

CASE STUDY

Accelerating Compliance & Collaboration with Exostar's Managed Microsoft 365

Customer: Diné Development Corporation (DDC)
Industry: Defense Contracting / Government Service
Company Size: Mid-Sized (700+ employees)
Solution: Exostar's CMMC Ready Suite
(Managed Microsoft 365, Certification Assistant, PolicyPro)

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

From Legacy Burden to Competitive Advantage in Under 90 Days

Diné Development Corporation (DDC), a mid-sized IT solutions firm supporting U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) projects faced growing pressure to meet Cybersecurity Maturity Model Certification (CMMC) 2.0 requirements. Its legacy on-premises system for Controlled Unclassified Information (CUI) was cumbersome with multiple components that lacked scalability and usability – shortcomings that presented a major security and compliance risk.

110

SPRS SCORE

90

DAYS TO DEPLOY

95%

USER ADOPTION

DDC is now CMMC-ready, audit-prepared, and positioned to grow its DOD business pipeline with minimal disruption and maximum long-term scalability.



THE CHALLENGE

Legacy Infrastructure Created Risk, Complexity, and Inefficiency

Prior to engaging with Exostar, the company relied on a complex, on-premises system built on virtualization technology to manage CUI. This legacy environment involved isolated networks, redundant credentials for authentication, and VPN access—all of which created barriers for internal users and external collaborators.

Despite the effort invested in the set-up, it was underutilized when it came to handling CUI. In fact, only one person had accessed the system to upload CUI in the prior nine months. Usability concerns, high administrative overhead, and technical limitations made the solution ineffective. The company's self-assessed SPRS score stood at 67—far below the 110 required for full NIST SP 800-171 compliance and well short of future CMMC Level 2 readiness.

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“80% of our contracts involve CUI and will soon require CMMC—without Exostar, we wouldn't be able to pursue key opportunities.”

— Chuck Welch, Director of IT, DDC

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Worse still, 80% of the company's contracts included clauses requiring the secure handling of CUI and likely future proof of CMMC compliance. Without a viable path forward, the company risked losing a significant amount of business.



THE SOLUTION

Deploying a Compliant, Cost-Effective Collaboration Platform in 90 Days

In response, the company considered its options. It quickly ruled out trying to develop a solution in-house because it would take too long, be too expensive, and still might not clear the bar for CMMC Level 2. Instead, they decided to seek a commercially available solution and conducted a comprehensive market evaluation. Internal IT teams developed a detailed matrix of technical and functional requirements based on the business's specific use cases, then evaluated more than six proposed solutions—including managed virtual desktop environments, cloud storage platforms, and collaboration products. After careful evaluation, the company chose [Exostar's Managed Microsoft 365](#).

In addition, the solution included Exostar's MAG identity access gateway for secure, seamless single sign-on (SSO) integration with the company's existing commercial Microsoft 365 accounts. The implementation was supported by a third-party partner who ran a concurrent gap assessment using the Certification Assistant and Exostar PolicyPro products in Exostar's CMMC Ready Suite to ensure all documentation—System Security Plans (SSP), Plans of Action and Milestones (POA&Ms), policies, and supporting evidence—was submission-ready.

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“Hit the easy button and go with Exostar—they’ve figured it out. It’s cost-effective, user-friendly, and it works. We now have full compliance and a strategic advantage in a highly competitive space.”

— Chuck Welch, Director of IT, DDC



EXOSTAR'S MANAGED MICROSOFT 365 STOOD OUT FOR MULTIPLE REASONS:



Accelerated Deployment: What would have taken significant time and resources to build in-house could be deployed far more quickly with Exostar based on its proven track record.



Cost Efficiency: Exostar's subscription-based pricing proved significantly more affordable than competing solutions and in-house alternatives.

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“What would've taken us 12-18 months, Exostar delivered in 3.”

— Chuck Welch, Director of IT, DDC

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Built-in Compliance: 85 of 110 NIST SP 800-171 controls came implemented out of the box in a well defined shared responsibility matrix, reducing the internal workload substantially and clearly delineating the company's areas of focus.



Trusted Environment: Operating in Microsoft's FedRAMP-authorized GCC High cloud, Exostar's environment ensured the confidentiality, integrity, and availability of CUI.



THE RESULTS

From Risk to Readiness: Compliance Achieved, Collaboration Transformed

After engaging with Exostar in late October 2024, the company completed its implementation and remediation work by late January 2025. Its SPRS score jumped from 67 to 110—representing full compliance—and was successfully submitted to the DOD.

KEY BENEFITS INCLUDED:



Simplified Access and Improved Usability: Users could access Exostar’s secure Teams environment via familiar interfaces using their existing credentials. This eliminated login confusion and dramatically improved adoption.



Secure CUI Collaboration: Microsoft Teams integration allowed internal teams and external partners to collaborate securely in dedicated, compliant workspaces.



Streamlined File Handling: With options like drag-and-drop file uploads and compliant file drop via email, users could share CUI securely and intuitively.



Audit-Ready Environment: The enclave’s logging, reporting, and policy alignment helped the organization prepare confidently for third-party assessments.



Improved Stakeholder Alignment: With 80% of contracts likely requiring CMMC compliance, leadership rallied behind the initiative, recognizing the importance of protecting future revenue streams.



IMPLEMENTATION EXPERIENCE

User-Centered Rollout and Hands-On Support Enabled Quick Wins

The company received hands-on support from Exostar's onboarding and customer success teams. Training materials, live walkthroughs, and phased user rollouts helped ease adoption. In just a few months, over four waves of users were onboarded smoothly, and feedback from stakeholders was overwhelmingly positive.

Additionally, the company began inviting select partners into their Exostar enclave for proposal collaboration—extending the value of the solution into its broader ecosystem.

Advice to Peers: To organizations facing similar CMMC pressures, the Director of IT offers this guidance:

"Don't wait. Scope your use cases, map your requirements, and evaluate partners early. You don't need to build it all yourself. Exostar has done the heavy lifting so you can focus on securing your business and winning contracts."



WHY IT WORKED

An Integrated Suite That Scales with Business and Compliance Needs

By integrating the core components of Exostar’s CMMC Ready Suite, DDC achieved rapid compliance, reduced internal burden, and positioned itself for long-term success.

Solution	Purpose	Outcome
Exostar’s Managed Microsoft 365	Secure CUI collaboration	Enclave fully deployed and operational in 3 months, user adoption >95%
Certification Assistant	SPRS scoring & documentation	Score improved to 110, registered with DoD
Exostar PolicyPro	Policy creation & management	Comprehensive policies mapped to all 14 control families

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“The single sign-on integration and familiar Teams interface made adoption smooth and intuitive.”

— Chuck Welch, Director of IT, DDC

