

## Small Business Case Study

Products Used: Dell Latitude with Intel® Centrino® Duo mobile technology, Dell PowerEdge servers with Dual Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology, Dell workstations with Intel® Pentium® 4 processor technology.  
Company Size: 10-25



# ProMation Automates Design with Intel

## Case Summary

ProMation Engineering has been providing specialized automation design and tooling services for the automotive industry for the past 11 years. With increasing file sizes leveraging 3D technology and more complex projects for the nuclear industry, the company's network was stretched to the breaking point. To proactively address dwindling storage space, they needed to upgrade their servers, while providing more power and mobility at the desktop level to enable further company growth. Storage requirements were growing at more than 15 percent per year, which meant an inexpensive and scalable solution was required.

## Challenge

Mark Zimny, ProMation Engineering President and founder, started the company more than a decade ago to provide engineering and automation services to the automotive industry. The company specializes in creating innovative engineering solutions and advanced manufacturing techniques that have transformed the company into one of the leaders in the automation industry. For its clients, ProMation specializes in customized automation equipment, ergonomic tools, robotics, vision systems, and system control technologies from concept to final implementation for new product launches and continuous production improvements.

With a constant eye on innovation, Zimny upgraded ProMation's manufacturing standards by implementing ISO, and was moving into a new market sector serving the nuclear industry. The company's revenues and staff have grown by more than 15 per cent per year, and with the large size of the engineering 3D files, the network was starting to slow. In addition, many individual work stations needed more power to build more and more complex machinery.

"I've had good growth and we need more professional structures and technology to continue growing at the pace we've targeted," says Zimny. "Computers are driving the growth of the company."

Server capacity was becoming an issue for the rapidly growing company. "We were running out of space very quickly, which was slowing the response times on the network," says Taslim Bholat, Costing/IT system co-ordinator.



**“With the dual core technology, the engineers can create complex drawings more quickly and have the responsiveness they need.”**

In addition, the company didn't have a firewall solution and with plans to expand access through a company Virtual Private Network (VPN), they needed to enhance corporate IT security.

### **Solution**

To address their need for more storage space and a faster server, as well as security solutions, ProMation brought in Lynch Digital Media, a company that specializes in outsourced IT support for small and medium companies. After working with ProMation for a year, Gavin Lynch of Lynch Digital Media said their preliminary assessments of the network proved they needed to expand the network. “They were running everything through one server which was beginning to affect performance. We wanted to spread out the load on to another server to increase the speed and reliability.”

A new Dell PowerEdge\* 2850 server with Dual Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology with expandable memory was brought in to manage the rapid growth of the company. Bholat says by adding the new server and balancing server responsibilities, users are seeing much faster response times when accessing the network.

“We've been using Intel processors for ProMation's servers and workstations since the beginning because we know they are top quality,” says Lynch. “With Intel® we get the reliability we want for our clients, as well as a solid reputation for industry leading performance.”

To address the security concerns, Lynch installed an enterprise gateway security solution to provide security for the entire business network through a single point. The enterprise gateway also provided enhanced email, antivirus and spam protection. In addition, travelling employees now access the network through the

enterprise gateway to provide a secure VPN connection to company data and files while protecting the proprietary nature of client projects.

### **Key Advantages**

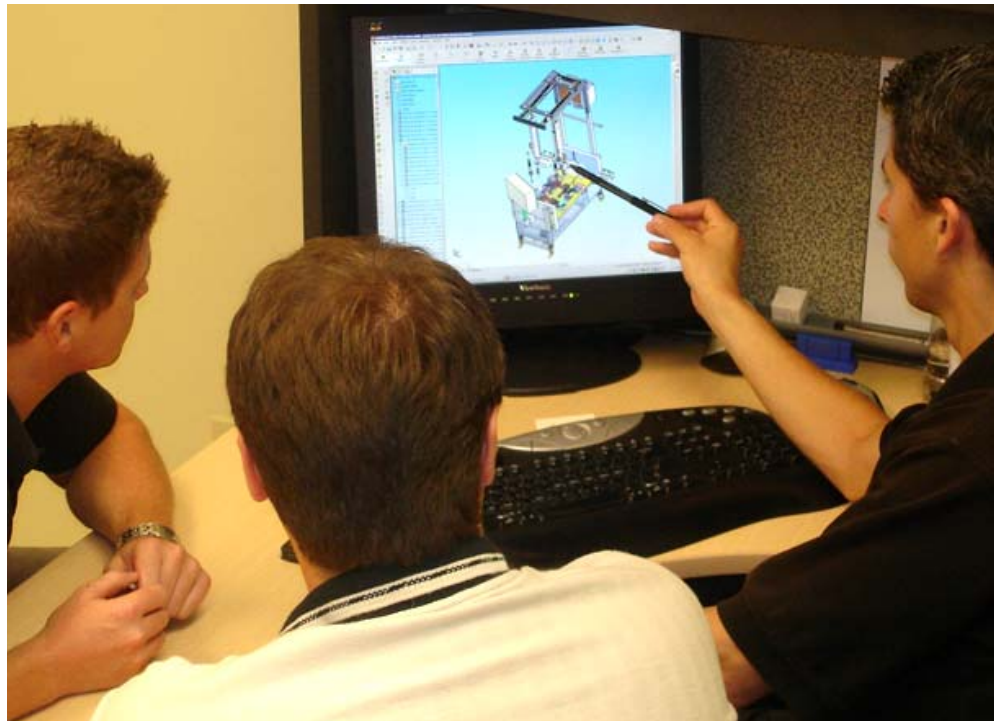
Since the upgrade, Lynch says the support calls have dropped dramatically because the network has enough capacity to handle peak loads.

