

# Working smarter: using Podio to collaborate in complex environments

## How Citrix Podio keeps Integrity's teams connected and informed

### Research and monitoring in conflict-affected settings

Integrity is a specialist consultancy that provides ethically delivered expert services in complex and challenging contexts across the globe. They assist governments, NGOs, and global organizations by delivering research and monitoring services to improve their programs. Effective and efficient project and risk management underpins all of Integrity's work.

With head offices in London, UK and Arlington, in the US state of Virginia, and with regional offices and projects throughout the world, Integrity uses [Citrix Podio](#) to collaborate across a global staff and a network of expert consultants and partners.

### Acquiring and sharing project-critical information

Integrity's core business is to generate and share new evidence to inform decision making. Information is therefore critical to Integrity's operations. Will Lowrie, Head of Data and Knowledge Management at Integrity, notes that data-driven insight has become increasingly important to the organization and its clients.

"We present proposals to clients that outline how we identify challenges, and what insights we can provide to overcome them," he explains. "Increasingly, that involves using cutting-edge data science methods to predict the future, from producing machine learning models to predict migration patterns, or creating sentiment analysis products that gauge real-time public perceptions towards specific groups, through to using satellite imagery to assess the likelihood of conflict."

Acquiring and processing this data successfully and efficiently is critical, especially in locations where communications infrastructure is frequently poor and connection bandwidth low – areas where Integrity's teams spend much of their time. Equally important is ensuring that these teams have all the necessary information to carry out their work safely and effectively.



#### Industry

Professional Services

#### Location

United Kingdom

#### Citrix products

• [Citrix Podio](#)

## An effective means of operational organization

Back in 2013, Integrity was still a relatively small organization when Citrix Podio was implemented. It was first used by a project team working in various parts of Syria during the country's ongoing crisis, feeding information and other communications back to Integrity's regional MENA office.

With Integrity's team using the Podio app to check in on a daily basis from Syria, it soon became clear that the organization had found an effective way to organize its operations. This represented a critical step up from sending multiple documents by email with no central viewpoint. Conflicting copies were causing major problems, and important files could be hard to track down. "We didn't have a unified system," says Lowrie. "We needed an intuitive solution to the problem of collaborating across diverse operating contexts and time zones, and to reduce the pain points of sharing spreadsheets back and forth. Podio transformed our entire information environment and instilled a culture of collaborative knowledge management."

Integrity used Citrix Podio to build out a high fidelity information system across different geographic areas of Syria to serve as a hub of information on the conflict. "We realized very quickly that there was a lot of potential to roll it out to other Integrity projects and company processes," recalls Lowrie.

The platform was soon extended to the flagship Learning and Monitoring Program Somalia (LAMPS), where it continued to demonstrate its suitability to Integrity's organizational needs, using webforms managed through Podio to record and distribute key data. "Citrix Podio played an important role in our operations and work planning, as well as supporting our provision of duty of care for our colleagues in Somalia," says Patience Lulu, Project Manager at Integrity's Kenya office in Nairobi. "It allowed us to share information between London, Somalia, and Kenya, and enabled us to coordinate efficient third-party monitoring data collection activities across Somalia."

## Building a stronger company knowledge base

Citrix Podio spread quickly across Integrity's operations and is now widely deployed in areas such as field coordination, duty of care, task management, corporate functions, and workflow automation. "We use automations to trigger event-driven processes around daily check-ins or supplying information to data collection teams," Lowrie says. "We also lean on it quite heavily to save time and improve the value of the content we have in Podio from a business intelligence perspective."

"In one example, we developed an application to track verification activities as part of our monitoring program in Somalia, on behalf of the UK Foreign, Commonwealth, and Development Office," Lulu continues. "The app meant we could connect a geographically dispersed team to understand what activities were being monitored and when."

Lowrie also acknowledges the importance of data capture, and Podio's role in both facilitating and rewarding Integrity's diligence in this area. "The output that we get is just far more valuable through Citrix Podio. If someone has a meeting with a key contact, they can access the history of Integrity's previous engagements, and really understand the relationship between Integrity and the organizations they are meeting with."

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**Will Lowrie**  
Head of Data and Knowledge Management  
Integrity

The Citrix Podio platform also means Integrity's various applications are connected, giving teams instant access to project histories or potential issues faced in different locations. "Citrix Podio helps us understand the challenges that teams face on the ground," Lulu explains. "We can then use this knowledge to do whatever it takes to make their jobs easier, and this knowledge has helped evolve our approach over time."

"The relational aspect is absolutely foundational," agrees Lowrie. "Otherwise, you're just talking about a lot of spreadsheets in silos. Citrix Podio is a fully integrated system, and secured via multi-factor authentication. Having it embedded in the company means we have secure access to critical information that could otherwise have been missed."

### Integrity's information 'nervous system'

As Integrity's information resources become more widespread, so does its capability to tailor dynamic risk management strategies for each of its areas of operation. Lowrie notes that one of Podio's real values is its no-code platform, which enables the organization to quickly and easily build custom templates using its easy 'drag and drop' template builder, without the need for coding expertise.

"Our needs are very specific," Lowrie continues. "Over time we've deployed a set of common application kits that we can then customize for implementation in each environment. Being able to access well-refined Podio business intelligence without having to reinvent the wheel for every project saves a lot of time and pain."

Lowrie describes Citrix Podio as Integrity's 'nervous system for information', adding that it builds bridges between teams working globally in information-poor and often connectivity-poor environments where more demanding, resource-hungry applications would struggle. "It helps us promote a unified company culture using one common system," he concludes. "And as Citrix Podio evolves, we evolve with it."

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