A new mobile device management solution helps AAA Washington to more efficiently provide secure technology support for remote workers delivering Emergency Road Service.

SoftwareONE helped AAA Washington transition to Microsoft Intune to improve secure device management for emergency road service (ERS) technicians and internal staff. The refreshed capabilities improve operational efficiencies, including enhanced user access and heightened security.
AAA Washington Upgrades Remote Controls to Improve Services

Better managed and secured mobile devices help speed communications with remote workers to ensure members receive rapid service response.

Summary
AAA Washington planned a move to Microsoft Intune to enhance operations and security for remote device and application management while saving a $58k renewal fee for its existing application. The new solution controls a mix of Android and iOS devices and applications to ensure secure access without friction or security risk. The change supports all AAA Washington remote workers, from roadside technicians to call center staff to insurance and travel agents. With a COVID-19 accelerated timeline, AAA Washington engaged SoftwareONE for support and guidance to make a fast Intune transition for nearly 600 users. Implementation was accomplished with minimal business interruption. With SoftwareONE’s support, AAA Washington successfully held to the completion deadline while avoiding the renewal fee and improving management functionality for support of mobile devices used to deliver quality member services.

The Challenge
Providing 24/7 emergency road service is a central part of AAA’s mission. For AAA Washington, orchestrating ERS includes a web of behind-the-scenes technology and mobile resources. In case of an emergency, clear and consistent communications with contracted ERS service providers are critical. It allows the AAA Washington call center to quickly and efficiently dispatch resources to help members change a tire, jump-start a battery, or be towed to a safe location. And it is the shared mobile devices assigned to each vehicle that provides that critical communications link with the technicians.

However, the cost to support the technology used by ERS staff was impacted by a diverse mix of devices and user experiences. It had become a challenge for the internal IT team to manage remote tablets and mobile phones centrally.

AAA Washington had relied on an aging Mobile Device Management (MDM) solution that was nearly a decade old to manage mobile devices and user configurations. But the aging system’s cost and limited capabilities no longer met the need. Also, because emergency road service delivery includes vehicles and mobile devices owned by third party ERS contractors, managing the population of 300+ devices, including Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) units, used to dispatch contractor’s service vehicles had become particularly challenging. Although mobile device management was necessary to control and secure user access to the critical dispatch and scheduling applications, the process was manual and time-consuming.

Beyond the technology and service quality implications, AAA Washington had a financial challenge. The costly renewal license for the current MDM solution was coming due. However, a robust application alternative, Microsoft Intune, was already licensed under AAA Washington’s new comprehensive Microsoft Office 365 agreement. Making a switch would provide both financial and operational benefits. All the team needed were experienced and knowledgeable resources to assist – quickly.

About the Customer
AAA (American Automobile Association) Washington has been serving members and the traveling public since 1904 in Washington and North Idaho in the US. The organization provides various exclusive benefits, including emergency road service, discounts, maps, and personalized trip planning, to its more than 1,200,000 members. Also, its full-service travel and insurance agencies provide products and services for members and the public.

“Expertise and counsel were there as our SoftwareONE partner confidently guided us through the project.”
Lori Reed, IT PMO Manager, AAA Washington
The entire process was much less about the technology than it was about people. It was about having a partner able to lead us and expedite a change that helps us to help our members. Because of the COVID-19 situation, this was an unexpected value-add that we realized very quickly, thanks to SoftwareONE.”

Lori Reed, IT PMO Manager, AAA Washington

AAA Washington set five critical measures for a successful Intune implementation:

1. A transition to Intune with minimal user or business interruption
2. Solving BYOD user and device management problems
3. Meeting the contract deadline to avoid a $58K renewal fee
4. Easing management overhead and operational difficulties
5. Expanding secure device management functionality

SoftwareONE collaborated with AAA Washington to provide a detailed understanding of available system options. What were the device management choices in phase one? What made sense upfront, and what functions should be held for later? What about security, compliance, configurations, policies, controls? Could the new system on-board devices faster? What future enhancements were available after the AAA Washington team had more experience?

With SoftwareONE guidance, AAA Washington set a strategy for fully-managed devices. As the associated challenges were met and adjustments managed, AAA Washington and SoftwareONE teams collaborated and gained new insights. “The difference now is day and night,” said Kevin DeKay, Senior IT Manager, AAA Washington. “Our MDM had handled the basics, but it didn’t provide much insight into operations. Intune has improved management, added device functionality, and broadened insights to improve our customer service delivery. That’s our objective. But we’re not tech experts on mobile devices. We needed SoftwareONE to walk us through the application features and show us new opportunities to improve our approach, quality, and speed of services. They did this, and it has been a great value for us.”
Our SoftwareONE team brought critical characteristics to our project. We very much appreciate the attentive support for our business objectives. The right people with the right skill sets were focused, disciplined, and professional, with a deep understanding of Intune and mobile device management. Even with our severe time constraints, they kept their cool and kept us on track.”

Lori Reed, IT PMO Manager, AAA Washington

The new solution also provided an opportunity to enhance and fine-tune security. “The previous security system was adequate. However, the new system improves our ability to manage finer adjustments and deliver a higher level of security,” said Dr. William Lidster, Senior Manager, Information Security and Compliance, AAA Washington.

The cloud-based Intune service enables both Mobile Device Management and Mobile Application Management (MAM). That helps protect and isolate organizational data on Bring Your Own Device units. It controls device use and enables remote application management for mobile phones, tablets, workstations, and laptops. Also, a SoftwareONE developed custom management home screen has introduced improved business controls.

As COVID-19 spread in the early months of 2020, AAA Washington had a sudden need for a more remote user base. “We needed to move a few hundred call center staff to work from home,” said Chuck Stewart, IT Manager, AAA Washington. “Intune allowed us to move from limited remote capabilities to new insight. We can manage remote provisioning, control the active directory structure, monitor security, and closely manage remote devices and applications. In effect, it helped us to manage the remote worker technology for quality service delivery.” SoftwareONE has provided the help and insights that will allow AAA Washington to use Intune for configurations, decisions, and continuing improvements in support efficiencies.

Benefits and Outcomes

01 AAA Washington upgraded its existing mobile device management to future-proof, cloud-based Microsoft Intune with minimal business interruption and within a tight timeline.

02 Using Microsoft Intune, AAA Washington has improved security options and technology support and equipped its remote workers with better managed and secure applications on mobile devices. Even amid COVID-19, the changes provide consistent communications that continue to assure reliable emergency member services.

03 Moving to Intune before the expiry of the legacy solution saved AAA Washington $58k in licensing expenses.

04 The new cloud-based mobile device and application management solution aligns with AAA Washington’s goal of an IT infrastructure that is flexible and easily scalable. It helped them to reduce management overhead and to gain broader operational insights. It improved security and compliance configurations, added functionalities, native capabilities, and strengthened data protection.

05 Intune reduces AAA Washington’s administration effort by covering both Mobile Device Management (MDM) and Mobile Application Management (MAM), saving IT staff time and solving BYOD user and device management problems by protecting and isolating organizational from private data.

06 A SoftwareONE developed custom management home screen has introduced improved business controls in support of member services efficiencies.