



Windows Server® 2008

Customer Solution Case Study



Customer: Connotate Technologies, Inc.

Web Site: www.connotate.com

Customer Size: 50

Country or Region: United States

Industry: Knowledge management solutions

Partner: The Henson Group, Inc.

Partner Web Site:

www.hensongroup.com

Customer Profile

Connotate is a leading provider of Web monitoring and Web mining solutions. It uses automation that can be trained to monitor, extract, mash up, repurpose, and integrate Web content.

Software and Services

- Windows Server® 2008 Enterprise
- Windows Vista®
- Windows® XP Professional

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www.microsoft.com/casestudies

Dynamic Web Solutions Group Enhances Security for Sophisticated Web Mining Needs

People love being able to “fix” issues themselves without needing to wait on an IT resource to help.

Joseph P. Cusumano II, Director of IT, Connotate

Connotate Technologies deployed Windows Server® 2008 as a proactive measure for enhancing its IT environment, ensuring it delivers premium Web monitoring/mining solutions that uncover the market insights clients rely on to make critical decisions.

Business Needs

To maintain a competitive edge selling highly sophisticated services to a very demanding and rapidly expanding clientele, IT leaders at Connotate are constantly investigating innovations to enrich their IT environment.

“Connotate is a fast-moving company striving to stay on the cutting edge of IT technologies to better serve external customers and partners, as well as internal users,” says Joseph P. Cusumano II, Director of IT at Connotate. “This means we have a strong commitment to exploring early adoption.”

In 2007, Microsoft announced the Windows Server 2008 Rapid Deployment Program (RDP). This early-adopter initiative presented Connotate with a unique opportunity to review key enhancements from Microsoft in network security and reliability that have direct

relevance to the company.

Today, Connotate has a robust and high-security IT infrastructure maintained by more than 60 servers located in its New Brunswick, New Jersey, headquarters. However, as the company continues to grow, it envisions future challenges in maintaining network security for an increasingly demanding and disparate user base. All 50 employees use laptops; some of them work in the field and require remote connectivity and collaboration functionality. The company must also provide access to other types of users, such as customers, partners, and third-party vendors.

Connotate envisioned a Windows Server 2008 deployment as the vehicle for introducing new standards of security into its network environment, while automating much of the authentication. Ultimately, such advancements would also alleviate

Connotate's relatively modest IT organization to focus more exclusively on line-of-business projects, achieving greater overall value for the enterprise.

Solution

Microsoft approached Connotate to participate in the RDP through The Henson Group, a Microsoft Gold Certified Partner that specializes in Microsoft technologies. The Henson Group had successfully assisted Connotate in the past.

At the time, Connotate was considering a competing solution from Cisco, in part because its network uses Cisco switches. Based on guidance from The Henson Group, Connotate realized Windows Server 2008 quickly proved to be a more viable option, as much for its flexibility as for the harmony that it offered with other Microsoft server technology initiatives that Connotate was planning to execute.

With the assistance of The Henson Group, Connotate deployed four manually built servers to facilitate an upgrade from Windows Server 2003 that benefited all 50 of the company's employees.

In Windows Server 2008, Connotate uses Network Access Protection (NAP) technology to scan individual computers as they join the corporate network. If a particular computer does not adhere to standards, it is redirected to an isolated network to be addressed before it can enter the main corporate network.

The deployment also enabled Connotate to implement smart cards. Windows Server 2008 introduces a layered architecture designed to bring consistency to implementations of smart card interfaces. Windows Server 2008 also provides easy access to end-user smart card management features.

Finally, Connotate took this opportunity to rebuild its certification authority and implement a series of standards and best practices. These activities enhance a network that can grow with the company and retain its security and reliability.

Benefits

Connotate's primary objectives focused on enhanced security and reliability. However, after deployment, the company almost immediately reported gains in employee productivity as well. With an immediate substantial reduction in helpdesk calls and fewer security issues, Connotate found its goal of increasing productivity was met nearly immediately.

The IT department saw this reduction manifested in an immediate savings of approximately eight hours of work per week—which in a small company environment is substantial.

With the newly enhanced certification authority, Connotate implemented Active Directory® Auto Enrollment, which streamlined a manual process that previously saddled the IT department.

Connotate measured its return on investment based on increased security and reliability of its network, and reported satisfaction with early results. Windows Server 2008 has changed the way Connotate thinks about internal network security by providing effective tools to help protect its network.

Other recognizable benefits included:

- Improved methods of checking the compliance of computers and other devices that try to use the corporate network
- Automatic processes for remediating noncompliant computers

- Reduction of helpdesk calls
- Increased network availability for employees, who can remedy security issues either automatically or individually, and no longer have to wait for help from the IT department

The nexus of Connotate, Microsoft, and Henson Group exemplifies the value of the mature ecosystem that has delivered a competitive advantage for Connotate.

"Connotate envisioned Windows Server 2008 delivering specific enhancements for its environment," says Chris Russo, Senior Consultant, The Henson Group. "By deploying early, Connotate not only achieved those objectives today, but now has a more robust engine to explore additional enhancements for tomorrow."

Windows Server 2008

Windows Server 2008, with built-in Web and virtualization technologies, enables you to increase the reliability and flexibility of your server infrastructure. New virtualization tools, Web resources, and security enhancements help you save time, reduce costs, and provide a platform for a dynamic and optimized datacenter. Powerful new tools like IIS 7.0, Server Manager, and Windows® PowerShell, allow you to have more control over your servers and streamline Web, configuration, and management tasks. Advanced security and reliability enhancements like Network Access Protection and the Read-Only Domain Controller option for Active Directory Domain Services harden the operating system and help protect your server environment to ensure you have a solid foundation on which to build your business.

For more information, go to:
www.microsoft.com/windowsserver2008