

Case Study

Groton Biosystems

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THE CHALLENGE

As Groton Biosystems experienced accelerated growth, Tom Stoodley, the company's Director of Software, decided it was time to find a new technology partner with broad capabilities.

"We had been working with an individual consultant to support our IT needs, but as we grew, we realized that we required a higher level of support," Stoodley said. "We needed a partner who could provide support 24x7 with experience in the latest technologies so that we could provide services to our clients as efficiently as possible."

When Groton Biosystems considered making this change, the company was relying on an old server running earlier versions of Microsoft Active Directory and Exchange. The hard drives were also approaching capacity. "When we made the decision to partner with a solution provider, we looked for a company that could respond to our needs and roll-out a new solution quickly," Stoodley said. "We also needed them to do so without impacting our business operations. We could not afford significant downtime."

The older versions of Active Directory and Exchange also prevented Groton Biosystems from taking advantage of some key application upgrades. "We were not able to use the latest upgrades," Stoodley said. "This was becoming an issue for maintaining a stable work environment. We use the network continuously, and we were worried that it would go down. We were also concerned about security given the age of the system, and we knew support for our versions of Active Directory and Exchange would not continue for long."

THE SOLUTION

Stoodley began his search for a technology partner on the Internet. He identified three local companies, including Covisia Solutions, Inc. "We set out from the beginning to partner with a local company," Stoodley said. "A local connection facilitates communication and makes it easier to work together."

The cost of the proposal that Covisia submitted was not the lowest among the three potential partners, but Stoodley had a high degree of confidence that Covisia would provide the type of support Groton Biosystems needed. "They made several visits

Key Benefits of Covisia's Microsoft Active Directory and Exchange Migration

- Allows Groton Biosystems to deploy the latest end-user application updates.
- Provides a stable and reliable computer network so Groton Biosystems can maintain business operations 24x7.
- Led to on-going technology partnership with Covisia Systems, which now maintains their computer network, responds quickly to urgent requests and helps Groton Biosystems adapt its infrastructure for future technology upgrades.

About Groton Biosystems

With headquarters in Boxborough, Massachusetts, Groton Biosystems provides leading-edge, process-monitoring solutions for protein production companies as well as government agencies, research institutions, and universities. With a focus on the biotech industry, Groton Biosystems offers on-line and laboratory solutions that monitor the research and manufacturing process. In addition to complete in-house manufacturing, the company's 14,000 square foot, state-of-the-art facility is equipped with a methods-development laboratory to provide customers with on-site application services. Groton Biosystems also offers support services and stocks all necessary supplies for system maintenance.

before putting a proposal on the table and did much more extensive investigation on which to base their recommendations. The other potential partners did not take as much time to understand our environment.”

Stoodley added that another major differentiator was that the other vendors planned to use contractors. “With Covisia, we interact only with Covisia employees. We prefer this approach because it gives us greater continuity in service.”

The migration to the latest versions of Active Directory and Exchange went smoothly. “Covisia has a lot of experience in migrating companies like ours from an older platform,” Stoodley said. “We experienced no downtime except during the physical cutover, which we planned for a late Friday afternoon. Covisia readily agreed to work as long as necessary to make sure the system would be ready by Monday morning. As it turned out, the system was available Friday night.”

In addition to deploying Microsoft Active Directory and Exchange, Covisia also installed an HP ProLiant 450 server and Trend Micro anti-virus software. Since the migration, Covisia has provided preventative maintenance services by visiting every three months to make sure the Groton Biosystems network performs properly and to install application updates. Covisia also provides 24x7 support by phone, remote access, and on-site when necessary.

THE BENEFITS

Groton Biosystems relies heavily on the new server, operating system, and e-mail application to run the business. “Everything we do is on that server, so the reliability that Covisia has provided is crucial,” Stoodley said. “About six weeks after the migration, our old server actually had a non-recoverable hard crash. Fortunately we no longer relied on it for day-to-day operations. Covisia had completed our migration just in time – we were fortunate they deployed their solution so quickly.” For a company like Groton Biosystems, a reliable partner like Covisia is key to overall success. “I am the IT person by default - we don't have an internal IT staff,” Stoodley explained, “But the partnership with Covisia is just like having an internal IT staff. They keep our server up and running so we don't have to worry about our computer network.”

Stoodley said the 24x7 coverage offered by Covisia is important. “Like many businesses, we often have people here on weekends so getting coverage is essential.” Groton Biosystems also takes advantage of Covisia's experience since Covisia is not new to the biotech industry. Every systems engineer who provides support on the phone, remotely or on-site is a full-time employee. They are all familiar with the Groton Biosystems network. “The greatest benefits we receive from Covisia are the reliability of service and the level of service Covisia provides,” Stoodley said. “If Covisia had not deployed the upgrade as quickly as they did, we would have been dead in the water when our old server crashed. That's representative of the ultimate ROI – they take away the worry. The migration allowed us to continue working smoothly with a more robust, state-of-the-art system. It's also easier now for us to do our own basic user administration.”

Stoodley also emphasized the benefits of a small but growing company making the transition from an individual IT consultant to a fully-staffed solution provider like Covisia. “Many small businesses that experience success like us go through the same process,” Stoodley said. “You reach the point at which you need full-time support and that means moving to a full-service company. A significant advantage with Covisia is that there is always someone on the other end of the phone who is able to help when you have a problem. They also remotely monitor our system 24x7 and notify us when something is not working properly.”

Going forward, Groton Biosystems anticipates enhancing the software packages that it uses and adding new packages to support its operations. The company will rely on Covisia to make sure the changes are compatible with Groton Biosystems' infrastructure. “Covisia will tell us exactly how we need to reconfigure our systems and network,” Stoodley said. “It's reassuring to have a technology partner like Covisia who can guide you through major network and application changes.”

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About Covisia Solutions

Covisia Solutions is a full-service IT solutions provider focused on helping organizations align their IT operations with their business to improve information access and security, reduce complexity and cost, and manage technology to meet the needs of competitiveness, growth and change. Whether your need is improved information access or greater security, a network upgrade or strategic planning, Covisia Solutions can help your IT organization deliver for business.