

HALTON CO. | Reliability means happy end-users



CLIENT SUCCESS STORY



New e-mail system results in higher productivity for Caterpillar dealer—and dependable service for its customers

With an ever-increasing dependence on e-mail—and a system that was close to the breaking point—Caterpillar dealer Halton Co. knew it was time to find an answer—and fast. They turned to technology partner Advanced System Designs to develop and install a solution that not only solved their immediate problem, but also made it easier to meet and exceed the needs of their customers.

Halton sells, leases, and rents new and used Caterpillar equipment and provides parts and services throughout Northwest Oregon and Southwest Washington.

With nearly 350 employees in its five stores, reliable e-mail is a necessity. “We rely on e-mail to communicate internally and with our customers and vendors,” says Chris Tsikayi, Halton’s Network and Technical Services Manager. “Without e-mail, our business is severely impacted. Our system was close to failing and we did not have the internal resources to remedy the situation.”

Once Halton decided a solution was vital, choosing a partner for the job was easy. “ASD designed our original e-mail system,” Tsikayi says. “We had worked with them in the past and were pleased with their performance. We trusted them to do our e-mail migration.”

Identifying all the needs

A reliable e-mail system was an immediate concern, and ASD provided a viable solution—migrating Halton’s existing Domino e-mail environment to the most up-to-date version on a new server.

But Halton identified other needs as well—from filtering capabilities to helping them support their link with Caterpillar. ASD combined expertise from all of its focus areas to meet those business requirements. “We are flexible,” says Brent Hoover, ASD Vice President of Consulting Services.





“ASD was fantastic to work with. I received regular phone calls to make sure that we were happy with the way the project was developing. I will definitely look to ASD for solutions in the future.”—Chris Tsikayi, Network and Technical Services Manager, Halton Co.

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Business Results



“We can build a solution even if it doesn’t fit one of our verticals. Our goal is to meet the customer’s requirements and exceed expectations.”

Unsolicited e-mails, commonly known as spam, had gone from being a minor annoyance at Halton to a major problem that reduced employee productivity. In addition to inconveniencing employees, spam overwhelms the network by using up bandwidth.

The solution was a spam filter. “Our end-users are much happier now that they are not receiving as much junk mail,” says Tsikayi. “Our new filtering system is able to block a significant amount of spam.”

In addition, Halton expressed concern about security—keeping its network safe from viruses and computer breaches. “We added enhanced security to the network to protect them from internal and external attacks,” says Hoover. “We also installed a firewall to scan e-mails coming through Halton’s direct connection to the Caterpillar network.”

ASD also handled all the software licensing related to the project. Some software licenses are based on the number of machines running the program, while others are based on the number of possible users. “ASD made our lives a lot easier by handling all of the licensing,” Tsikayi says.

These solutions met all of Halton’s needs—improving employee productivity, keeping confidential data from unauthorized use, conserving bandwidth and decreasing legal liability.

Delivering the right products

ASD recommended a two-server approach to support Halton’s new Domino e-mail environment. A Simple Mail Transfer Protocol (SMTP) server is responsible for running the spam, anti-virus and intrusion detection software, while a Windows 2003 server handles mail implementation, which supports both calendaring and notes. ASD migrated Halton’s current iSeries implementation of

Domino to the latest version on the Windows 2003 server.

“Our IT department is happier with our e-mail system on a Windows server, because we are more familiar with that platform,” Tsikayi says.

Doing it all

Speed was a priority for Halton—and one way to ensure a quick turnaround was to have ASD provide a turnkey solution. ASD put together all the resources, installed the hardware and software, and then set up the new system.

“If the customer wants it, we can do it all,” Hoover says. “It eases their mind if we do the complete project—plus their staff is often overburdened and doesn’t have the time to spare. Sometimes the skills required to do this type of project are not those that IT people need day-to-day. It was a faster turnaround for ASD to do the whole job.”

“ASD sent two people to our site for close to a week,” Tsikayi says. “One person migrated our e-mail and upgraded the server, then helped us upgrade our clients. The other person installed our second server.”

While Halton was happy to let ASD perform the installation, they knew it was important for their IT staff to feel comfortable with the system and have the knowledge necessary to operate it. “They wanted a solution that their people could take care of,” Hoover says. “When we were done with the installation, we transferred skills to their operations staff.”

Making employees happy—and more productive

Halton’s new e-mail solution has had a positive impact on the company and its employees. It’s faster and more dependable. And the time employees spend sorting through unwanted e-mails has been significantly reduced. The end result is a system that provides the tools Halton employees need to do their jobs—and ultimately to better serve their customers.

Technology People. Business Results.

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We implement total solutions for your business e-mail needs, including IBM servers, anti-spam and anti-virus applications. We offer turnkey solutions—finding the answers, installing the hardware and software, then transferring skills to your IT staff.

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“Everyone is much happier now that we have a newer, stable system,” Tsikayi says. “Our new system is much faster, has more storage space, and the interface is much nicer to work with. This all translates into happier end-users.”

“We view this project as a huge success.”