

Solving the Dilemma of Upgrade vs. Replacement of an Outdated Small Business Computer Network

Growing property management firm reap benefits from replacing their old and outdated computer network with expert consultancy and installation services from IntegrIT Network Solutions.

Technology has become an important staple in the modern business environment. Businesses today rely upon automated technologies for both routine tasks and strategic planning. Due to the rapid progression of technology development and innovation, one of the biggest decision-making expenses organizations are often faced with today is deciding what to do when computer technology becomes outdated.

As with all business decisions, the decision to replace servers/software/computers rather than upgrading, comes down to a question of cost vs. benefit. Strategic planning and consideration of scalability and compatibility is critical when it comes to technology expenditures. This study reveals how consulting with an experienced and certified IT consultant firm helps a small business incorporate longer-term business plans, cost-savings, and potential expansion and growth.

History



Doug Henrikson
H P Properties

H P Properties specializes in real estate property management and development. Founded in 1998, it employs five staff members and is located in Mountlake Terrace, WA.

Their current system consisted of Small Business Server 2003 with Windows XP computers running Microsoft Office 2007. They needed to quickly upgrade their outdated network to allow for more efficiencies and capabilities with room to grow.

The current operating system is scheduled to be retired by Microsoft in 2012. This means the operating system would then no longer receive necessary patching, which poses a huge security issue. In addition, the server was out of spec. Therefore, is unable to support an upgraded operating system.

Challenge: Outdated computer system running on server not compatible with necessary operating system upgrade, posed future security threat and major performance issues

The existing technology was aging, and on the verge of becoming inefficient and functionally ineffective. Dated network and servers were beginning to create performance challenges. “Windows Small Business Server 2003 was a great foundational server solution and it served us well over the past 7 years,” says Doug Henrikson, Owner of H P Properties. “But our hardware was aging and our operating system was out of date making our system slow and not performing very well.” In addition, the server was overdue for replacement and Mr. Henrikson began thinking about upgrading the company’s infrastructure.

Through extensive discussions with IT consulting firm, IntegrIT Network Solutions, about the needs and expectations of the business, the upgrade parameters were determined. The existing technology was not meeting goals or benefiting the company in ways that it could from a strategic perspective. Therefore, an overhaul and investment in new technology was the best option to bring it up to spec, allow necessary upgrades, and take advantage of features available in the newest software and operating system available.

Solution: Complete System Replacement Bringing Computer Network up to Spec, Allowing Necessary Upgrades with Room to Grow and Add Future Solutions

After IntegrIT suggested that H P Properties look at the upgraded functionality in Windows Small Business Server 2011 Essentials, the company decided to deploy the solution. Designed and priced for small businesses with 25 or fewer computers, the all-in-one server solution provides core functionality for networking, automatic backups, document and printer sharing, easy remote access, and more.

H P Properties also decided to purchase new PCs running the Windows 7 Professional operating system and Microsoft Office Professional 2010. IntegrIT also set up Hosted Exchange Email with enhanced email, calendar, and archiving features. H P Properties now has the necessary security and efficiency tools it needs, with the option to enable on-premise or cloud expansion for even better collaboration and efficiencies as needed.

With Windows Small Business Server 2011 on the new server, H P Properties can more easily share files over SharePoint and do automatic image backups on all computers. “We liked the idea of easier access to shared files on the server rather than using the VPN [virtual private network], and knowing that all of our computers have the ability for bare metal restore gives me great peace of mind,” says Henrikson. The upgrade to new PCs running the latest Microsoft software has also yielded productivity improvements.

Because Small Business Server 2011 Essentials is a lighter platform and H P Properties opted for hosted email exchange, it was not necessary to purchase a large capacity server, various stand-alone components, or an exchange server for email hosting, which would have required additional maintenance costs as well.

Working with IntegrIT to determine the right strategy and solutions to deploy that would best benefit its business and fit its specific needs, H P Properties has benefitted in several ways:

- **Reduced risk of data loss.** Henrikson can now rest assured knowing all data on the server is protected through daily, automated backups. Should an incident occur, the company is able to restore individual files, folders, or the entire server and all company workstations within hours.
- **Easier Access to Data.** Now that all data is on the server, users can easily share files, have their data follow them as they switch PCs, and the ability to gain access remotely through a web browser. “In the past, we had to log into a VPN and choose which computer to log into and then sort through folders to find what we were looking for,” says Henrikson. “Using Remote Web Access to save and retrieve files on the server, everyone at H P Properties is working more efficiently.”
- **Greater productivity.** Designed for greater simplicity and high performance using the 64-bit architecture, this solution is more stable and robust, allowing for much more reliability and efficiency. By using Windows Search in Windows 7, staff can quickly find information and have a consistent user interface across all Microsoft Office applications.
- **Improved use of IT budget.** Affordable and easy to deploy, use, and maintain. The all-in-one solution eliminates the need and expense of buying the various stand-alone components and server products that a small business needs and puts those into a single package, with one set of hardware requirements at a third of the price.

“IntegrIT Network Solutions delivered on all aspects from initial consultancy to doing the installation around our working requirements, which involved their being on-site over the weekends. As a growing real estate management agency, we recognize the need for a Partnership approach with our IT suppliers and are very pleased to recommend IntegrIT Network Solutions.”

Doug Henrikson, Owner - H P Properties

Results: Increased Competitive Advantage that Did Not Break the Bank

IntegrIT Network Solutions worked closely with H P Properties to understand their businesses needs and to develop their IT strategy to meet these requirements.

The migration from the old server to the new system was smooth and was done quickly. Combined with a new PC network based upon the latest Microsoft Windows 7 and Microsoft Office 2010 PCs, the IT system is now a robust, resilient infrastructure with the capacity to aid the further growth of H P Properties.

“Since we upgraded to Windows Small Business Server 2011 and Windows 7, everything is working faster and better,” says Henrikson. “Performance is up by 30 to 40 percent.”

H P Properties now has all of the features of an enterprise network, but without the enterprise cost, with a scalable, reliable server solution that everyone can use to work more cohesively. “We now enjoy updated component technologies, increased data protection, and new tools to help us grow our business capacity,” says Henrikson. “We didn’t spend more than we needed to and we have a solution that will grow with our company.”



P.O. Box 2458
Lynnwood, WA 98036

Tel 425 787 0193
Fax 425 787 0124

www.integrit-network.com



6100 219th ST SW, Suite 535
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98012

Tel 425 776 9200