Company Executive Summary

Nifto Properties is a family-owned, small business focused on providing affordable housing in Florida's panhandle. There is currently 1 real estate holding in Nifto Properties portfolio, but this responsive property management company aspires to purchase additional real estate properties and will use their Florida panhandle property as their guide on the type of infrastructure needed to drive customer satisfaction and maintain profitability. They strive to provide their tenants with a quiet and safe area to live, work and play. Their infrastructure consisted of legacy hardware that contained critical business operations data and eventually all information for the tenants who lease property from Nifto Properties. Nifto subscribed to an online CRM provider, but the management portal lacked integrated information on the tenants. After experiencing significant property damage from a tropical storm where the tenants lost contact to Nifto's on-premises property management systems, Nifto considered adopting a cloud-based infrastructure for business continuity and to incorporate secure, modern, scalable technologies.

Company Technology Challenges

Nifto Properties relied on legacy hardware and software to operate a real estate management business. Each tenant undergoes screenings with several results containing PII which must be protected. RentechDirect functions as Nifto Properties Customer Relationship Management (CRM) application, yet the functionality and capabilities of the application do not meet Nifto's requirements. One requirement is to prevent tenants from discovering the direct phone numbers of Nifto management. Google Voice was initially relied on to receive/transcribe tenant calls, but the Google Voice App also did not function as expected. Nifto did not own or manage their domain name nor have an email solution delivering mail from their organization. Nifto Properties intends to acquire additional real estate properties and recognized that they needed to adopt a professional business foundation that is secure and scalable. Nifto interpreted the technology landscape as a difficult one to traverse since there were many operational elements that required updating. As a small business, their cash flow is limited to hire IT staff. The Nifto Properties team began interviewing technology companies for a cloud-based solution that would be secure, cost effective and manageable as a small business. Nifto hired Threadfin as their trusted partner.

The Solutions: Domain; Route 53, S3, Amazon Workmail and Amazon Connect

Threadfin recommended AWS solutions as affordable, scalable, and secure way to establish the foundational cloud infrastructure build. The foundational build adheres to the AWS Well Architected Framework. Initial architect activities included purchasing the Nifto domain from AWS, configuring DNS routing with Route 53, S3 for a static website and a secure storage site for tenant-related documents, configuring Amazon Workmail for two employees and one Info account to process website inquiries, Amazon Connect with a local phone number, call flows and queues to process tenant issues and alert Nifto private phones if needed, IAM policies/permissions, Cloud Watch and Cost Explorer Alerts. All AWS assets combined support Nifto Properties' ability to provide modern property management processes from a secure, resilient, scalable cloud-based infrastructure.

The Solutions: Domain; Route 53, S3, Amazon Workmail and Amazon Connect
Building a scalable and secure foundational infrastructure for this small business provided Nifto the ability to maintain business operations and assist their customers when a natural disaster was imminent. Knowledge transfer and a runbook was provided to Nifto employees with pictorial guides on how to securely access their AWS assets. Threadfin's knowledge transfer process focused on the functionality of Amazon Connect and call flow lifecycle management. There was additional attention on other features inherent to Amazon Connect and Nifto noted those will be addressed in the future. The Amazon workmail solution supports Nifto's professional appearance and provides a platform for collaboration on future residential property buys as well as providing a vector for calendaring and reminders. The initial static website was uploaded with testing of the inquiry (Info) Contact Us function, all with good results. Secure Folder structure was created on S3 to house tenant application/background documents and secure access was demonstrated. Nifto Properties management team is very pleased with all the outcomes experienced during this partner-led digital transformation.

Future Innovation on AWS
Nifto Properties realizes the benefits of a modern, scalable infrastructure. They intend to increase the total number of properties under their management and increase the management staff. The AWS foundational build and Amazon Connect call routing features will scale as needed with Nifto's future business growth. Future Amazon Connect feature enhancements including a Chat and a ChatBot on the Nifto Properties website is strongly recommended to increase tenant satisfaction with property management services. Threadfin explained the need for FAQ or common Q/A content from tenant phone calls. Nifto understands that to create a web API screen pop that provides dynamic tenant information when a tenant calls Nifto Management requires a significant amount of DevOps and collaboration with RentechDirect. This Amazon Connect feature will be an opportunity for future innovation on AWS. Nifto may adopt an alternate CRM application that integrates seamlessly with Amazon Connect.

Threadfin will perform quarterly business reviews with Nifto and maintain contact to ensure adoption of the AWS infrastructure continues to support their small business.