

Case Study:

How Netgain Helped AAFCPAs Build a Scalable, Secure IT Foundation

When AAFCPAs' on-premises systems began to show their age, CIO Peter Sebilian faced a choice that would define the firm's next decade. The 160-person accounting and advisory firm was growing fast, and its infrastructure wasn't keeping up.

"We used a weighted decision matrix," Peter said. "When we came up with a ranking, the Netgain solution stood on its own."

That decision, made more than six years ago, gave AAFCPAs a platform that has scaled easily as the firm grew to nearly 400 team members.

From Aging Hardware to a Future-Ready Model

AAFCPAs had relied on an on-premises hyperconverged system that was nearing end of life. The team explored a dozen configurations, from colocation and new hardware to self-hosted options in AWS and Azure. None offered the mix of performance, CPA-specific application expertise and flexibility the firm needed.

"When we first engaged with Netgain, we were about 160 users," Peter said. "Now we're around 380 to 400. The architecture and deployment model let us morph into that growth with very little fanfare."



Client Snapshot

Firm: AAFCPAs

Location: Westborough, Massachusetts

Size: ~400 users across multiple U.S. offices and international locations

Challenge:

Replacing aging on-premises infrastructure while supporting rapid growth, maintaining security and compliance, and keeping internal IT closely involved in daily support.

Solution:

Netgain's co-managed cloud platform gives AAFCPAs a secure, resilient environment built for CPA applications and hybrid teams. The firm's internal IT team retains ownership of Tier 1 support, while Netgain manages hosting, platform operations and Nexus360 XDR™ security services. The model delivers the flexibility to scale, meet compliance standards and operate seamlessly from anywhere.

Results:

Scaled from 160 to nearly 400 users with minimal disruption, improved cyber insurance coverage from \$3 million to \$5 million and reduced security costs. AAFCPAs gained a dependable, CPA-specific IT foundation that supports growth and allows its internal team to focus on innovation instead of infrastructure.



Enabling a Work-From-Anywhere Culture

Even before remote work became the norm, AAFCPAs wanted a model that would let its team collaborate securely across offices and time zones.

"It really has facilitated our work-from-anywhere philosophy," Peter said. "We have people working from all over the globe and certainly all over the country."

By moving beyond its physical servers, the firm gained reliability and resilience that protect against local outages and disruptions.

"We really enjoy very, very few single points of failure," Peter said. "How do you get away from your building having a problem and not be relying on the building?"

Expertise That Understands the CPA Stack

Accounting software can be as complex as the tax code itself. AAFCPAs needed a partner that understood the nuances of the industry's core tools.

"We recently went through a significant upgrade to our most important application," Peter said. "Your team did it with very little transitional impact. Someone without industry experience or experience with that application would have struggled."

Netgain's relationships with vendors such as Wolters Kluwer, Thomson Reuters and niche solution providers help keep their applications running smoothly through upgrades and busy seasons alike.

A Co-managed Partnership

AAFCPAs takes pride in its own technology team. Continuing a shared administrative model brings agility and shared purpose. AAFCPAs continues to own its Tier 1 support, which serves as the firm's daily face of IT. Netgain provides the secure cloud platform and higher-level operations that keep everything running.

"Administrative ownership was high on the list," Peter said. "We wanted a shared model strategically and to keep our Tier 1 support internal."

That shared approach gives the firm control while tapping into Netgain's depth when needed.

"It doesn't have to be all or none," Peter added. "You can sign up for security operations without moving your whole architecture."

Strengthening Security and Compliance

As AAFCPAs grew, so did its need for advanced security. After evaluating four providers, the firm chose Netgain's Nexus360 XDR™ service.

"We've been a subscriber of the Nexus360 XDR service for nearly two years," Peter said. "Netgain's offering met the vast majority of our security goals."

The service has improved protection across the firm by combining host- and client-level defense with firmwide visibility into potential threats. Netgain ingests and manages application and infrastructure logs, giving the team clearer insight into activity across the environment. It has also been a cost-effective way to strengthen security without adding full-time staff or standing up an internal monitoring operation.

"It costs less than if I tried to hire a security analyst and significantly less than establishing our own 24x7 SOC," Peter added.

Cyber insurance renewals have also become simpler.

"Our renewal is now easy," he said. "Third parties meet it with good comments, and we've been able to increase coverage from \$3 million to \$5 million."

Hosting Still Matters

While many firms rely on SaaS applications, AAFCPAs' hybrid environment continues to require a combination of secure hosting services to manage remote access and global teams.

"Many cloud services don't need hosting, but the hosting model still has relevance because firms are opening tech stacks to international folks and need a remote jump point to manage access," said Peter. "When applications require a client to be installed, having an environment where these updates are applied, quality assured and deployed in a centralized model results in efficiencies and improved outcomes to the user community."



The Outcome

Today AAFCPAs runs on a platform that supports growth, flexibility and peace of mind. The firm's IT team can focus on strategic initiatives instead of constant maintenance, and its professionals can work anywhere with confidence that the systems behind them will keep up.



“It’s about having a model that scales and a partner that understands how we work. Netgain delivers both.”

The background of the page features a blue-toned photograph of a person's hands resting on a keyboard. Overlaid on this image is a semi-transparent dark blue box containing the testimonial. Additionally, there is a vertical column of white text on the left side of the keyboard, which appears to be a log of system operations or errors.