



Always Thinking Ahead

High Availability Services

Testimonial:

Alderbrook Industries

In the fall of 1997, Alderbrook was faced with many of the typical challenges presented by an acquisition, not the least of which was suddenly outmoded information technology.

Alderbrook, a privately owned manufacturer and distributor headquartered in Pickering, Ontario, supplies seasonal lights and decorations to major retailers across Canada and exports to the United States, South America and Asia. In many ways it was a perfect match when Noma Industries decided to divest its Christmas Products division located in nearby Toronto.

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"When we completed the acquisition, the company instantly tripled in size," says Alderbrook's president, Charles Parker. "We had to increase our office staff dramatically, make major changes in our headquarters facility to accommodate them, integrate a new manufacturing facility, and upgrade our systems and network."

"We needed to do things faster," Parker continues. "Essentially, we had three times the work to accomplish in the same amount of time – but our order entry system slowed down with the increase in users and transactions, and our new manufacturing facility wasn't tied into the

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network. We knew our technology was no longer adequate to support the business, but without an in-house IT staff, we needed to rely on someone who could tell us what had to be done and then proceed with implementation."

Alderbrook evaluated several vendors, but ultimately selected Compaq Customer Services to assess the situation, recommend a course of action, and implement the solution. "I wanted to be confident that everything would be done in a thorough, professional manner and that everything would be running smoothly as we entered our peak season in 1998," states Charles Parker. "We process and ship a large percentage of our orders between Labor Day and mid-November, and we couldn't afford to have any unresolved problems."

In June 1998, following the initial consulting engagement and Alderbrook's acceptance of the resulting plan, Compaq delivered the complete solution. A new server was installed and configured along with a 10/100 hub. A second server was installed at the newly acquired manufacturing plant, establishing a link with headquarters and electronic mail services between the two sites. The server operating system was upgraded to

intraNetware 4.11, and all clients were migrated to Windows 95. Additionally, the office environment was optimized by fine-tuning the allocation of computing and printing resources.

"I was especially pleased with the professionalism of the Compaq people and their spirit of cooperation," he concludes. "Compaq Services really went out of their way to accommodate our requirements."

"We are very happy with the results," Parker says. "The benefits to our business operations are apparent, and the work was top notch. There were no problems throughout our busy season this year."

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