

case study

Rocket Software

HIGHLIGHTS

THE NEED

- Redesign entire systems infrastructure
- Upgrade inadequate mail system
- Develop standards for software development and business operations systems

THE SOLUTION

- End user hardware upgrades to improve systems management
- VPN and T1 connections for remote access
- SMS solution for inventory, software development control, and remote management
- Installation of network security, backup system, and disaster recover capability

THE RESULT

- Greatly increasing business efficiencies
- Vast improvement in "time-to-market" with new software
- 75% cost save with VPN and T1 connections
- Dramatic reduction in system support costs

the organization

Rocket Software is a software development company whose products for DB2 provide database access and management tools for OS/390 e-business availability and performance. Additional products include query, reporting, and application development solutions for the enterprise QMF environment. Their System Software product enables technologies for PC, mobile, and wireless computing. They also developed web/e-commerce technologies for the IBM WebSphere environment.

the need

Square One was initially asked to upgrade and shareware mail system and install Microsoft's Systems Management Server (SMS). The inadequate email system did not support a common address book, shared folders or email backup. It became apparent early in the project that SMS would provide very little benefit if layered on top of existing technology.

Square One quickly recognized several shortcomings inherent to Rocket's network and processes. Rocket's growing business had outpacing the growth of its systems infrastructure. There were no standards for servers, development machines, or other technology that was running the administrative or development sides of the business. This resulted in extremely high support costs and lost productivity. Software developers wasted valuable time resolving internal systems issues and project timelines suffered.

the solution

Square One performed a detailed analysis of Rocket's business and technology needs, encompassing all phases of workflow and development. Square One then designed a new infrastructure, with entirely new support procedures. The network was upgraded to gigabit technology with ten new servers, to better apportion the workload of the development teams and the functional business units.

End-users were upgraded to a corporate standard, with IBM ThinkPads for mobile users and 300PL workstations for desktop users. This enabled Rocket to take advantage of the built

in hardware-based systems management that comes with IBM's product line. Square One built an SMS solution to handle inventory management, version control, software updates, and remote management.

Implementation of a hardware standard and systems management tools reduced overall support costs and dramatically improve uptime. Problem resolutions are now leveraged over the entire installed base quickly, with little or no modification required from one machine to the next. A Check Point firewall and Virtual Private Network (VPN) now allow remote users to access the main office at minimum cost.

Finally, a complete tape backup library system was put in place, along with sophisticated restore and disaster recovery capability. This improved the estimated time to full recovery, in the event of either a system failure or complete disaster, by nearly 90%.

the result

Rocket is now functioning at greatly increased efficiencies. Improved speed and reliability of the infrastructure dramatically reducing overall support costs. The main benefit to Rocket was vast improvement in its "time-to-market" with new software products and version updates. Using VPN remote access and T1 connections for key users, rocket is able to attract quality developers w/o concern over physical location or re-location costs.

The VPN enabled Rocket to inexpensively link remote offices that were previously unable to share information and resources. The T1 costs versus the previous ISDN solution accounted for a 75% cost save, allowing a four-month payback on the VPN implementation.

Square One achieved its goal of managing itself out of the project within six months, turning over all day-to-day systems management. Square One assisted in identifying the skill set and hiring of Rocket's new technology team. The entire project was implemented with no interruption to Rocket's business flow.

Square One currently provides ongoing remote support to Rocket Software in the business process and systems areas.



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