



Small Business Case Study

Product Used: Intel® Xeon® processor technology, Intel® Centrino® Duo mobile technology, Intel® Entry Storage System SS4000-E
Company Size: 1-25



Small Businesses Grow With Premiere System Solutions & Intel

Case Summary

Small companies require technology solution providers like Premiere System Solutions to focus on their bottom line, and provide answers to questions like “how does this help my business grow?” With an eye on strengthening business profitability, Premiere System Solutions relies on Intel® to provide the reliability their customers are looking for. Additional Intel® solutions provide clients with secure mobility to work anywhere.

Challenge

The initial focus of Premiere Systems Solutions was on building white box solutions for businesses. Over time, the company expanded to assist small companies – those with fewer than 50 people – to proactively manage their IT networks. This includes putting systems in place to ensure business continuity and the security of corporate intellectual property.

“Small businesses face many similar challenges,” comments company president Andy Szego. “While early in the business the focus was on providing desktop computers to clients, companies today are facing dramatic increases in the amount of data being produced, as well as an urgent need to ensure that that data is protected.”

At the same time, employees require more flexible IT solutions providing them access to their office while traveling or working offsite.

“Our focus is on supporting companies that are too small to require on-staff IT support,” adds Steven Lennox, Premiere System Solutions Vice President.

Premiere System Solutions reviews their clients’ entire corporate infrastructure, gains a deep understanding of the business requirements and competitive challenges, and then recommends specific IT solutions to address their top issues.



“The solution we are selling is a business solution and Intel has the reliability we need to give our clients,” says Andy Szego, president of Premiere System Solutions.

“We look at all IT from a business perspective,” says Lennox, noting the return on any investment should be immediately evident to the customer.

Solution

There are some common issues that Premiere System Solutions is seeing among their client base. Specifically, the need to move from a peer to peer network to a server environment that is powered by a reliable server infrastructure built around Intel® Xeon® processor technology.

The server provides a central platform from which key business functions such as backups, storage devices for archiving older corporate data, and firewalls can be managed easily, while enhancing security and ensuring business continuity.

A centralized data environment also provides companies with the ability to securely and efficiently collaborate. Businesses can take advantage of this environment to allow secure remote access for employees to increase mobility and leverage the flexibility of wireless solutions.

Key Advantages

Customers of Premiere System Solutions have the security of knowing the systems recommended are built on reliable, top quality technology that is affordable and robust.

“Intel® gives us what we need,” says Szego, noting their company focuses on technical excellence first and foremost. “The solution we are selling is a business solution and Intel has the reliability we need to give to our clients.”

Intel Servers: The Backbone of Small Business

Premiere System Solutions has witnessed a dramatic

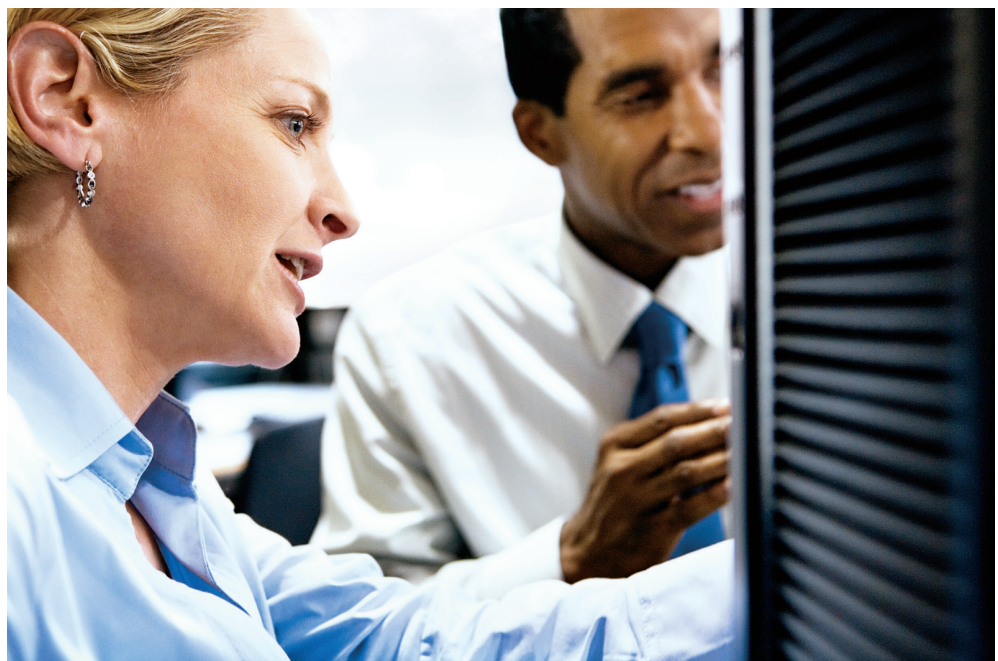
increase in the number of companies moving to a network infrastructure with servers. Businesses start looking at servers when their existing peer to peer network speed drops, they want more secure data sharing, offsite access to files for mobile workers, or they are looking for a more reliable system for backing up crucial corporate data. Szego notes that the costs of a server have come down to make the price accessible to more small businesses, and the benefits are making the adoption of a server environment mission critical.

“Collaboration is key for every business today. With a small business server product, companies get unparalleled collaboration, coupled with increased security,” notes Lennox.

Increased security with centralized firewalls, spam filtering and anti virus protection are some of the immediate benefits of implementing a server environment with Intel® Xeon® processor technology. Virtual private networks (VPN) can be deployed providing secure access to data by mobile users. “All of these things are far more manageable with a server,” adds Lennox. “Intel Server Systems with Intel Xeon processors are the most durable and reliable products on the market, which is why we recommend them to our customers.”

