

# A one-stop clinic gets an all-in-one remedy



ITNORTH.CA

## QUICK LOOK

**Company:** ITnorth.ca

**CEO:** Akos Zsufa and Gert-Jan (GJ) Voormeulen

**Website:** [www.itnorth.ca](http://www.itnorth.ca)

**Headquarters:** Fort St. John, Canada (with offices in Victoria, Calgary and Leduc)

**Founded:** 2003

**Industry:** Network support, cloud integration and consulting firm

**It's not every day that an orthopedic surgeon** and a registered physiotherapist seek an IT company to help them with pain. But that's what RebalanceMD (RBMD) did when they knocked on ITnorth.ca's door. Their technology was hurting.

Founded in 2003, ITnorth.ca is a trusted IT network and consulting service in Western Canada. They serve a variety of clients, many in the healthcare industry. With a CDN award and a Microsoft IMPACT Award for Cloud Infrastructure of the Year in 2014, ITnorth.ca was a solid choice for RBMD.

In a strategic win-win, when the Microsoft Gold Partner addressed RBMD's aching technology, they created a solution they could replicate and monetize. As they helped their client, they helped themselves.

Here's what they did.

### A one-roof cure for care

RBMD's founders Dr. Patrick McCallister and Stefan Fletcher had a genius healthcare solution for patients requiring musculoskeletal care: They rounded up traditional medicine and adjunct health practices under one roof.

With one-stop simplicity, patients could receive high-quality care from experts spanning all phases of treatment. This included sports medicine, new joint implantation, orthopedic surgery and rehabilitation.

Uniting the healthcare practitioners eliminated a huge bureaucratic roadblock. It ended the need for the government-enforced referral system and allowed patients to move seamlessly from doctors to therapists. This significantly decreased waiting and increased convenience.

### "It hurts when we tech"

All of the healthcare harmony, however, generated technical pains.

The office procedures and files of 30 physicians and 60 support staff needed merging. RBMD needed to conquer the complexities of the Medical Services Plan billing system, which treats traditional treatment and physiotherapy/sports medicine differently. They needed to comply with Canadian FIPPA (Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act) regulations. They also needed to streamline and automate workflows, and identify and implement best practices.

It was a tall order that was severely short on technology. ITnorth.ca to the rescue.



"It's not just a product solution anymore, it's a business solution."

“When we arrived at RebalanceMD, their network was in a shambles,” says Akos Zsufa, managing partner of ITnorth.ca. “They had a hodgepodge of Linux web and Windows SBS 2008 systems. The clinic had gone through three different IT companies that offered reactive maintenance, but had no proactive or future designs in place to eliminate issues or build a solution.”

Additionally, they had a small, maxed-out business server, an email server that crashed each day, a crypto virus that had disabled the Accuro Electronic Medical Record (EMR) app and downtime levels that induced chronic headaches for care providers and patients alike.

ITnorth.ca stepped in to make RBMD whole. They also set out to make them flexible, scalable and replicable, so the clinic could expand easily and take their concept nationwide.

### **Prescription for holistic IT: Cloud for Healthcare in a Box**

In parallel, ITnorth.ca’s solution reflected the same all-in-one elegance as RBMD’s one-roof clinic. The solution was Cloud for Healthcare in a Box.

Based on Microsoft Office 365 for business productivity, Lync for communications, and Microsoft Azure backup and recovery, the box solution included:

- Office 365
- Lync
- Azure
- FIPPA-compliant Private Cloud hosting (Hyper-V cluster)
- DNS management
- Antivirus
- Backups
- Web hosting
- Support
- Maintenance

Cloud for Healthcare in a Box involved placing the EMRs on a hybrid cloud. This made the records accessible to other clinics wanting to join RBMD. Using Microsoft’s cloud solution with the Azure Disaster Recovery backup system, the entire infrastructure became centralized and is controlled by a System Center Virtual Machine Manager (SCVMM ) in ITnorth.ca’s private cloud with the Azure Cloud Backup site.

The centralized, secure and private infrastructure allows RBMD franchises to join through the VPN connection to their cloud server, or to access via RemoteApp and Microsoft App-V services wherever it’s needed.

ITnorth.ca credits carefully chosen partners with much of its success, including this project. “We know what our niche is and we want to grow. And in order to do that, we reach out and partner up,” Akos says. To create a “Microsoft Health Vault” solution that would conform to the stringent Canadian FIPPA regulations, ITnorth.ca partnered with QHR Technologies.

