Florida Pest Control Company Builds Strong Operations With Zoho One

Pest Control and Lawn Care · Florida, USA · 55 Employees

EnSec provides pest control and lawn care to homes across the coastal counties of Alabama and Florida, with 55 employees covering everything from sales and permitting to customer support and on-site service. For years the business ran on a patchwork of disconnected tools, and a spam-filter standoff with their email provider forced a rethink of the entire workplace suite. Starting with Zoho Mail, EnSec moved step by step onto Zoho One, bringing communication, support, remote IT administration and inventory into one connected system. Because Gulf Coast storms can arrive quickly, a cloud-based, remotely accessible platform was essential, and it proved its value when remote work suddenly became necessary. Today, owner Cliff Killingsworth sums up the platform in a single phrase: ease of use.

THE CHALLENGE

Tools that never talked to each other meant manual handoffs, limited visibility for leadership, and a business exposed to storms, spam filters, and costly repeat trips.

THE SOLUTION

One integrated, cloud-based platform that connects communication, support, administration and inventory, giving every employee a single identity and a shared view of the work.

THE RESULT

Leadership can finally see how sales and support are performing and plan supplies ahead of time. Field agents get expert help on the spot, and the business keeps moving through any disruption.

55
EMPLOYEES

4
WAREHOUSES TRACKED IN ZOHO INVENTORY

3
SERVICE CATEGORIES: TERMITE, PEST, LAWN

2
STATES SERVED: ALABAMA AND FLORIDA

1
EMAIL ADDRESS USED TO LOG IN TO EVERY APP

10
YEARS RUN ON DISCONNECTED TOOLS BEFORE ZOHO ONE

Zoho One

KEY APPS USED

Zoho Mail · Zoho Cliq · Zoho Desk · Zoho Voice · Zoho Inventory · Zoho WorkDrive · Zoho Connect · Zoho Assist

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ABOUT ENSEC

EnSec is based in Florida and has 55 employees. They provide pest control and lawn care services to homes across the coastal counties of Alabama and Florida. Their work requires a variety of operations functions—from sales to permitting to customer support—as well as all the transportation, equipment, and work hour considerations of delivering services to their customers on-site.

> "If I had one global comment about Zoho, it's ease of use."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

The Challenge

Before Zoho, EnSec was using a different vendor's software for nearly every function they needed covered. This led to a system of manual tasks bridging the gaps between applications that didn't connect to each other directly. Once issues with one vendor forced them to switch to a different platform, they saw the opportunity to leverage an integrated system to refine those steps. Zoho One met that goal.

Disconnected systems

Before they found Zoho, EnSec's communications and other key functions were scattered across different apps and platforms that didn't talk to each other. Google Workplace housed their email, word processor, spreadsheets, and other everyday applications. They had implemented open source solutions for other areas, including RocketChat for text communications, StarCode for inventory management, and SugarCRM for sales. This required employees to switch between different apps, and in many cases transfer data manually, to continue their work across these different functions. It also limited their reporting ability and made it difficult for leadership to clearly see how well their plans were working in particular areas of the company.

Preparing for extreme weather

EnSec's leadership decided they needed resilient systems, and that this would have to include cloud-based services. Because weather conditions on the Gulf Coast can get serious very quickly, EnSec factored hurricanes and flooding into their technology plans. Previous experience had shown them that, in the case of a major storm, they could keep the business moving forward during the event by working remotely. In that situation, on-premise servers could be taken offline by power outages, and wouldn't be much help. They needed a cloud-based service hosted securely in another region.

Vendor hassle with Google

In order to use Google Workspace, they had to use GMail as their email service, but GMail didn't support their work order process. They were using a bit of custom code to generate PDFs of work orders out of their CRM and emailing those to remote field staff every morning. Google would mark these internal emails as spam, causing major communication delays and a lot of frustration for Cliff. Essentially, the filters in GMail were penalizing EnSec for "spamming" their own employees. These false offenses added up, and eventually GMail stopped them from sending outbound emails at all. The company needed to change email providers, and that meant changing their whole workplace suite.

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Call reporting frustrations

They needed to be able to generate comprehensive reports on their sales and support processes, but with the system they had in place, they could only track inbound calls. This required them to make decisions based on loose estimates and conversations with their sales reps. Cliff grew frustrated with the amount of effort going into outbound sales calls, as he couldn't see whether all that work was effective.

Losing time on repeat trips

When pest control agents are in the field, there's always a chance to run into something unexpected. Common issues can be planned for in advance, but every job is unique. Field agents need a system for evaluating and responding to things they've never encountered before. Before Zoho, field agents in doubt about an issue would email or send a RocketChat message to someone at the home office, and couldn't rely on getting a quick answer. Typically the agent would have to schedule a follow-up visit, and travel out to the site a second time to solve the issue after they could work with others in the company to find a solution. This increased the commitment of time, fuel, and equipment use for a job, increasing the expense required to complete that contract.

