



CASE STUDY

PRODUCTS:

- Microsoft 365 Business Premium
- Teams Phone

CLIENT NAME:

American Fence Association (AFA)



How Frontline Apps Helped American Fence Association Execute a Seamless Transition to Technology Self-Management

AFA is the largest professional fence, gate and perimeter security association in the industry, with over 1,800 member companies throughout 15 countries.

As such, operational continuity is critical to AFA's ability to serve its members effectively. Members rely on consistent communication, easy access to resources, and uninterrupted support. Behind the scenes, however, associations like AFA often operate in complex technological environments that can be difficult to manage, particularly during periods of significant organizational change.

That complexity became especially relevant when AFA's board of directors made a strategic decision to transition from an externally managed structure to a fully self-managed organization.

It required moving critical business systems, employee accounts, shared files, communications and domains into a new independent technology environment, without disrupting staff, members or external stakeholders.

To make that happen, AFA partnered with Frontline Apps LLC.

The result was a smooth, organized migration that empowered AFA with greater control, stronger collaboration tools and a modern foundation for future growth.

■ THE CHALLENGE

Previously, AFA's day-to-day operations were performed by an outside management company. When the decision was made to bring operations in-house, the organization needed to quickly and efficiently stand up its own technology infrastructure, including:

- Creating a new dedicated Microsoft tenant
- Migrating employee accounts and email histories
- Preserving archived communications
- Moving shared files and documents
- Transitioning website domains and related systems
- Ensuring employees could continue working without interruption

- Preventing members or clients from noticing any disruption

While internal leadership understood the importance of the move, the technical requirements were complex. AFA needed a trusted partner who could manage the details, coordinate with the outgoing IT team and translate technical decisions into clear next steps for non-technical stakeholders.

That is where Frontline Apps stepped in.

■ THE SOLUTION

WHY AFA CHOSE FRONTLINE APPS

AFA leadership already knew Frontline Apps founder Terry Brown through prior professional relationships and had confidence in his technical expertise and experience working with associations.

After initial conversations about the scope of the project, it became clear that Frontline Apps offered exactly what AFA needed:

- Deep Microsoft ecosystem knowledge
- Strong project management discipline
- Experience navigating organizational transitions
- The ability to simplify complex technical concepts
- A collaborative, responsive working style

Rather than attempting to manage the migration internally, AFA contracted with Frontline Apps for the migration and as a strategic technology partner.

Frontline Apps helped AFA design and implement a modern workplace environment centered around Microsoft 365 Business Premium, along with Teams Phone and additional collaboration tools.

The engagement began with discovery and planning.

Frontline Apps met with AFA leadership to understand all systems, dependencies and priorities involved in the transition. From there, the team mapped

responsibilities between all parties, including the previous management company's IT department.

This early planning stage was critical as it ensured everyone understood:

- What needed to be migrated
- Who owned each task
- How systems would be configured
- What timeline needed to be met
- How to minimize risk during cutover

With the roadmap in place, Frontline Apps moved into execution.

A SMOOTH MIGRATION WITH NO DISRUPTION

One of AFA's most important goals was to ensure that no one on the outside would notice the transition.

Members still needed support, staff still needed access to email and files, and operations had to continue as usual.

Frontline Apps helped make that possible by carefully managing the migration of core systems.

Microsoft Tenant Creation

AFA needed to move from a shared system to its own standalone Microsoft environment. Frontline Apps built and configured a new tenant specifically for AFA,

granting AFA full ownership and administrative control going forward.

Email and Account Migration

Employee accounts had to be migrated to the new environment while preserving prior communications and archives. Frontline apps coordinated the mapping and migration process so staff could retain continuity in their day-to-day work.

File Transfer and Access

Shared files and internal resources housed in the prior environment also needed to move securely and remain accessible. Frontline Apps helped with the transfer of those assets into the new structure.

Domain and Operational Systems

Additional business-critical systems, including website domains and connected services, were also part of the transition plan.

By coordinating all moving pieces, Frontline Apps helped AFA avoid downtime and minimize disruption to day-to-day activities.

Turning Technical Complexity into Clarity

For many organizations, one of the biggest challenges in a migration project is not the technology itself but communication.

Technical teams often speak in acronyms, system terminology and platform language that can be difficult for internal stakeholders to interpret. Decisions stall when teams are unsure what something means or why it matters.

AFA was able to avoid this challenge by working with Frontline Apps.

Rather than overwhelming the team with unnecessary complexity, Frontline Apps translated technical requirements into practical business terms. Leadership understood what was happening, what decisions were needed and what came next.

That clarity reduced stress, improved confidence and kept the project moving.

STRONG PROJECT MANAGEMENT EVERY STEP OF THE WAY

Frontline Apps brought a highly structured approach

to the project. After meetings, AFA received clear follow-up communication outlining:

- Frontline Apps action items
- AFA action items
- Upcoming milestones
- Required decisions
- Next steps

This level of organization helped everyone stay aligned and on schedule.

For lean internal teams balancing daily responsibilities, that kind of project leadership can make the difference between a stressful migration and a successful one.

UNLOCKING THE FULL VALUE OF MICROSOFT 365

The partnership did not end once systems were moved.

With the new environment in place, AFA began exploring how to better use the collaboration tools already available inside Microsoft 365.

Previously, Microsoft Teams had been used primarily for chat. After working with Frontline Apps, AFA gained a broader understanding of how Teams could support both internal collaboration and external communication.

The organization also began adopting additional tools, such as:

Microsoft Loop

AFA's marketing team started using Loop for collaborative weekly meeting agendas. Instead of static documents, agendas became living workspaces where team members could contribute topics, track updates, and stay aligned.

Microsoft Planner

Frontline Apps also helped introduce Planner as a way to organize tasks, assign ownership, and improve visibility across projects.

These tools help AFA streamline workflows, improve collaboration, and build more efficient internal processes as the organization grows.



“We were thrilled with the service that we received. The whole goal of this transition was for our members and external clients not to know anything was happening, that we would turn the lights off there, turn them back on with AFA, and everything would be smooth. With Frontline Apps’ support, we were able to achieve that.”



— Cristina Rodriguez, CAE, IOM, Deputy Executive Director, American Fence Association

■ THE RESULTS

By partnering with Frontline Apps, AFA successfully transitioned from an externally managed organization to a self-managed model with confidence.

Key outcomes included:

- Seamless migration to a dedicated Microsoft 365 environment
- Preserved email history and shared data
- Minimal disruption to employees, members and clients
- Improved internal collaboration through Teams, Loop and Planner
- Greater ownership and control over technology systems
- Clear communication throughout the entire project
- A scalable foundation for future operations

Most importantly, the transition happened so smoothly that AFA’s members and external stakeholders were largely unaware that anything had changed behind the scenes.