Compaq provides a rock-solid infrastructure for the financial industry's top climber

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Prudential Insurance Company of America

Business results:

> Reliability of 99.99 percent allows for:
> - round-the-clock performance
> - enhanced customer services
> - improved employee communication and workflow

> Scalable architecture is quick and easy to expand

> Management troubleshooting tools minimize cost

What makes it work:

> Mostly Compaq ProLiant™ 6500 servers with 1 GB RAM, more than 100 GB storage, four processors

> Compaq Insight Manager™

> Candle Pinnacle

> Tivoli

> Compaq Integration Server

"If you select the appropriate infrastructure, you can set your sights anywhere," says Mark LaChac, Vice President of Groupware Services at Prudential Insurance Company of America.

The upbeat LaChac works for one of the largest life insurance companies in the United States and one of the largest financial institutions in the world, serving 30 million customers worldwide. His accomplished groupware services team aims to run a premier messaging and collaboration operation among the company's insurance, investment, and real estate divisions. To support this goal, Prudential has established an infrastructure high on performance and virtually nil on downtime — essential for competing in an industry raising the bar on customer service with round-the-clock responsiveness.

Using Lotus Domino to streamline data-driven applications such as claims management, telephone directories, real estate and other software suites, Prudential complements its scalable applications with the award-winning Compaq *ProLiant* 6500 servers. The platform utilizes symmetric multiprocessing (SMP) design, enabling multiple CPUs and lessening the number of required servers.

High availability prevails through Compaq and Lotus clustering solutions. Lotus' solution keeps multiple nodes in a cluster synchronized over a local or wide area network link. Compaq offers an operating system clustering approach that doesn't replicate storage or data, but relies on a shared SCSI disk to allow each cluster node to access data. With multiple

systems acting as a single computing resource, individual systems and storage can fail without affecting the systems' operations.

"Based on our experience, Compaq is a leader," says LaChac of choosing the *ProLiant* platform. "They're typically the first company to employ newer technology in servers, such as faster processors and controller cards, and generally lead the way with larger, faster hard drives."

In recent months, Prudential's statistics demonstrate the Compaq platform, encompassing 100 mail servers and approximately 70 application servers, is 99.99 percent reliable. "You can't get better than that in this kind of environment," says LaChac. "Compaq's reliability is tough to beat."

High database demands, high Compaq reliability

With 67,000 users sending over 90,000 Internet mail messages per day and serving 30 million customers, reliability is as critical to Prudential's computing environment as insurance and financial advice is to a customer's loyalty. Reliability is also an essential factor for generating sales revenues, and allowing employees to streamline their workflow.

That increased productivity among employees is as evident within the office walls as it is across the mobile workforce. The company's 9,000 agents now carry laptops that enable them to immediately access sales illustration software, a client contact management system, needs analysis software, and a database of online insurance

forms and reference materials. With Notes as the Internet-like interface to the applications, agents can communicate with underwriters and support staff from any location, at any time. Telephone tags are down, and face-to-face client contacts are up — due in large part to the improved workflow and high availability of the Compaq platform.

"We've had exceptional success with the laptop program," says LaChac. "We have a more mature Lotus Notes product coupled with newer, solid Compaq hardware configurations. That deployment has run exceedingly well. Our uptime there surpasses our general environment."

Being a leader means being there first

Improving quality of life is a key mantra in Prudential's mission statement. To ease the maze of maneuvers involved in one of life's biggest headaches — relocating — Prudential merged two divisions to create Prudential Real Estate and Relocation Services (PRERS), a service which annually handles over 164,000 relocation transactions for more than 47,000 transferring employees. With PRERS, Prudential boasts its position as the first fully integrated provider of real estate and relocation services.

Prudential's Groupware Services supports two Web sites for PRERS, both running on Compaq hardware. One is a real estate affiliate center that provides services for thousands of brokers, including the ability to access information via a Palm VII™, a wireless hand-held organizer. The other is a relocation center which provides information to individuals or companies — everything from hiring movers to mortgaging a new home. The system also allows employees to tap in to an international online database, or take a 360-degree virtual tour.

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To maintain its leadership position, PRERS will continue to accommodate exponential numbers of users and data, as well as deliver on its promises for providing 24 X 7 access to selling, buying, financing and moving.

For another layer of performance dependability, Prudential deploys Compaq *Insight Manager*. The software proactively monitors each device, and if a critical event occurs, it sends a page and an alert to the operations team.

"We can view this Compaq *Insight Manager* data and correct any potential issues before they cause a production problem," says LaChac. "It's an essential tool for maintaining a high availability environment. We also use it to track hardware and device driver levels. This enables us to keep our infrastructure consistent, which in turn drives our high availability levels."

Rounding out Prudential's management tools is Candle's IntelliWatch Pinnacle, which manages and monitors a Lotus Domino server.

As the intranet matures, Compaq nurtures its growth

Making a messaging and collaboration environment scalable within a department was never easy. However, as dissemination of information evolves to include a highly populated intranet, the level of support intensifies.

Prudential's intranet initiative, which began in 1996 by supplementing the Domino infrastructure with Internet capabilities, now allows over 60,000 employees to retrieve internal information. It supports close to 40 different departments with Web sites. Known as "Inside the Rock," Prudential's corporate intranet achieves remarkable cost savings, in one example saving $100,000 annually in printing costs to produce an employee newsletter.

With the number of home pages and functionality escalating, Prudential's intranet must be deployed on a platform that's affordable and scalable. Fortunately, with Compaq's clustering solutions, Prudential

can easily add or change computing and storage when needed.

Unsurprisingly, that happens fairly often, prompting LaChac to frequently confer with Compaq personnel. "Our sales rep is very good at getting us product information and strategies," says LaChac. "Through the sales channel, we've also received lots of technical support and information.

"Compaq has also helped get some staff members Compaq-certified. When a problem arises that proves difficult to solve, Compaq gets us the best technical people. They respond quickly and work hard to resolve our issues."

LaChac says it was essential that Prudential work with a company that could provide worldwide capabilities in system integration, global deployment, and support. By using Lotus Domino on a Compaq platform, this insurance innovator can navigate its future under the global direction of two internationally known leaders.

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