Cybersecurity foundation for smart city transformation

Town of Gilbert ensures cyber resiliency and forges ahead with digital service innovation on Dell Technologies solutions.

Business needs

As the thriving, fast-growing Town of Gilbert transforms into a digitally enabled City of the Future, it needs to safeguard its systems and services against malware and other cybersecurity threats.

Business results

- Enables immediate incident response and remediation.
- Safeguards data from malware and other threats.
- Ensures continuity in delivery of digital services.
- Allows the town to confidently pursue City of the Future initiatives.
- Provides a single point of contact for all support needs.

Solutions at a glance

- Cyber Recovery Solutions
- Deployment Services
- ProSupport

Customer profile

“Technology leaders like Dell Technologies help us make the goals defined in our IT roadmap a reality.”

Mary Goodman
Assistant Town Manager, Town of Gilbert
Gilbert, Arizona — at one time a small, suburban community — today pursues digital government transformation as it becomes a City of the Future. Gilbert is home to a growing population of currently about 260,000 people in the larger Phoenix metropolitan area. Prosperous community, strong economy and an exceptional built environment are key elements of Gilbert’s innovation initiatives.

Cybersecurity within the City of the Future roadmap

Information technology plays a critical role within that built environment. Cybersecurity, in turn, helps unleash the potential of technology to facilitate municipal services. Sasan Poureetezadi, chief technology officer for the Town of Gilbert, says, “In Gilbert, what drives our IT roadmap is innovation with the goal of providing the best possible experience for our citizens and employees. Cybersecurity is a strategic pillar of our technology planning and service delivery.”

Gilbert maintains partnerships with leading technology providers to help design its digital journey with the best possible outcomes for workers and residents. Eugene Mejia, Gilbert’s deputy chief technology officer, comments, “Dell Technologies has been a key partner of Gilbert for years, starting with endpoints, expanding into the data center and more recently addressing cybersecurity.”

To businesses and residents, the Town of Gilbert delivers more than 250 services that are highly dependent on technology and data. As Gilbert’s Chief Information Security Officer, Tony Bryson is responsible for addressing a burgeoning variety of threats and risks. “We don’t want cybersecurity to be purely reactive,” Bryson says. “We want to work with a partner who takes a lead in the direction of security and technology. Of the technology providers we considered, Dell Technologies has the clearest vision for ensuring that we can protect ourselves against current and future threats.”

“One critical advantage we realize by engaging with Dell Technologies is top-quality support for our entire technology environment from a single source.”

Tony Bryson
Chief Information Security Officer,
Town of Gilbert
Ensuring system resiliency and service continuity

The Gilbert IT team scoped out a resilient security infrastructure to address threats the town experienced and to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of services that increasingly depend on cloud technologies. When Gilbert published a request for information (RFI) to identify technology providers that could deliver to this blueprint, Dell Technologies was one of several responding vendors. Systems Engineer for the Town of Gilbert Mike Phillips says, “Dell Technologies led the competitive field with a data recovery and protection solution that we adopted and are still expanding. They not only met all our 15 criteria for capacity, performance and support, but also enabled us to provide the best service value to our citizens.”

Gilbert’s technology managers appreciated that Dell Technologies could provide a complete portfolio of secure solutions to ensure that security is consistent and pervasive. Mejia states, “What we get from Dell Technologies is a holistic, integrated approach that designs security into computers, servers, infrastructure and services.”

Strong security with immediate incident remediation

Gilbert IT implemented a layered security architecture that includes secure Dell Technologies storage and server solutions, with replication to a secondary data center and the cloud. Monitoring software inspects data to make certain it’s not compromised and alerts the IT team if it detects suspicious conditions. Multiple locking mechanisms, including layered passwords and time stamps, protect the backup storage to safeguard against ransomware attacks.

IT managers control the virtualized technology efficiently from a central console instead of logging into many different applications. On this foundation, they designed procedures to enable a rapid recovery and continued service operations as soon as a breach or malware incident occurs.

“We collaborated with Dell Technologies to design a long-term security solution that meets both our technical and financial goals,” Phillips explains. “Now we’re working with them to develop a consumption-based model for Technology as-a-Service. This will allow us to pay a reasonable monthly fee based on the capacity we license.”

“Dell Technologies led the competitive field with a data recovery and protection solution that we adopted and are still expanding.”

Mike Phillips
Systems Engineer,
Town of Gilbert
Streamlining technology management to fuel innovation

By consolidating support, services and expert collaboration with a single provider, IT has reduced management overhead and freed team members to work on initiatives that support Gilbert’s ongoing transformation. Taking full advantage of Dell Technologies Deployment and ProSupport services allows the IT department to deliver more value to the town’s government.

Mejia notes, “Dell Technologies services help us recognize potential threats and address them before they can do any damage. This is not just a major security advantage, it also frees up time we can use to meet the application needs of our internal customers. Operating our Security Operations Center-as-a-Service easily saves us four to six full-time positions, maybe even more when you consider that it is active around the clock.” Town Manager Patrick Banger comments, “Working with Dell Technologies enables our IT department to deliver greater economies of scale with fewer resources. A perfect example of this is our Security Operations Center-as-a-Service.”

Dell Technologies ProSupport augments the value of the hardware and software solutions throughout their lifecycles. “One critical advantage we realize by engaging with Dell Technologies is top-quality support for our entire technology environment from a single source,” Bryson says. “Other providers struggle with that. In addition, our costs would go through the roof if we had to use multiple support providers. Those savings directly benefit our stakeholders.”

Acclaim follows accomplishment

As a best practice, Gilbert’s cybersecurity approach garners visibility from other communities, whose IT managers learn from the town’s experience. Regionally, Gilbert and Dell Technologies share their insights in the Arizona Virtual Digital Government Summit and the Greater Phoenix Economic Council, a smart city initiative. The town’s cybersecurity plan contributed to Gilbert being named ninth-place winner among U.S. cities in its size range in the 2020 Digital Cities Survey of the Center for Digital Government (CDG). The CDG survey assessed cities’ use of technology to realize strategic initiatives to enhance services, secure them and weather the pandemic.

Summarizing Gilbert’s experience with Dell Technologies, Gilbert’s Assistant Town Manager Mary Goodman says, “Technology leaders like Dell Technologies help us make the goals defined in our IT roadmap a reality. Their services and the tools that they offer have been integral to our success in modernizing, mobilizing and protecting our workforce as we seek to provide the best possible customer service to our residents.”

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Patrick Banger
Town Manager,
Town of Gilbert

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Contact a Dell Technologies Solutions Expert.