### **Curing two needs with one remedy**

While analyzing RBMD’s needs, ITnorth.ca didn’t lose sight of its own. When Microsoft asked its partners to move to the cloud nearly five years ago, ITnorth.ca wasn’t exactly sure how. Since then, they have continually looked for ways to get clients to the cloud and to grow their business.

“We had a lot of meetings. We did a lot of redefining of ourselves,” Akos



“I’m a firm believer that anything I need, somebody else also needs.”

says. "We'd say, 'What are we doing, how are we going to do this? What does this mean for our company? What sort of bench strength do we need to have?'"

"It was definitely a process," says Gert-Jan (GJ) Voormeulen, co-owner. "It's not like, 'Okay, let's do it tomorrow.' We came from an SBS world, because that was our niche, so we needed to go to the cloud, but what did we need to do to get there?"

To make the transition, the company turned to Microsoft. "The MPN network is behind us all the time. We call in our TPAM for solutions. We can call in any branch of the cloud and they're ready to help," Akos says.

### **Healthy results...for RBMD and ITnorth.ca**

In creating Cloud for Healthcare in a Box, ITnorth.ca answered RebalanceMD's needs, as well as its own.

For RBMD, the results significantly increased productivity, cost savings—and the number of happy healthcare providers. The solution saved RBMD \$35,000 in licensing fees, and reduced capital costs by \$135,000.

But the real standout star was efficiency. Over 18 months, the downtime decreased to 0%. This returned \$140,000 per month to the bottom line.

On top of that, RBMD achieved their goal of franchising the business. They have already been resold to a clinic in Vancouver, and there are plans for future expansion.

For ITnorth.ca, the box solution opened up new opportunities for growth. The box can be tailored to a variety of market verticals. For example, the firm successfully used the same root technology to answer a need for the gas and oil industry.

"I'm a firm believer that anything I need, somebody else also needs," Akos says. If RBMD needed a box solution, others might too. "So we created a solution that can be replicated, and we can resell it and monetize it."

### **Partnering for the future**

Having grappled with getting clients to the cloud and having overcome a plateau in growth two years ago by adding a business development arm, ITnorth.ca believes its future success will continue to lie in building its business around Microsoft solutions, turning to Microsoft for help and in partnering with others.

"I go to the Microsoft Worldwide Partner Conference. I go to other conferences too," Akos says. "I look at the technologies being launched by Microsoft and at the different partner programs. We pick a couple of competencies and verticals we want to hit up and find out that Microsoft has everything there: the structured paperwork, the ways to monetize it, how to make money with it. We just plug it into our systems."

"We can't do everything ourselves," GJ says. "You have to pull resources in and the best way to do that is to talk to people. That's how we did it. We'd ask, 'How can I get there? Somebody must know.' The best way is MPN. Someone out there knows and can help. You can't do it by yourself. As long as we work together, we can succeed."

Akos agrees. "It's how we've been successful and that's how others can be successful as well. The MPN, it's called the Microsoft Partner Network for a reason. And it's not just partnering with Microsoft, it's partnering with partners as well."



## **WHY MICROSOFT?**

ITnorth.ca's road map continues winding toward bigger opportunities and more cloud-based solutions. And they count on Microsoft technologies, the MPN and their fellow partners to ride along to the next destination.

# ROAD MAP to Success

1

## A HEALTH CLINIC NEEDS TO HEAL ITS TECHNOLOGY

When RebalanceMD (RBMD) sought to merge multiple medical practice disciplines into a smooth-running clinic under one roof, the aging and unstable technology, disparate systems—and the staff—couldn't handle the challenges.



## HELPING YOU HELPS ME

As ITnorth.ca looks for ways to solve RebalanceMD's challenges, they remain guided by a big-picture desire to grow their business and help clients get to the cloud.

2

3

## AN ALL-IN-ONE...

ITnorth.ca creates an all-in-one solution called Cloud for Healthcare in a Box. It's based on Microsoft Office 365 for business productivity, Lync for communications, and Microsoft Azure backup and recovery. It's exactly what RBMD needs.



## ...BECOMES ONE FOR ALL

The all-in-one solution becomes a one-for-all opportunity for growth. ITnorth.ca can tailor the solution for other vertical markets. They begin to sell it and monetize it.

4



5

## MIRACLE CURE

RebalanceMD saves \$35,000 in direct licensing costs and enjoys reducing capital costs by \$135,000. Over 18 months, RBMD also reduces downtime to 0%, which returns a whopping \$140,000 a month to the bottom line. Additionally, the box solution allows RBMD to expand across the country and they begin selling franchises.

