



## At a Glance

**Organisation:** National University of Ireland, Galway

**Industry:** Third level education

### Customer Profile

With over 17,000 students and more than 2,400 staff, NUI Galway has a distinguished reputation for teaching and research excellence. NUI Galway has earned national and international recognition as a research-led university with a commitment to top-quality teaching.

### Business Challenge

- To develop a readiness and implementation program to migrate 55,000 email accounts from the Live@Edu platform to Microsoft Office 365 Online.

### Solution

- Architect an overall Office 365 migration strategy.
- Preserve the integrity of NUIG's student identity management system by enabling a seamless transition and synchronisation between Active Directory and the Office 365 environment.
- Reduce complexity and simplify customisation through a process of policy and methodology adjustment.

### Benefits

- A safe, secure, feature-rich email and collaboration service for students.
- Less IT administration overhead onsite allowing allocation of resources to IT projects of a strategic nature.
- Students enjoy 25GB mailboxes, 25GB of online storage together with the full Office suite on multi-device access.
- Improved student collaboration on campus and externally.

## NUI, Galway dives deeper into the cloud for its 55,000 students and alumni

Leading third level university, NUI Galway has migrated its online student email service to Microsoft's fully-featured Office365 email and collaboration platform. Following a migration project architected and overseen by MJ Flood Technology NUI Galway's students now enjoy anytime, anywhere access to fully featured and storage-rich email and collaboration services.

NUI Galway had been moving IT services to the cloud for some time but this latest project takes the university's core services to its students to a whole new level with 25GB mailboxes and 25GB cloud-based file storage as standard. The development also recognises and addresses the growing trend towards multiple device usage via mobile or tablet by providing students with five licenses each for the full Microsoft Office productivity suite incorporating Word, Excel and PowerPoint.

"The absence of complaint is a positive metric," comments Conor McMahon, Head of Operations at ISS, NUI Galway. "Before we moved to the cloud, we had negative feedback from students on the look-and-feel and reliability of the on-site email system and the amount of storage we could provide them with. This negative feedback has been taken away by provisioning the service to the cloud with Microsoft and MJ Flood Technology," he says.

### Planning for the migration

With the discontinuation of the Live@Edu email service from Microsoft, NUI Galway realised that a move to Office 365 was on the cards. From an early point, they recognised that the integrity of student identity management would have to be maintained in the move to the cloud.

Once a student registers with the university, his or her identity contains access to registration for courses, library services, exam services and email. This unique identity lasts a lifetime and was integrated into the Live@Edu system through Active Directory (AD) and Identity Lifecycle Manager (ILM).

Garrett Wallis, Senior Technical Architect with MJ Flood Technology explains the technical approach to the migration:

"On the face of it, it may sound simple: migrating one set of cloud-based mailboxes from Live@Edu to another. However, NUIG have many complex processes around identity management, which made the transition anything but straightforward.



***“The absence of complaint is a positive metric. We don’t have to deal with onsite systems, servers and software. We need fewer onsite operational resources which frees up those resources for re-allocation to projects of strategic value to NUI Galway.”***

**Conor McMahon, Head of Operations at ISS, NUIG**

“These identity processes required a high level of customisation to enable a seamless transition and synchronisation between AD to the Office 365 environment.”

### **Synchronising data across mail systems and to the cloud**

Microsoft generally suggests the use of DIRSYNC to migrate student data to the new system but it didn’t perform the manipulation required to present the data in an appropriate format. Instead, another Microsoft product, Federation Identity Manager (FIM), was used as the intermediate step.

The MJFT team also connected and consolidated on-premises staff mail systems to a single on-premises Exchange 2010 environment and created a hybrid environment with Office365. Address list visibility between students and staff was enabled and a test set of staff mailboxes from Exchange 2010 to Office 365 was provided together with a migration process for NUI Galway to use for future moves to the cloud.

“Through a rigorous set of processes, we were able to accelerate migration from tens of users per day to thousands of users per day and fast track the project to meet a much more aggressive timeline,” according to Wallis. “Using a combination of data staging and automation as well as storage as a point solution, we helped the NUI Galway team overcome every obstacle they met along the way.”

“With hybrid environments, you obviously have to be careful about how email is routed,” says McMahon. “With student email in the cloud and staff email on-site, but both sharing the same domain, there’s a bit of architecture around that piece and the team at MJFT were very good at that. They had the experience and we wanted to work with a partner experienced in doing these large-scale Office 365 migrations in a hybrid environment,” he adds.

### **Planning for the future**

“We don’t have to deal with onsite systems, servers and software,” concludes McMahon. “We need fewer onsite operational resources which frees up those resources for re-allocation to projects of strategic value to NUI Galway. Our continuing adoption and development of Office 365 is consistent with our strategy of providing best-in-class computing services to our students and facilitating collaboration across the University and beyond,” he says.

**For further information on MJ Flood Technology solutions for education, please contact Mark Donnellan at [mdonnellan@mjf.ie](mailto:mdonnellan@mjf.ie)**