Companies need a robust infrastructure to manage demands placed on its network by the amount of data produced by staff. Data is growing at 50 to 300 percent in a year, making data storage management a hot button in many businesses.

This situation is not helped by regulatory changes that require companies to maintain more and more records for longer periods of time. “The reality is the more you have access to, the more you want to access,” says Szego, noting companies are looking for easy access to archive files, while ensuring they have all mission critical data securely backed up.



Securing Volumes of Data

Whether from documents and archiving, or the growth of the business, Lennox says businesses are facing significant increases in the amount of data being generated on a daily basis.

Premiere System Solutions was called upon by one client to support 80 CAD operators. Without a formalized server network, the designers often didn't have access to the drawings they needed, which meant they couldn't get the job done efficiently.

"It gets expensive for the company when their staff can't access the information they need. Without access, they can't do the job, and the cost of implementing servers with Intel® Xeon® processor technology was easily justified when contrasted against the downtime for staff and inability to complete the work of their clients."

Mobility Made Easy With Intel Centrino

Many businesses strive to provide their staff the opportunity to balance work and life at home. Mobility solutions that provide users with seamless access to corporate data are in demand. Szego remarks that without a proper server environment, supported by Intel® Xeon® processor technology, businesses can't provide secure VPN access to remote workers.

"The ability to work any time and any place is becoming essential for business," says Lennox. "With Intel® Centrino® mobile technology, people can do business in a less structured office environment. They can move around, share access to data and manage information securely."

The virtual office is powered by IP telephony giving remote users timely access to clients. Lennox comments that this kind of mobility is not possible without a solid server infrastructure. The extended battery life of the new Intel® Centrino® Duo mobile technology enhances productivity for road warriors – even when power access is not available.

Security Inside & Out

It is not surprising to hear that many small businesses are becoming concerned about securing their data from both malicious attacks, as well as competitors.

For one business that relies on their proprietary polling infrastructure for competitive advantage, the company needed a bullet-proof server environment, coupled with a firewall and secure VPN connectivity for remote uses.

"Security is always a concern with remote workers but if you build the network properly, and put the right security protocols in place, your business will be protected," says Lennox, adding other innovations such as biometrics helps ensure corporate data protection even when being accessed from outside the firewall.

Technology Builds Base For Expansion

Growth and expansion are the lifeblood of small businesses. Premiere System Solutions was called to a manufacturing client who specializes in custom labelling for business. The company was using three different software solutions to track sales, accounting and to estimate work. It had a manual back up system that was unreliable. There were no facilities for sharing data mitigating attempts by staff to collaborate on projects. The peer to peer environment couldn't allow mobile solutions for its workforce. With plans to acquire a competitor in Quebec, as well as explosive sales growth, the company knew its computer and network infrastructure was not up to the challenge.

Premiere System Solutions conducted a comprehensive review of their operation and recommended a solution to not only handle current

requirements, but to also provide a stable platform for ongoing scalable growth.

"Uptime and network availability was a real issue for them," says Steve Chandler, Sr. Systems Engineer, noting that the customer had realized the need to integrate their sales, accounting and invoicing systems.

"We took the time to understand their specific industry, researched the software they were interested in implementing and made sure the recommended hardware options could support their plans," says Szego, noting a formal network powered by Intel® Xeon® processor technology, mobility options with laptops with Intel® Centrino® mobile technology, as well as an automated back up system to protect their information, were top priorities. Integrating the Quebec acquisition with their Ontario operations was also of great importance.

The solution was to install a server running Microsoft Small Business Server 2003* powered by Dual-Core Intel® Xeon® processor technology in a rack configuration. Microsoft Small Business Server 2003* provided an advanced software solution protecting corporate data while allowing secure access to critical business features such as corporate data, e-mail, Internet connection, internal Web sites, and printers in an integrated software tool. Mobile users were accommodated by the built-in support for mobile devices, and the secure remote access utilities available in the application. Premiere System Solutions also installed the Intel® Entry Storage System SS4000-E to provide high performance data back up and bare-metal recovery for mobile executives. The combination provides the stability, security and scalability the company needs to manage their projected explosive growth.

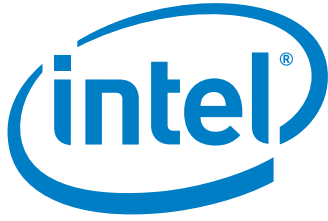
"We look to deploy the best practices that meet the specific business requirements of the customer," says Lennox. "We take the time to understand the business, industry and challenges before making any hardware or software recommendations. This business methodology has allowed Premiere System Solutions to build and expand. Customers know we take the time to understand their business, and we continue to work with them as their businesses evolve. Further, with low staff turnover, clients can work with the same people day in and day out - people who really understand their business needs."

Future Uses

Successful deployment of mobile solutions will play a pivotal role in the future of many small businesses. Szego and Lennox note that mobility and flexible work environments are key to staff retention. "More and more people are going to be working from home offices, so businesses need to ensure that their network infrastructure can securely support those workers from anywhere. And, by adding a combination of Voice over IP, wireless access and a VPN connection, workers can be productive from anywhere."

Further business growth for Premiere System Solutions will depend on their ability to stay focused on their customers and tailor their expertise to match.

Szego concludes that they build long-term, referral relationships with their clients and are called on to provide the right IT solutions to address changing business needs. They aren't simply a supplier of hardware to companies but a business partner who can tap into a business problem and offer the best possible solution to address it.



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