



Small Business Case Study

Product Used: Intel® Xeon® processor technology, Intel® Centrino® processor technology

Company Size: 1-10



Best HR Solutions Recruits Intel

Case Summary

Known as one of Canada's top retirement communities, companies in British Columbia's Okanagan Valley struggle to find staff and attract top talent. When David Webb moved to Kelowna from the UK, he saw an opportunity to leverage technology to bring together businesses and employees, and increase efficiency of operations. When Webb was building his business, he was relying on Intel® to give him an edge.

Challenge

In the Okanagan Valley in British Columbia, there is a staffing shortage. It is hard to find the right people to do the jobs that growing businesses require. That was a business opportunity for David Webb, who moved to Kelowna in 2005. With a background in both recruiting and information technology, Webb saw an opportunity to help area businesses identify and find people to fill critical shortages, and founded Best HR Solutions Inc to respond to that demand.

"We specialize in recruiting for companies in the Okanagan who need skilled staff to support business success," says Webb, noting simply finding a body to do a job is not enough. They are looking for people who can increase the business results and profitability. "The fundamental problem in this region is that businesses need more people than are available, if they can't get the right people then their business suffers."

Best HR Solutions needed to make sure it had all the business processes, tools and technologies in place to identify the right people for the right positions, every time. That meant ensuring they have specialized staff internally who can screen candidates, as well as personnel who can get inside a client's business to understand their specific needs.

As a new business, it also meant setting up the infrastructure from the ground up to support the business when it opened, as well as a year down the road. "We needed to make sure our recruiters can apply the right knowledge at the right place to find the right people. Technology is critical in making that happen."

The question now was how to build the processes and systems the company needed.



"I believe in best of breed and Intel is best of breed," says Best HR Solution's David Webb. "It's a real time saving to be consistent with the hardware platform you choose."

Solution

With previous experience in IT, recruiting and business process planning, Webb and his team started building a customized HR recruiting and process management tool to integrate all aspects of the business from taking resumes of candidates and contact management to tracking jobs and billing.

To support this growing database information, they needed a network infrastructure that was robust enough to manage the company's growth, while providing secure remote access for their staff who are often working outside the office.

To start with a solid foundation, Best HR Solutions is using servers with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology. Their internal servers are backed up to an offsite collocation facility to provide increased redundancy of mission critical data.

"We had the advantage of building IT systems for others and knew how to integrate a business process flow into the construction of our network," says Webb, noting they looked for best of breed across the network. "I believe in best of breed and Intel is best of breed. It's a real time saving to be consistent with the hardware platforms you choose. It makes updating so much easier."

Building a network infrastructure from the ground up to launch a new company can be expensive but Webb says the investment is critical to business success.

"It's more expensive to buy things piecemeal and bolt it together," he says, noting the process planning they did at the beginning pays off as the business grows by being easily scalable. "What's more expensive is to lose a multi-million dollar client because you didn't want to spend a few thousand dollars."

After establishing a solid back office infrastructure with servers running Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor

technology, Best HR Solutions turned to the front office. The company established a wireless network in the office which is connected into their high speed LAN and equipped all their recruiters Motion Tablet PCs with Intel® Centrino® processor technology. Wireless provides the recruiters with flexibility to meet with clients and candidates in the boardrooms while being connected to important network-based files.

Key Advantages

For a business that depends on its technology for all aspects of its operations, Best HR Solution needed reliability. Since the entire business from resumes and client interactions to contact management and finance is computerized, being unable to access their data would mean the end of their business. While Webb admits some of their choices may have been overkill, it gives him the peace of mind he wanted.

When coupled with growth pinned at about 100 per cent per month, Best HR Solutions also wanted a solution that could easily scale as their business expanded.

"If you plan ahead, and do it right, the technology investment costs less in the long term than if you do it piecemeal and you end up with a more effective business."

Write On

Since all of the recruiters spend a lot of time in meetings both with clients offsite and candidates when it came to making decisions about personal computers, Best HR Solutions chose to equip them with Motion* Tablet PCs, powered by Intel® Centrino® processor technology. With the Tablet PC, recruiters can easily take notes in client meetings and instantly update the notes to the management system over a secure web interface.

"Tablet PCs are useful for three reasons," says Webb. "It



is socially acceptable to write notes on a Tablet PC the way typing on a notebook is not; you can easily translate your notes into electronic files that are attached to the database, which is a huge time saving and eliminates duplication of effort; and the technology opens up conversations with clients.”

“It also allows us to start talking with clients about our business process because the Tablet PC catches their attention. What it does is segue into how we are using technology to give good customer service and allows us to be more effective than our competition,” says Webb.

Since these client meetings are critical to understanding the job search criteria and the kind of candidate they are seeking, the notes taken on the Tablet PC allow the recruiters to precisely define and track the search. For Webb, it allows greater efficiency and eliminates unnecessary steps such as re-typing notes.