“The dual core technology harnesses the up and down times on the network, providing enough speed and reliability during peak periods,” says Lynch. “We wanted to give ProMation a solution that would handle all network requests and the incredible data growth we've been seeing.”

In addition, Lynch says the company now has an enhanced backup system thanks to the second server with Dual Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology because they can backup files faster and more reliably than ever before. This means they know they have a complete backup with no data flaws.

“It's been a really good solution for us,” says Bholat, noting network speeds have increased by 30 percent and processor loads are down by more than 40 percent. “By equally balancing the server responsibilities, we've increased the response time of each server. Fewer requests for resources means faster response times.”

For Zimny, money invested on technology is money well spent. He sees the value in dedicating finances to technology because it allows them to stay at the leading edge of their industry, something that has been rewarded with new customers and expansion into new market sectors.



"Investment in technology is a key component of our plan for the future growth and profitability of the company," says Zimny. "We have a clear vision of how to use wireless laptops, and technology can enhance communication and improve efficiency. It's very important for me to have instant communication with all the people in my company – from engineers to the floor sweepers."

### **Being Recognized By The Best**

This past year, ProMation was selected by Atomic Energy of Canada (AECL) for a specialized project. The move into nuclear from their traditional automotive client base Zimny credits to the investment they've made into technology, and business processes such as ISO.

"Our investments have already started to yield results," says Zimny. "We were noticed by AECL, which is one of the best engineering companies in the world. We're being asked to design sensitive equipment for a nuclear reactor."

For Zimny, the investment in IT tools for his engineers makes sense. "I invest as much as I can every year upgrading our technology to stay ahead of the trends. It allows us to expand into new markets and grow the business. I don't wait for our customers to ask us to upgrade, I look at the market and make strategic investments."

### **Enhancing Customer & Manufacturing Practices**

With a faster network in place, ProMation is leveraging technology to enhance manufacturing resource planning (MRP) and customer relationship management (CRM) technology. Bholat says the new CRM program integrates many aspects of their business including costing, sales quotations and automatic hours tracking for billing. The server's dual core technology allows easy streaming of the corporate databases to accurately track and manage client jobs. "It's going to speed up our ability to track costs on any project and more accurately quote on our projects," says Bholat.

"This system allows us to continue improving our processes as part of ISO," says Zimny, noting that in order to bring in the new CRM and MRP system, the company needs the additional power, speed and reliability. By installing the new server with Intel® Xeon® processor technology, the company can roll out the programs that will enhance company efficiency and reduce duplication of effort.

### **Engineering Automation With Intel® Xeon®**

With drawings being developed in three dimensions with SolidWorks®, an engineering design program, ProMation engineers needed more speed and faster response times when working on the two to three projects underway at any given time.

ProMation upgraded some of their engineering teams to let them work on servers with Dual Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology. With the dual core technology, the engineers can create complex drawings more quickly, and have the responsiveness they need to rapidly change between programs with the improved throughput of multithreaded applications.

### **Marketing ProMation Without Wires**

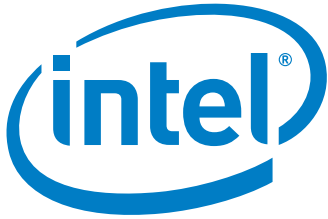
While building the business on the engineering side, the company is also investing heavily on business development and marketing. Jelena Hinic, ProMation's marketing specialist, leverages a wireless notebook with Intel® Centrino® Duo® mobile technology to conduct marketing research and fill the sales pipeline with a comprehensive lead generation program.

With job responsibilities including newsletters, technical articles and web site development, Hinic needed a faster notebook to allow her easy transition from one program to another. When she upgraded to her new Dell Latitude® notebook with Intel® Centrino® Duo® mobile technology she saw an instant improvement.

"I am flipping back and forth from one design program to a digital imaging program, while surfing the Internet to get critical prospect or competitor information," says Hinic. "I figure my new laptop is more than 30% faster than before."

When Hinic is working, it's not unusual to have more than five internet browsers open, as well as Microsoft Publisher, digital imaging software, and Microsoft PowerPoint. She says the ability to rapidly move between programs has sped up her ability to complete the web sites and newsletters produced for the company.

"We have ramped up the branding and internal communications within the company," says Hinic, adding that the company regularly hosts an employee open house. During these events, Hinic can easily open her laptop, connect to the wireless LAN and download the presentation which they are showing to the staff. "It's a real time saver," she says. Another benefit of wireless will come as Hinic expands her client interactions and spends more time on the road making presentations. The ease of wireless connectivity made possible by the Intel Centrino technology, coupled with secure VPN connectivity allowing access to network files while on the road means productivity won't be impacted when Hinic is out of the office.



### Future Uses

Zimny plans to continue to add new technology, upgrade computer systems, and increase the number of notebooks to enhance communication within the company. "If I could double the number of PCs, I would do it because of the enhanced communication we would get. I started with laptops on the shop floor so we can speed up communication and I now want to add more laptops so we can access anyone at any time with suggestions on process improvement. It fits well with our ISO plan," he says.

Hinic says they are also adding video capture technology to add streaming video to their marketing efforts, as well as plans to add a live web cast technology so clients can see a demonstration of the equipment being built for them. Lynch says that without the new server, these kinds of enhancements wouldn't be possible. They need the speed, coupled with the new server with Dual Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology which cleanly streams video over a high speed internet connection.

Find out more about a business solution that is right for your company by contacting your Intel representative, or visit the Intel Business Enterprise Web site at [intel.ca/business](http://intel.ca/business) or its industry solutions specific sites at [intel.ca/business/bss/industry](http://intel.ca/business/bss/industry).

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