerns

**BENEFITS**
- Cloud-based services deliver fast access to the latest solution upgrades and workforce management tools for improved productivity and labor cost savings
- Migrating to Kronos in the cloud, rather than hosting the solution on site, will save M-NCPPC 26 percent in operational costs over five years
- Kronos in the cloud delivers a high level of operational support and solution expertise not typically available in house
- Kronos Cloud Services provide reliable access to workforce data, even during a natural disaster

---

**Tracey Harris**
IT Systems Manager, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission

“When we compared the cost of migrating to the Kronos Cloud, it was less expensive to migrate, and it frees up IT staff to work on other initiatives.”
As a public agency, The Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission (M-NCPPC) is continuously on the lookout for cost savings in its operational programs. M-NCPPC has been using Kronos workforce management solutions since 1997 and needed to upgrade because the version it was using would no longer be supported. After talking with Kronos customers who were using Kronos cloud-based services and comparing these costs to that of hosting its Kronos solution on site, M-NCPPC chose Kronos in the cloud.

“Our Kronos solution is a critical business application, and we were confident that Kronos would be able to provide the operational support we need for our Kronos infrastructure,” says Tracey Harris, IT systems manager. “We had migrated our email to the cloud, which created confidence, and felt that with Kronos managing its own product we couldn’t go wrong. We were right.”

Disasters affirm value of cloud services
Two weeks before crossover to the cloud, M-NCPPC’s Kronos database server crashed during a critical time in the payroll process and was down for four days, reinforcing the importance of having reliable access to data. M-NCPPC stopped using its in-house Kronos solution on a Friday and began using cloud-based services the following Monday. The smooth switch to the new solution and its many upgrade features has been “absolutely wonderful,” shares Harris. “Going to the Kronos Cloud has definitely proved to be worth the investment.”

Within six weeks of M-NCPPC crossing over to Kronos in the cloud, Superstorm Sandy hit the East Coast, knocking out power for days at many businesses and residences. Kronos Cloud Services were out for only an hour, while M-NCPPC’s on-site systems were down longer. “The notification and communication plan were phenomenal, so we had no downtime,” notes Harris. “Going to the Kronos Cloud has definitely proved to be worth the investment.”

Cloud services deliver cost savings
Also figuring into the decision was the need to reduce the volume of servers in M-NCPPC’s data center or build another center. The added cost, as well as staff needed to maintain the infrastructure, didn’t seem feasible. The commission conducted a cost-of-ownership study that reviewed upgrading its Kronos solution and the cost of hosting the solution on site versus in the Kronos Cloud. M-NCPPC discovered that cloud-based services would save the organization 26 percent over five years.

“When we compared the cost of migrating to the Kronos Cloud, it was less expensive to migrate, and it frees up IT staff to work on other initiatives,” Harris explains. “The people and services at Kronos are the experts when it comes to managing their products. Incorporating these resources enhances the quality of our Kronos program.” In addition, using cloud services has allowed the organization to shift IT staff to its ERP system implementation.

Latest upgrade features readily available in the cloud
For M-NCPPC staff, moving to the cloud provides efficient and cost-effective access to the latest Kronos solution upgrades as they are released. Effective dating of pay rule assignments is one of the upgrade features that payroll staff is enjoying, says Harris. With a variety of pay rules and policies, automatically applying pay policies consistently and on the correct effective date is a huge time saver that also helps with compliance.

Other upgrade benefits, notes Harris, include automated record updates and reporting capabilities. Particularly popular are time detail, audit, and accrual reports. Following Sandy, M-NCPPC could access information for FEMA reporting with just a few clicks.

While upgrading, M-NCPPC also added intuitive InTouch clocks. “Moving to InTouch clocks has been a major success because of cross-punching capability,” says Harris. “We can enable another clock in a device group to accept nonhome employee punches. Employees can swipe or punch in their badge number, a valuable feature when traveling employees leave their badge at their primary work location or at home.” Employees also can see prior punches right at the clock, and with cloud services, managers can approve employee time from home.

Looking ahead
As the commission seeks to further leverage its Kronos solution in the cloud, Harris says that following ERP implementation they will roll out time-off requests and delegation approval, features executive staff is eager to use. Deploying the Kronos mobile solution for traveling employees also is being considered.

Going to Kronos in the cloud sustains M-NCPPC’s operational productivity while enhancing its IT services and keeping its budget firmly on the ground.