Device administration

Between remote work and field service, EnSec depends on a lot of mobile devices. Keeping software updated on every device created a significant amount of repetitive work for EnSec's small administrative team. The bulk of this work was created because each application the company used required its own authentication and login.

Building new users in this disconnected system was equally frustrating. It required a series of repetitive login and account creation steps. Cliff had tried other device management solutions, but found that those complicated the process in new ways.

> "It's just one step forward two steps back when I experiment with these other options."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

Seasonal supplies

EnSec has to be ready to work when the season is right for specific tasks. For one example, some weed control supplies only work within a specific temperature range, so the company has a window of time when the local weather will be right to use them. A delay in supplies or mistake in inventory could result in missing that window. The same goes for termite and pest treatments.

To manage this effectively, the company needed better insight into its inventory than it currently had. With four warehouses spread across the region and supplies in vans not visible within their system, they had a hard time accurately predicting how much they needed to order and when.

The Solution

> "I've researched lots of expensive options and I have yet to find this level of value in anything else."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

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EnSec's frustration with Google prompted them to find a new vendor for their email, word processor, and other everyday apps, and that led them to Zoho One. Looking further into the platform, they realized that they could replace even more of their disconnected apps with Zoho One to automate more tasks and gain more clarity into their operations.

A fully integrated system

All the apps included in Zoho One are built to work together. Replacing various apps with solutions included in Zoho One gave EnSec's employees a smoother user experience. They've eliminated a lot of manual data entry and time spent clicking between different log-in screens.

There are also pre-built integrations with a wide range of third-party software. These days, EnSec uses a specialized CRM aimed at their specific industry, and their Zoho tools work alongside it. They've leveraged the flexibility of Zoho One to create an overall software system that supports their specific needs.

From hurricane preparedness to workplace flexibility

Zoho's services being hosted in the cloud and accessed by a browser-based interface met EnSec's needs. They can access their work remotely in the case of severe weather. Housing their data on secure, Zoho-owned servers well out of harm's way enables them to keep their business moving forward when working remotely, whether that's because of an emergency or part of standard operations.

After pandemic protocols were lifted and EnSec transitioned back to in-office work, some of their employees remained working from home, and remote work has become a normal part of their operations. With the reporting capabilities in Zoho One, leadership remains confident that remote work is going well. All they need to do is review metrics like call volumes and ticket resolution times to see that productivity is strong.

Starting with email, finding more

> "Email is like a bus ticket. Cliq is like having your own Ferrari."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

Zoho Mail was their first step into Zoho, and from there EnSec embraced other communication apps in Zoho One. Email is their main mode of communication with stakeholders outside the company, so reliable email service is non-negotiable for their business. Zoho Mail has met their expectations, and they found further value in the other communication apps included in Zoho One.

After solving their email challenges, they looked to Cliq to streamline company-internal communications. Cliq is Zoho One's chat solution that can be accessed on desktop, mobile, and within the interfaces of other Zoho One apps. It's EnSec's preferred mode of communication, both on-site and in-office. Employees at EnSec rely on it hourly for updates and discussions around daily operations.

Call reporting clarity

The integration between customer service ticketing and VoIP with Zoho Desk and Zoho Voice filled the gap in their sales call reports. It enabled them to start tracking both inbound and outbound calls right away, providing clear insight into a process that had previously been impossible to measure. Once Cliff could see how often outbound calls were answered, his previous frustration with the outbound effort faded. He found that the support team's outbound calls were much more effective than leadership had previously guessed.

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Supporting field agents and customers

Customer support agents help field agents with customer concerns through video and audio calls. When a field agent needs help from the support team, they send a message to the Cliq group EnSec created for that purpose. All available support agents will be notified, and those that are able and available can hop into the meeting to work out an issue on the spot. In addition to text chat, employees on either side of the Cliq conversation can talk live, share their screen, or take a video to help describe an issue or explain a solution.

Those meetings can also be recorded in Cliq and stored in WorkDrive, Zoho's file management solution, for later reference. That way, agents who are in the field during the meeting can catch up later to learn about what was discussed. Some of these meeting recordings also make good training materials for onboarding new field service and support employees.

Remote IT administration and email as identity

With Zoho One, Cliff can access company devices remotely using Zoho Assist, and easily manage all the Zoho applications on each device. Setting up new users in the software is also much faster now. He builds the user profile in Zoho Mail, so they have email up and running first, then uses that profile in all of the other Zoho apps.

The Zoho Mail address is also the email associated with the user's account in the third-party applications EnSec uses. This way, each employee has one email address that is used to log in to all their company accounts—including single sign-on for Zoho One—linking every app to one consistent user identity.

Inventory visibility enables proactive stocking

With Zoho Inventory, EnSec tracks inventory across their four warehouses and their service vans. They can generate reports on resources across their three service categories: termite, pest, and lawn, and view the accounting for each.