“If a Tablet PC allows one recruiter to place one more person a month, it more than pays for itself,” he says, noting the impression it leaves with clients is invaluable. “We won the business of an engineering firm because of our business process, professionalism and our technology. In that context, technology is cheap.”

Wireless Aids Staffing & Recruiting

Since their entire business is accessible over a secure web interface, Best HR Solutions leverages the mobility of the Tablet PC to give its staff flexibility. The Okanagan is experiencing staffing shortages in all industries, says Webb, adding that the company installed wireless point-to-point access into recruiters’ homes to make it easy for them to work whenever and wherever. This has helped them attract talent.

“The wireless connection to people’s houses is cheap when you know what you get out of it in terms of productivity. If we didn’t have technology, we would lose money and couldn’t do our jobs.”

“Recruiting doesn’t have to be a full time business but you have to be available all the time. Wireless gives us that flexibility to be accessible without being in an office 9-5,” he adds.

For one of Best HR Solutions’ staff, the wireless connectivity has allowed her to continue working while caring for her children. Without the flexibility of working at home with her Motion* Tablet PC with which she can easily connect to work using wireless, she might not have been able to take the position.

“It has really helped us attract people. We don’t care where they are working because we have the IT systems to allow them to be efficient and get the job done right.”

Making Connections

Best HR Solutions’ business is linking candidate talent with a client’s job requirements. To do that, they are constantly meeting with candidates, tracking experience and skills and matching those with client requirements. When a client requirement doesn’t meet skills they have in the database, they need to advertise and network to find the right people to put in front of that client.

Matching client requirements and candidates is complex. There are skill requirements that need to be screened, as well as softer qualities such as personality or team fit that need to be considered. With so many variables, a paper-based system is impossible.

“How could we find people if we just had resumes in a filing cabinet,” asks Webb. “Electronic records are the only way to go. What we do is so multi dimensional, there’s no other way you can do it.”

In addition to being able to mine the database for the right talent, the company has to be able to visually and dynamically track the candidates as they progress through the interviewing, as well as the client stages of recruiting from interviewing to offer.

“All of that can be time consuming and there is a lot of information to process, which would be impossible with a manual system,” he says. “You need to organize effectively so we can take on more jobs.”

More jobs mean more money for the company. He adds that having all the information centralized on their servers with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology means they can call up any candidate or any client and instantly know where they are in the process. And that means every member of the team can provide answers when clients call in for an update.

“Without this level of information access, we can’t do our job as effectively or help as many people so quickly,” he says. “Everyone can see the records and can have an intelligent conversation about the account status.”

Database is Mission Critical

The backbone of Best HR Solutions is its database. As a result, Best HR Solutions has built in redundancy to ensure business continuity. First, the servers with Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology allow easy back up and data protection. Next, the company also backs up to tape and has off site collocation to allow the business to be back up and running in less than 2 hours if there was a catastrophic failure such as a fire.

“We can’t afford to lose data so we have internal redundancy and we back up to offsite server. The archive logs are also backed up,” he says. “If we lose our systems for any length of time we’ve lost business.”

Additionally, the company wanted to ensure there is enough processing power to serve up candidate searches quickly. With tens of thousands of records in the database, finding the right candidate requires processing speed to get the candidates identified and contacted quickly. Webb didn’t want any lag time when processing queries and using servers powered by Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology, he doesn’t wait.

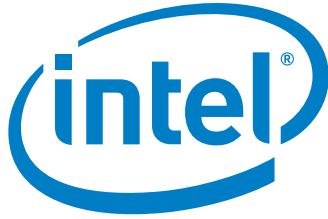
In addition to offering recruiting services, Best HR Solutions is also running a software company that supports clients on an application service provider (ASP) model. The software helps clients develop best practices to increase business efficiency by tapping into a knowledge database of business process and management information from a wide range of industry sectors. While this program is still in development, Webb says they wanted to ensure their infrastructure could scale to support the growing software business, as well as the growing recruiting business.

Future uses

Best HR Solutions sees managing growth as one of the most critical future challenges they will face. Having grown from nowhere to 10 people in a year and a half, Webb expects the same level of growth to continue, with revenues projected to increase from half a million to 10 million dollars in two years.

They also see an opportunity for business growth on the software side by offering businesses access to quality consultancy on their business process through a knowledge management system. Clients would access the database on an ASP model, query the database for specific answers to their business process questions and access expertise with the answers. For more complex questions, they would be referred to consultants who could take it to the next level.

The company is also in the process of developing an innovative recruiting search tool that integrates all aspects of a candidate’s skills set to take into consideration soft skills, experience and technical experience. It’s a more



complex type of query system that takes searching beyond a simple Boolean search that looks for specific markers based on a vague set of personnel requirements.

"We are doubling our business each month and our market is virtually unlimited," says Webb. "The only limits are finding people to help with the searches so we need technology to be constantly improving efficiencies so we can do more with less."



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