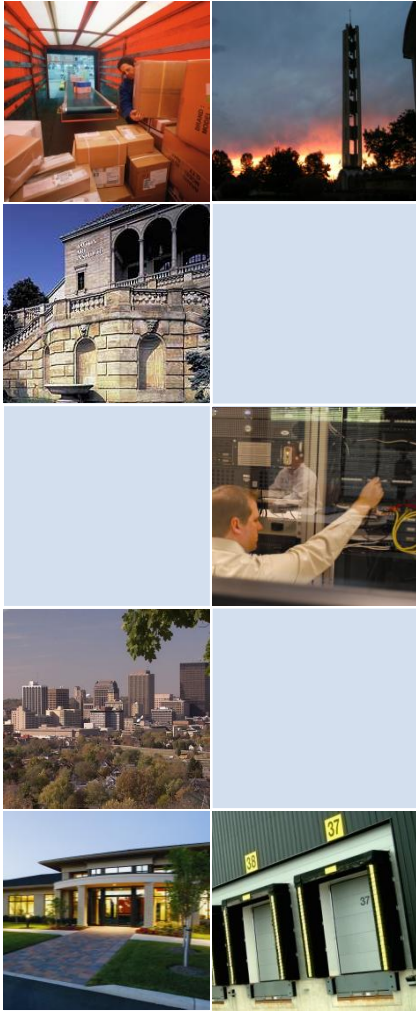




THE GREENTREE GROUP

The Competitive Edge Solution®



Dayton Area Distributor Puts the Parts Together

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Dayton Area Distributor Puts the Parts Together

Summary

A parts and distribution company needed their IT infrastructure to efficiently drive their business. As the business grew it became harder to manage the inventory and day-to-day activities because the IT infrastructure was cumbersome and slow. The Greentree Group assessed the problems and came up with a complete solution. Inefficiencies stemmed from out of date systems and software, different releases of software that were incompatible and burdensome business processes. Greentree recommended updating the company's desktops, server, and software, as well as, updating day-to-day activities to benefit from the company's advance in IT. As a result of Greentree's recommendation, the company implemented the full solution. Now the parts and distribution company runs efficiently because of an updated, compatible IT infrastructure. Software and systems can now communicate with one another effectively, the systems are more reliable and faster, and the employees have eliminated unnecessary work. Instead of crippling their business, IT is now driving their business efficiencies.

Problem

Like many small distribution companies, growth caused a need to change the way things were done. The company was running outdated systems that were slow and unreliable. The business software was also outdated and not useful for managing the inventory. All of this added up to one word: inefficiency.

The outdated systems were a major pain point for the distribution company. The systems were no longer supported by Microsoft, meaning a crash would result in major losses of valuable company data. If the company lost all of its records and information it would probably put them out of business. The outdated systems were also slow and unreliable, which hindered the ability of employees to work efficiently.

The business software that the parts and distribution company was using was also outdated and difficult to use. The software managed the company's inventory, but this was a very labor intensive task that required employees to manually enter and update information. This was a problem because the company's inventory was constantly changing, which meant employees were continuously updating the inventory.

Solution

The Greentree Group assessed the situation of the parts distributor and recommended several. The company needed to update desktops, server, and software, as well as, day-to-day activities to benefit from the advance in IT. When implemented, these updates would facilitate a gain in efficiency for the distributor.

Updating the systems was the first challenge for The Greentree Group. The distribution company needed to



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replace all desktops and their server. Greentree gathered a list of requirements and placed orders for all of the company's new equipment. When Greentree chose the server, they selected one that would be robust enough to handle the company's needs both now and in the future. Greentree demonstrated the power of Windows Small Business Server 2003 R2; the mail system, ease of management, simplified remote access and network update capabilities. The server was set up at Greentree's offices to test functionality before implementation at the parts distributor's facility. Greentree assisted the distribution company's IT contact in working on the new server to become acquainted with the system and to learn how to manage it. The desktops were ordered, tested at Greentree's facilities as part of the network, and installed at the distributor's site when the server was installed. Both the server and desktops use the latest versions of Microsoft software which increased reliability and efficiency.

