

CASE STUDY · CONSTRUCTION

How Appellation Construction Services **Unified File Access**

Connecting job sites, the shop, and the main office using their existing on-premise server.

~30

Daily Active Users

70+

Licensed Users

<1 Hr

Rollout Time

Organization

Appellation Construction Services is a union construction company with a main office, a separate shop facility, and a number of active construction sites staffed by superintendents and foremen across multiple locations.

Industry

Commercial Construction (Union)

Infrastructure

On-premises Hyper-V server with Windows SMB file shares, secured by NTFS permissions and Active Directory.

THE CHALLENGE

Too Many Routes To The Same File

Construction generates a lot of documentation: drawings, safety records, payroll data, Navisworks models, spreadsheets, and the rest. Getting the right file to the right person had become difficult for Appellation, particularly when the right person was on a job site rather than at a desk.

Office employees connected directly to the on-premises server over the local network. Field employees, scattered across remote job sites, had no reliable way to reach the same files. The result was a set of workarounds that varied across departments and sometimes person to person.

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We had people doing five different routes to access files. Electricians were doing one thing, PMs were doing another. Nobody was on the same page.

Project managers often emailed documents out to field crews, which broke down with large Navisworks files that exceeded attachment limits. Some teams used Trimble, the company's payroll platform, as an ad hoc file repository. Others suggested Teams or SharePoint. Each option came with friction of its own.

The result was real lost time. VPs were digging through email threads, server folders, and collaboration tools to find a single document. Data lived in several places with no clear authoritative copy, and there was no single audit trail showing who had accessed what.

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It was a lot of time just to find one file. You'd check email, then the server, then Teams, and then maybe Trimble—before you even got to what you needed.

THE DECISION

Keep The Server, Change The Access

The IT team's read was straightforward. The on-premises server was working fine and the files didn't need to move. They just needed to be reachable from anywhere.

Appellation was already running MyWorkDrive on a limited basis, mostly for PMs who occasionally worked from home or the road. The mapped drive client gave them the same File Explorer experience they had at their desks, without needing a VPN.

Instead of migrating to a new storage platform, the IT team set up a dedicated “field folder” partition on the server. Each active job got its own folder with the relevant drawings, safety documents, and project files. MyWorkDrive handled the access layer, giving field employees secure HTTPS connections from anywhere using the mapped drive client they already understood.

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We already had MyWorkDrive. It was just easy to run and go. We didn't need to learn a new platform or move our files somewhere else.

THE ROLLOUT

Under An Hour, Almost No Training

Bulk setup ran in under an hour. New field employees are onboarded in minutes: the IT administrator grants folder access, installs the MyWorkDrive client on their device, and they're working. There are no training sessions or instruction manuals involved.

The reason it works that way is simple. MyWorkDrive's mapped drive client integrates directly with Windows File Explorer, so people navigate files the way they always have: folders, subfolders, double-click to open.

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There's essentially no learning curve. People are used to the way Windows already does files. They just hop on and use what they need to use.

Support requests around MyWorkDrive are uncommon, and when they do come in, they're usually general computing questions rather than something specific to the product.

Day-To-Day Operation

01 How people get to files

Most people rely on the mapped drive client as their primary way in. Mobile access on iOS and Android covers the rest: field supervisors pull up drawings on iPads at job sites, and on one Saturday, the IT administrator retrieved a file for the CEO from a golf course. The web client gets occasional use from a couple of employees who prefer it.

02 Connectivity at remote sites

Construction sites aren't known for solid networking. Appellation runs on Starlink and cellular hotspots in the field. Performance has held up well for the file types they actually use: PDFs, Word documents, Excel spreadsheets, and Navisworks (.nwd) models. Browsing speeds could be slightly snappier over constrained connections, but for the two or three documents a field worker typically needs in a session, it hasn't been an issue.

03 What's in the field folder

A single job folder can run more than two gigabytes across 40 or more drawings: shop drawings in PDF and Navisworks format, safety documentation, payroll records, Word documents, and Excel spreadsheets. Previously, locating a specific document meant going back through email chains. Now there's one place to look.

THE IMPACT

From Occasional Tool To Daily Workflow

What started as an occasional convenience for traveling PMs is now part of how the company runs day to day. MyWorkDrive sees daily use from roughly 30 power users, with about 70 employees licensed to connect when they need to.

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This turned from something we were somewhat using every so often to something that's in our workflow now. People are picking this up every day.

If MyWorkDrive went down, the disruption would be felt immediately across the business. Workarounds exist, but the company isn't interested in going back to them.

Benefits

BENEFIT	DETAIL
Unified File Access	One location for all field documentation, replacing the multi-route problem that had been frustrating VPs and PMs.
No Migration Required	Files stay on the existing on-premises Hyper-V server, and MyWorkDrive connects to that storage without moving or duplicating data.
Familiar Interface	The mapped drive integrates with Windows File Explorer, so users navigate files the way they always have.
Sub-Hour Deployment	Bulk setup ran in under an hour, and new user onboarding takes minutes.
NTFS Permission Continuity	Existing Active Directory security groups and NTFS permissions carry over directly, with no new permission model to manage.

Benefits

BENEFIT	DETAIL
Detailed Audit Logging	Granular logs show exactly who accessed which file and when, which has proven useful for troubleshooting and compliance.
Mobile Access from the Field	Superintendents and foremen access drawings and documents from iPads and phones at remote job sites.
Responsive Support	Support cases are typically resolved within days, compared to weeks or months with other enterprise vendors.

A CLOSER LOOK

Audit Logging

One feature that stood out to Appellation's IT administrator was MyWorkDrive's audit logging. Being able to go back several months and see exactly when a file was accessed, and by whom, has been useful both for diagnosing issues and for verifying activity.

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I can go back three months and check to see if somebody accessed the file I need. I don't know if there's another product that really offers that, to be honest.

In one recurring case, the logs traced periodic disconnections to a Microsoft authentication issue on one power user's account. It wasn't a MyWorkDrive problem, but the logs surfaced it cleanly so the company's MSP could troubleshoot with Microsoft.

Support That Keeps Pace

As MyWorkDrive moved from convenience to daily-driver, vendor support quality mattered more. The IT administrator notes that every support case opened with MyWorkDrive has been addressed promptly, typically within days.

For context, the same administrator manages support relationships across several enterprise platforms, and turnaround times elsewhere can stretch from two weeks to as long as five months on a single unresolved ticket.

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Every support case I've presented has been touched on pretty well and pretty quickly. I don't think there's been one with more than a week of turnaround time.

Advice For Other Organizations

When asked what he'd tell other companies weighing remote file access options, Appellation's IT administrator kept it practical:

- ✓ Keep it simple. Stick with NTFS permissions and existing Active Directory security groups rather than layering on extra complexity.
- ✓ Don't overload the server. The point of MyWorkDrive is to make life easier, not to add overhead.
- ✓ Expect a fast rollout. Even employees who aren't especially technical get up and running quickly.

Ready To Simplify Remote File Access?

MyWorkDrive connects your users to the files they already have, without expanding VPN, migrating data, or adding new storage to manage.

[Start a free trial at myworkdrive.com](https://myworkdrive.com)