

Case Study

■ CASE STUDY

Sale of Business Unit Requires a Separation of Networks

BioTech Firm Looks to Nortec to Project Manage and Implement Migration

The Background



Founded in 1947 as Microbiological Associates, BioReliance is the largest provider of outsourcing services focused on the rapidly growing biologics sector of the pharmaceutical industry. BioReliance has provided services to over 600 clients annually, including most of the largest pharmaceutical and biopharmaceutical companies in the world.

The Challenge

In April of 2007, BioReliance, at the time a business unit of Invitrogen Corporation, announced that it was being sold – in its entirety - to Avista Capital Partners, a private equity firm. The sale included its Rockville, Maryland headquarters, which employs approximately 550 professionals, its 3 sites in the United Kingdom, employing another 400 staff members, and the firm's main global data center located in Frederick, Maryland.

The sale necessitated a quick separation of BioReliance's networks and active directories from the Invitrogen network. This meant that the firm needed to deploy a new server infrastructure as well as perform many other concurrent upgrades. The complex project also included centralizing the firm's anti-virus and Windows update management, acquiring its own WAN and internet connectivity, and forced BioReliance to build out its data center so that it could support its new load.

The Solution

Given BioReliance's short timeframe and small internal IT staff, BioReliance knew it needed help with this multifaceted project. Robert Nield, IT Infrastructure Systems Team at BioReliance, and technical lead on the project, began interviewing potential companies.

During the interview process, Nield stressed the main priorities for BioReliance: completing the separation within an extremely short timeframe, making the transition as transparent and low-impact for user community as possible, maintain free busy scheduling in Outlook, and ensuring an adequate redundancy of systems.

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"Nortec came in with a whole team to explain how they could help us, taking into account our priorities and restrictions," Nield says. "And they put together a comprehensive SOW very quickly. Other companies weren't as quick, and our timeframe didn't allow us to spend months on RFPs."

Nortec's recommendation was to migrate all systems at one time. While a somewhat riskier approach than migrating over several weeks with dual Exchange infrastructures, BioReliance's desire to keep the transition low-impact as well as maintain free busy scheduling in Outlook made this approach the best choice.

Nortec began by meeting with Nield to establish goals, timeline and roll-out plans. Logistical coordination between the different time zones and geographically dispersed support staff in the UK were critical. Nortec's role in the migration was two-fold: function as project managers for the migration so that BioReliance staff could work on other related tasks, as well as to implement all of the primary engineering and architecture.

During the preparation process for the migration, Nield discovered that the previous company's desktop management system wasn't a well-managed environment, and required Nield to put in a lot of time to manage and upgrade the workstations. With Nield busy working on this unexpected complication, Nortec continued implementing the migration plan. "Nortec made it all possible," says Nield. "They drove many deadlines to keep us on track."

Benefits

Today, BioReliance has a separate, reliable architecture of its own. "Everything went according to plan and came out exactly as in the initial plan Nortec proposed," says Nield. With its new infrastructure in place, BioReliance can continue in its goal of helping biotechnology and pharmaceutical companies bring their products to market worldwide.

For more information on Nortec, please contact us at georgeh@nortec.com.

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