

An Agile Approach to **Secure Remote Work** in a Digital Era

How the state of Illinois kept data protected and employees productive with BeyondTrust

Beyond Brick and Mortar

With the order for 30,000 employees to work remotely at the onset of COVID-19, the Illinois Department of Innovation and Technology (DoIT) faced an enormous challenge that it had to solve immediately.

Not only did DoIT need to figure out a way to grant employees access to their workstations from their personal devices at home, but it also had to meet the state's stringent compliance standards when granting access to critical state applications, systems and information.

In the past, the state had used a variety of remote access solutions, including VPN, but these initiatives could only support up to 5,000 employees and could not scale to the level needed.

The state needed a solution that it could implement quickly and with ease. According to Adam Ford, chief information security officer at DoIT, "We needed to find a tool to enable remote work as effectively, securely and quickly as possible, to be able to facilitate the critical business of government."

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ADAM FORD, CHIEF INFORMATION SECURITY OFFICER, ILLINOIS DoIT

A Quick Deployment

Ultimately, DoIT turned to BeyondTrust to implement a remote support solution that would meet the state's needs. BeyondTrust Remote Support allows employees to connect to their desktop in the office from their home device. Users can access their office

desktops via any browser, on almost any device, securely without needing a VPN or additional access controls.

Remote Support allows IT staff to see an employee's screen and control remote computers and devices running Windows, Mac, Linux, Android and iOS. The solution set also allows IT staff to remotely administer endpoints and gather critical system information without having to pivot to other toolsets or interrupt an end user's work activities.

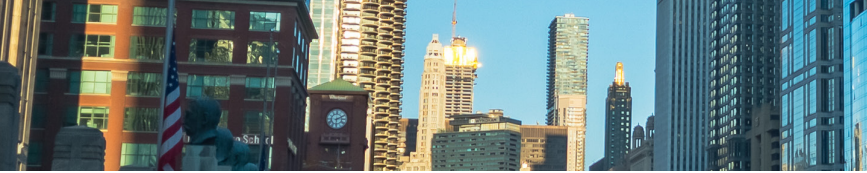
"This single pane of glass solution allowed the distributed IT team to collaborate on active sessions or pass sessions between them, while live, which was a huge differentiator as it led to faster and more accurate service delivery for DoIT's team," says Andy Shook, senior solutions engineer for BeyondTrust.

IT staff can also access the camera of a remote employee's mobile device to assist in setting up hardware and peripheral devices.

DoIT was able to work with the privileged access management company quickly and efficiently, which was critical for the state during this emergency situation. DoIT reached out to BeyondTrust on a Thursday afternoon, and by the end of the following Monday, BeyondTrust and DoIT together had successfully deployed the solution.

One reason for this quick implementation was that it required few changes to the state's infrastructure. Jake Chastain, senior solutions engineer for BeyondTrust, explains, "with our BeyondTrust Remote Support solution, we do not need to overhaul systems or change the way systems are structured. That's a big win for most organizations."

Another reason was the close collaboration between BeyondTrust and DoIT. Not only did BeyondTrust provide staff to augment the DoIT team, but the two organizations also developed a partnership that made for a smooth implementation process.



According to Chastain, BeyondTrust believes that a collaborative approach is ideal. “We never want to have a single transaction with a client and then move on,” he says. “We want to develop a partnership where we can become trusted advisors.”

Whenever DoIT staff had questions or wanted to adjust something within the solution, they felt comfortable reaching out to BeyondTrust.

“The DoIT and BeyondTrust teams were able to have open-minded conversations whenever we ran into a roadblock,” says Ford. “When something came up, we made sure everyone understood the goal, and then worked to identify ways forward.”

Keeping Data Secure

DoIT knew that, first and foremost, their new remote support solution had to be secure. They needed to assure the citizens of Illinois that, even when working in a remote environment, the government could still protect their data. BeyondTrust Remote Support provides this needed level of security: All data stays on systems within state facilities, thus ensuring DoIT met all compliance standards.

DoIT also needed to make sure the implementation process itself was secure, and BeyondTrust provided that reassurance. The company used unique certificates to establish an encrypted connection for DoIT, which kept all data safe while in transit.

This form of encryption is standard for most organizations, which meant BeyondTrust and DoIT did not have to make many changes, and could therefore quickly jump in and start setting up the solution.

Looking Toward the Future

DoIT implemented its remote support solution in response to the challenges of a unique moment in

Embracing Partnerships

According to DoIT, working with BeyondTrust has led to an important realization: that government can work thoughtfully with vendors and suppliers to achieve impressive outcomes.

As Ford explains, working with BeyondTrust and other vendors during the pandemic has taught his team the value of “being humble and expecting humility from both sides” when collaborating with others. “It’s important that the local government community and the vendor community be very transparent about the goals they are trying to achieve.”

By being open and creative, local government leaders can find solutions they might not have thought possible.

According to Ford, this kind of open, creative partnership can be “a model for the future of government work.”

time. However, the solution will continue to be useful for the state well into the future.

BeyondTrust’s Remote Support is agile enough to respond to another shift to remote work down the road. DoIT can expand the solution as needed, meeting any changes in the state’s workforce policies.

“Often, government can approach new ideas or new solutions with a lot of resistance,” says Ford. “This experience reminds us that flexibility in government can actually be a good thing, and is not something to be feared.”

This piece was developed and written by the Government Technology Content Studio, with information and input from BeyondTrust.

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BeyondTrust is leading the charge in transforming identity security to prevent breaches and limit the blast radius of attacks, while creating a superior customer experience and operational efficiencies. We are trusted by 20,000 customers, including 75 of the Fortune 100, and our global ecosystem of partners. **Learn more at www.beyondtrust.com.**