This allows management to keep an eye on supplies and order necessary materials ahead of time, so they can provide services within their ideal timeframe.

The Results

> "Migration was so easy that I was like 'Well, where am I going to run into the roadblock?' and I just never ran into it."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

As they expanded their use of Zoho One, EnSec has been able to strengthen business functions that weren't supported by their old system. Going beyond the individual problems they set out to solve when they started using Zoho, they've found opportunities to improve employee education, customer communications, and much more.

Easy migration

When EnSec decided to switch over to Zoho, Cliff expected the usual challenges that come with changing software vendors: digging through apps to find missing data, compatibility issues creating manual work, or unexpected downtime. He was surprised to complete the process without issue.

EnSec was able to move their emails and contacts from Gmail over to Zoho Mail and jump right back into their conversations where they left off. Moving away from RocketChat was a similar process. As they moved more of their communications over to Zoho One, they found that the integrations between apps provided additional functionality.

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Disaster resilience

When they signed up for Zoho One, EnSec had storms and power outages in their list of considerations. Zoho's cloud offering met their needs, maintaining their access to their software and data when they needed to work remotely.

They hadn't planned for COVID-19, but found that they were prepared for the transition to remote work. While the company waited to find out if they would be allowed to continue field services under the emergency protocols, EnSec employees took up their office tasks from home.

> "When COVID hit, we never missed a beat because of the communication suite of products. Email, Calendar, Cliq, Meeting, Connect. That was a real business value. Could've been a real disaster for our business."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

Data visibility

Gaining insight into the call reporting gap enabled EnSec to make informed decisions about sales strategies and how to make the best use of their resources. Zoho Voice enables them to view key metrics in real time as well.

Using Desk, they've been able to track more of their processes and easily generate reports. EnSec's leadership is gaining insights into their customer experience that wouldn't have been possible with their previous software system.

Formalized training and communications

For EnSec, one of the unforeseen benefits of Cliq is its searchability. When leaders in the company notice a pattern of questions and discussions on a particular topic, they can search through their messages for a keyword and quickly see all those conversations together. This helps them transform those separate conversations into FAQs, short how-to guides, and other educational resources.

They can then make those resources available to everyone in the company on Connect, Zoho One's intranet solution. Connect has modules specifically for posting files and manuals, as well as groups and feeds for more interactive resources. EnSec uses these modules to post written resources as well as recordings of support calls and training sessions that make useful reference material.

EnSec sees a lot of overlap in the kinds of information they want presented to employees and customers, but they still need to present that information somewhat differently for each group. They've created a Knowledge Base in Zoho Desk where they post information for their customers to read. With this parallel system, they can take their employee education materials from Connect, adjust the messaging and structure to better serve their customers, and post them publicly through their Knowledge Base.

Bringing expertise everywhere

> "[Cliq] helps you extend your experts' expertise all the way into the field."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

The Cliq channel EnSec has created connecting customer support to field service has made it possible to solve issues in one visit more often. Problems that used to require regrouping and rescheduling can now be handled in the moment on site. Without those extra trips out on location, EnSec saves time and money, and keeps equipment free for other jobs.

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Automatic lead assignment

> "We are thrilled to simplify our lead workflow from too many customer contact points and alert the right team member in Cliq."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

EnSec's lead intake process was working, but relied on someone to manually sort leads and assign them to members of the sales team. Once they were running smoothly on Zoho One, Cliff was able to automate that step. They now have an intake system that feeds leads from a form on their website into CRM. From there, a team member is automatically assigned and notified on Cliq, so the lead passes right from the website to a sales agent's phone automatically.

Looking Forward

EnSec has already seen key improvements in their customer support reporting, and they're looking to build on that success by expanding the ways customers can get in touch with them. They also have plans to use Zoho's inventory management solution to close a gap in their inventory system.

Customer support

EnSec has plans to leverage the omni-channel customer communications available in Desk to make support as convenient as possible for their customers. They want to incorporate SMS texting, Facebook Messenger, and web chat channels into their customer support process through integrations with Zoho Desk. This way, customers will be able to contact the company through any of these channels they prefer, and customer support agents will see and track all these customer requests together in one interface within Desk.

Inventory in transit

Cliff is evaluating the Bin Locations feature in Zoho Inventory to organize the way they connect their field service vehicles to their overall inventory system. Zoho Inventory provides multiple levels of location information, from Warehouse down to Bin Location. EnSec can keep track of the stock in each of their vehicles by setting up each one as a "warehouse" in the app. The additional specificity of the Bin Location allows them to locate specific items and equipment quickly, to speed up loading and unloading.

> "For a decade, we were running on so many disconnected pieces, and we would have to switch from one to another under different circumstances. So it's nice to run into an integrated suite where we can just keep adding to whatever business process worked or we outgrew."
>
> CLIFF KILLINGSWORTH, OWNER, CERTIFIED PEST CONTROL OPERATOR, ENSEC

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