



BEACON FINANCIAL GROUP INC.

> Industry

Mortgage

> Client Information

Beacon Financial Group Inc. is a mortgage company in Marysville, Washington.

> Problem

Beacon Financial Group Inc. was looking to solve three major problems: availability, security, and cost. They wanted a fully functional system before the opening of a new office.

> Solution

Nitix-powered Net Integrator Mark I server

> Quote

"As a mortgage broker, the security of our data is very important. The Nitix server setup allows us to accomplish security while being able to access and troubleshoot it from multiple locations - all this while knowing that backup and redundancy are being handled automatically," says Robert Brooks, co-owner of Beacon Financial Group Inc.



Case Studies

OVERVIEW

Beacon Financial Group was planning to open their first mortgage office. Beacon's founders had worked previously at another mortgage office and had suffered through data loss, downtime, viruses, and otherwise dysfunctional systems. They understood the cost of a poor system, but weren't sure how to affordably deploy a reliable solution.

PROBLEM

Beacon Financial Group came to Selkowitz Computer Services (SCS) to begin planning less than two months before the opening of their office. "We discovered Beacon had three major concerns: availability, security, and cost," says Kevin Selkowitz of Selkowitz Computer Services.

Calyx® Point®, a specialized mortgage automation application, is the critical application in Beacon's office -- its data needed to be centralized, backed up, and secured. Beacon also needed email, groupware, virus protection, and network security. Remote access was on the wishlist, as was staying within a limited budget.

SOLUTION

Selkowitz Computer Services made only one formal proposal -- a Nitix-powered Net Integrator Mark I server. Microsoft® Windows® Small Business Server was previously discussed, but dismissed due to its high total cost of ownership and reliability concerns. Beacon chose to purchase the Nitix server along with five custom desktop PCs from SCS, and acquired a T-1 line for voice and Internet connectivity.

The Thursday before opening the office, SCS began installation of the T-1 line, network, printers, desktops, and a Nitix-powered Net Integrator Mark I server.

The Nitix server was configured as a domain controller for reasons of security and availability. Beacon's network was impossible to physically secure, so securing access from the LAN via the domain controller was very important. Beacon wanted to be sure that a desktop system failure would not interfere with

employees processing transactions -- roaming profiles gives them great flexibility to switch systems and keep working.





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Security is understandably a big issue when availability is the goal. The Nitix-powered Net Integrator Mark I serves as their network firewall and is in restricted outgoing connection mode to limit backdoors or otherwise undesirable applications from being functional. The server is running Nitix's VirusProtect anti-virus software and all the desktops run Kaspersky anti-virus.

Nitix's WebMail allows the entire staff to have access to their email and calendars from anywhere on the web, and the VPN service is available to specific users so they can work on loans from the field. These features make Beacon more responsive to clients in a tough market while not burdening the staff.

"Nitix's Intelligent Disk Backup (idb) plays a major part in our system, but is perhaps the most transparent. Training the users on their new backup system took less time than un-boxing the server," says Selkowitz.

CONCLUSION

Beacon Financial Group went from a technologically empty office to a fully functional system in two days.

Since the installation, service on the Nitix server has been minimal -- two short VPN sessions have taken care of everything. "The Nitix server

setup is nearly foolproof and its operation is rock solid. The WebConfig interface has been great -- it's a joy to be able to change a setting on the system without going for a 45-minute drive. It's rare to get such impressive functionality, reliability, and affordability in one package," says Selkowitz.

"Just knowing that all of our data will continue being here day after day is worth the price. Peace of mind is a must in today's business world," says Andrew Austin, co-owner of Beacon Financial Group Inc.

"As a mortgage broker, the security of our data is very important. The Nitix server setup allows us to accomplish security while being able to access and troubleshoot from multiple locations - all this while knowing that backup and redundancy are being handled automatically. We came from a non-server configuration and lost all of our data files once. This will never happen again. With this system, we don't have to worry about growing out of our technical capability in the future," says Robert Brooks, co-owner of Beacon Financial Group Inc.