Agility networks, LLC

Case Study: Bensenville Community Credit Union

Chicagoland Credit Union Utilized Agility Network Services, LLC:

Complete technology infrastructure upgrade and fully outsourced I.T. management.

Client Testimonial

"I would recommend Agility Networks as the preferred choice for outsourced I.T. to any Credit Union in the Chicagoland area with assets between 5 and 45 million. With technology ever changing, Agility not only understands how my Credit Union runs, but they add high level professionalism and expertise which has helped my Credit Union achieve all of its technology goals, at a very affordable price. Outsourcing our I.T. department to Agility has not only saved me thousands of dollars, but I am now able to sleep at night, always knowing that my technology is well thought of."
-Roger Peters, President/CEO, Bensenville Community Credit Union.

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Company Profile

Bensenville Community Credit Union is a financial institution serving the heart of the Bensenville Community in Illinois since 1934. Currently, BCCU serves more than 4,500 members with a wide range of products and services.

Business Situation

Credit Union's typically serve member needs by maintaining a very personal relationship with their member base. Products and services of credit unions vary widely but normally offer similar draft/deposit accounts and financing options.

In order to offer more efficient services to their members, the Bensenville Community Credit Union was aware that they would need to invest in the information technology areas where underlying issues were contributing to customer downtime due to inefficient systems, unmanageable systems, and outdated hardware/software.

Technical Situation

The technology in place prior to the infrastructure reorganization and upgrade was very outdated including the network cabling. Unsupported and unintelligent switching devices were in place and the PC base was also outdated. Data backups were compromised as were defenses against viruses and malicious software. The email technology utilized was relatively unsecured, decentralized, and prone to support issues.

These issues are not uncommon; businesses of all types must struggle to maintain the highest security levels, updated equipment, general system management, and service levels to internal and external users.

Due to the nature of the business, downtime constraints needed to be strictly adhered to as the organization's telephone banking system was available to members on a 24x7x365 basis. Internet connectivity was essential to the business as was having secure perimeter protection which included a corporate-grade firewall capable of handling multiple private networks. Several VPN tunnels were also deployed to securely connect to external vendor systems.

Whenever there was a need for systems to be offline this needed to be communicated with minimal impact on the organization and most importantly, BCCU members.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:

- Agility provided planning and execution of the technology environment upgrade. This consisted of an overhaul of the existing infrastructure from the ground up. The entire project was a multi-phased approach toward achieving a more stable and manageable computer network system.

- Project included a complete overhaul of the cabling infrastructure to CAT-6 specifications which was coordinated with Agility's cabling partners.

- Installation and reorganization of all network infrastructure components including routers, switches and server-based hardware into new rack infrastructure. Network switch components were upgraded where required.

- Deployment of new, fully managed tape backup, power management, printing and a centrally managed anti-virus solutions.

- Deployment of automated Microsoft PC and server patch management solution to enhance network security .

- Deployment of new personal computing environment for teller line machines to enhance teller based services to members.

- Implementation of Microsoft's Active Directory to enhance security and access to resources.

- Migration of email system from POP3 to full Microsoft Exchange Server solution for better collaboration among employees and members.

- Agility Networks worked in various capacities to provide full project management as well as coordinating and managing tasks with multiple vendors.

- Implementation of 24x7x365 remote monitoring and management system to alert of potential and actual issues and failures.

- Implementation of secure virtual private network (VPN) tunnels to Line Of Business vendors to enable faster, more streamlined response to member enquiries - including integration with major credit card companies.

- Provided vital support and assistance to third party teller line application vendors in migration to new Line of Business application.

- Installation of a digital scanning solution capable of sending scans via email from Digital Sender and saving scans to secure network storage location, as well as converting scanned documents into searchable text.

- Project based work spanned 12 months with involvement from multiple vendors nationwide.

Decision Process

The Bensenville Community Credit Union utilized an array of I.T. providers before choosing Agility Networks as the vendor for their forthcoming I.T. projects and on-going management services. BCCU was looking for an outsourced technology partner that had the depth of experience in planning, implementing and supporting a financial environment with a wide range of applications and remote connectivity.

Agility was chosen based on past experience with developing a strategy and successfully implementing and supporting a diverse financial environment.

Solution

Overview of phases:

- Phase 1: Full System and network audit to identify vulnerabilities, provide recommendations and design a full upgrade path with timeframes and costs appropriate to BCCU's schedule.

- Phase 2: Implementation of new CAT6 cabling for the organization in preparation for new infrastructure.

- Phase 3: New rack implementation to secure/stabilize all network devices.

- Phase 4: Microsoft Active Directory design and implementation.

- Phase 5: Migration from POP3 based email to a full SMTP based Microsoft Exchange server.

- Phase 6: Desktop/laptop rollout company wide.

- Phase 7: New network switch upgrade to enhance connectivity and throughput.

- Phase 8: Deployment of new, centrally managed anti-virus solution.

- Phase 9: New printer deployment company wide.

- Phase 10: New LTO3 tape backup solution implementation.

- Phase 11: Implementation of new UPS battery backup systems for greater fault tolerance.

In order to successfully achieve a smooth migration and transition over to new infrastructure, Agility consultants continuously worked with multiple vendors and utilize project management skills to ensure all tasks were completed on time.

Benefits

By deploying new infrastructure components and changing aspects of the logical and physical network such as the implementation of Active Directory and Microsoft Exchange server, the organization was able to utilize new technologies which resulted in more productivity and enabled employees to perform more efficiently. This was a direct result of the implementation of more stable and fault tolerant network systems which in turn enabled Bensenville Community Credit Union to provide much more efficient services to their member base.

Products and Services Used.

- A complete and comprehensive System and network audit was performed to identify vulnerabilities, provide recommendations and design a full upgrade path with timeframes and costs.
- New CAT6 cabling was installed company wide to prepare for new infrastructure.
- New Gigabit Ethernet switches were implemented to provide faster and more reliable network throughput.
- Microsoft Active Directory design and implementation.
- Messaging and Collaboration: based on Microsoft Exchange Server.
- New Backup and recovery solution implementation.
- Implementation of new network printers.
- Implementation of network scanning functionality.
- Implementation of new desktop/laptop computers.
- Installation and support of vendor network equipment to facilitate third party applications.
- Deployment of new, centrally managed anti-virus solution.

Partner Companies

Vendor relationships were also managed by Agility throughout the project. Agility managed Internet service providers, Line of Business application vendors and cabling/rack contractors. Some of the companies involved were OpenSolutions, Fidelity National Information Services, PSCU Financial services, Certegy, and others. Agility ensured that deadlines were met; any foreseen problems were flagged prior to any major issues and made for very good project management.

Synopsis of the Case

Agility provided a diverse set of services on projects that included coordinating with multiple vendors and contractors, many hours of planning and implementation which resulted in a high level of client satisfaction. The projects were successfully completed within the constraints provided. Experience, planning and on-going management of the vendors, people and technology involved resulted in Agility exceeding customer expectations for the project.