Since the software supporting the business was critical, The Greentree Group worked with the distribution company to find the right solution. Greentree contacted several software providers in search of the software that fit the distributor's unique needs. Employees of the distribution company attended a live demonstration at Greentree's office and watched webcasts to learn more about the software packages. The company chose a software platform that was tailored for businesses like them with the ability to be customized to fit their specific needs. Once the software package was selected, Greentree worked with the vendor to learn the software and what was needed to transition seamlessly to the new software package.

With Greentree's assistance, the distributor was able to weigh all possible options and choose the best solution that fit their company's needs. Greentree was able to provide expertise to the distributor, but also help them realize their specific business needs so that they could choose a "best fit" IT solution; because it's about your business...not technology!

Benefits

With outdated systems the parts distribution company had issues with reliability, as well as efficiency. With systems that were no longer supported by Microsoft any crash would mean a catastrophic data loss. The software was tedious and difficult to manage. All of these factors contributed to a loss of efficiency for the company.

Installing new hardware such as the server and desktops helped the distribution company in many ways. With the prior systems, any desktop computer failure meant a possible loss of the user's information. The new server stores all of the users' information and is backed up each night. If a desktop computer fails, the user's information is still available because it is stored in a central location on the server. Greentree also formulated a backup solution for the server itself. Using Small Business Server backup, all of the distributor's data is backed up each night. Key employees receive a report each morning that displays the server details including the backup status, update status, critical alerts and more.

Microsoft Office 2003 Professional was ordered with each desktop. While the server has a very good junk mail filter, it is more powerful when integrated with Outlook 2003. Junk mail is filtered from the inbox and sent



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directly to the junk mail folder. This reduces the time spent eliminating spam from the inbox and is another efficiency gained by utilizing technology.

Using their new software, invoices are faxed directly from the server. This saves the time spent printing the invoice, creating a cover page and faxing the invoice to the customer. These changes have reduced the amount of paper used and made the employees more productive, yet another gain in efficiency.

The business software that Greentree recommended has made managing orders and inventory quicker and easier. This reduces the amount of time employees spend on orders and inventory and allows them to contribute in other ways around the company. Since the software is easier to use the learning curve is less disruptive to the company. The software is also compatible with the distributor's other systems allowing employees to manage inventory, warehousing, orders, finances, and reports from one program.

The distribution company has benefited in several ways. The new equipment and technology has helped them change their business. They no longer have to worry about computer failure and data loss. The staff is able to work more efficiently and more productively. Additionally, the company has an up-to-date inventory list.



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At a Glance

Problem

- A parts distribution company was utilizing dated technology
- There was a very high risk of computer failure and data loss
- As a result of dated technology, systems were incompatible and the company couldn't run operations efficiently

Solution

- The Greentree Group implemented all new hardware from desktops to a server
- A backup solution, with redundancy, was introduced
- An updated business software package that was easier to manage and compatible was installed
- Greentree researched, demonstrated, and helped the distributor realize how technology could improve business efficiency

Benefit

- The new hardware increased reliability and speed
- New software systems increased compatibility and ease of use while decreasing the time and effort required to manage the operations
- Data backups protect the company from data loss
- The distribution company is more efficient and proactive with respect to their technology and business

About The Greentree Group

The Greentree Group is a privately owned business founded in 1993, with corporate headquarters in Dayton, Ohio and operational locations in Dallas, TX, Richmond, VA, St. Louis, MO, Washington, DC, Warner Robins, GA, Oklahoma City, OK, and Ogden, UT. Greentree provides demonstrated quality in the core competencies of information technology, financial management and program management. Within these competencies Greentree utilizes emerging and leading edge technologies in order to address and overcome a wide array of challenges. The Group is a talented collection of analysts and problem-solvers truly providing "The Competitive Edge Solution[®]". For more information please contact (937)-490-5500 or email information@greentreegroup.com.



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